



YOUTH4OCEAN FORUM

*A platform for young ocean advocates
and changemakers to connect and shape
our future with a healthy ocean
that sustains us all*

TERMS OF REFERENCE



#YOUTH4OCEAN

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EU4Ocean is a project funded by the European Commission and implemented by a consortium of 12 partners across Europe. These partners are EU4Ocean facilitators and include: ACTeon (coordinator, France), Seascope Belgium (Secretariat of the European Marine Observation and Data Network and the European Atlas of the Seas, Belgium), the European Marine Board (EMB, Belgium), Nausicaá - National Sea Centre (France), the World Ocean Network (WON, France), Ciência Viva (Portugal), the European Marine Science Educators Association (EMSEA, Belgium), Ecologic Institute (Germany), the European Centre for Information on Marine Science and Technology (EurOcean, Portugal), Secretariat of Submariners (S.Pro, Germany), MARE Nostrum (Romania), European Schoolnet (Belgium), and Farah Obaidullah (Independent Ocean Advocate & Founder Women4Oceans, The Netherlands).

Disclaimer: these Terms of Reference are subject to change, and will be reviewed and updated regularly. Published and valid from November 2020.



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I - PURPOSE AND MISSION OF THE YOUTH4OCEAN FORUM

The Youth4Ocean Forum is one of three inter-connected components of the EU4Ocean Coalition (see Fig.1 below), an initiative of the Directorate General of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) of the European Commission to increase Ocean Literacy among European citizens. Other components of the EU4Ocean Coalition are the EU4Ocean Platform, the focal point for organisations and initiatives to connect, collaborate and mobilize efforts on Ocean Literacy, and the Network of EU Blue Schools, dedicated to empowering schools to bring ocean-related issues into the education system e.g. curricula, extra-curricular activities, towards becoming a certified Blue School.

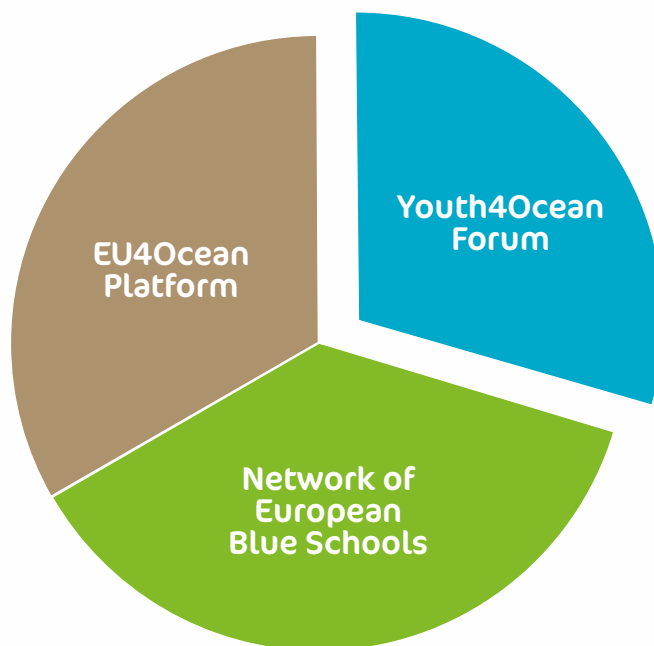


Fig. 1. E4UOcean Coalition

The purpose of the Youth4Ocean Forum is to encourage students, young professionals, young ocean enthusiasts and other young people in Europe with a track record or committed to preserving the health and sustainability of the seas and oceans, to take an active role in the ocean conservation and sustainable use through different activities at local, regional, national or international levels. While the main objective is to empower young advocates to become active citizens of an ocean literate society, a “Blue Society”, the establishment and development of the Youth4Ocean Forum will also address more widely European Union (EU) youth priorities linked to democracy, governance, public engagement, active citizenship, ethics, social justice, inclusion, and solidarity as well as wider societal challenges.

The Youth4Ocean Forum will mobilise young people who are willing to show leadership and commitment to Ocean Literacy efforts and will offer a focal point for Ocean Literacy for young people in Europe. It will connect and drive collaboration and innovation among young Europeans across current disparate youth Ocean Literacy initiatives, develop concrete activities that create awareness, engagement and momentum for action and change among the young Europeans.

The Youth4Ocean Forum will progressively connect diverse youth across geographical scales and with stakeholders of the three components of the EU4Ocean Coalition to engage in Ocean Literacy. Its ambition is to convey a strong voice for youth with solid youth engagement and leadership – reversing the traditional top-down relationship between adult experts and the youth to a fair and balanced relationship.

The method chosen to set up the Youth4Ocean Forum involves **co-creation** and **co-construction** with an emphasis on **collaboration and partnership among the youth mobilized, the EU4Ocean Platform members and the project consortium partners**. This approach is also confirmed in the recent Atlantic action plan 2.0 calling citizens to “adapt their everyday behaviour to make informed and responsible decisions that promote ocean stewardship in a co-creation approach”¹. It is intended to empower the youth to take ownership of the Youth4Ocean Forum, and to combine their knowledge and views on Ocean Literacy issues in order to develop meaningful and creative partnerships and to make their learning inspiring and creative.

These Terms of Reference present the methodology, scope, objectives, membership rules, code of conduct, and governance of the Youth4Ocean Forum.

II - AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE YOUTH4OCEAN FORUM

The main focus and ambition of the Youth4OceanForum is to support and encourage the development of youth Ocean Literacy activities and projects in the European Union (EU), and in particular in the following sea-basins: the Arctic Ocean, the Atlantic Ocean (including the North Sea), the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea.

Initially, the activities of the Youth4Ocean Forum will focus on three themes:

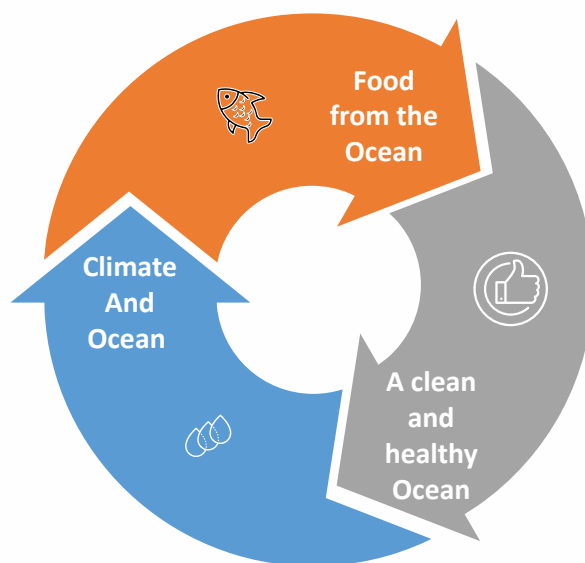


Fig. 2 . Themes

Other topics may be developed, based on feedback by Youth4Ocean Forum members, Young Ocean Advocates, EU4Ocean working groups and the DG MARE.

The Youth4Ocean Forum will have three objectives:

1. Support youth empowerment,
2. Support youth actions,
3. Support youth lobbying actions.

¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European The Council, The European Economic And Social Committee And The Committee Of The Regions. A new approach to the Atlantic maritime strategy – Atlantic action plan 2.0, Brussels, 2020.

2.1 Support youth empowerment

The Youth4Ocean Forum will empower young people to become active citizens of the ocean literate society, a Blue Society. To achieve this goal, the Forum will :

- Collect information related to Ocean Literacy;
- Deliver scientific content to its members in a way that everyone can understand it;
- Facilitate the exchange of good practice;
- Facilitate the co-creation of scientific Ocean Literacy;
- Promote, facilitate the set-up and put forward youth projects (see section 4 below for more details)
- Facilitate the cooperation between youth and other organisations (schools, EU bodies, NGOs...)

Therefore, the Forum will:

- Carry out communication activities on social media, publish articles and other material on the Youth4Ocean Forum website, by word of mouth, during local, regional and international youth events and festivals, etc.;
- Propose challenges and projects;
- Help to implement the Young Ocean Advocate process, select and promote Young Ocean Advocates (see section 3.3 below for more details);
- Organise youth capacity building events e.g. “Meet an expert” online meetings with scientists, stakeholders, artists, representatives of international organisations, NGOs, etc. and with the assistance of the EU4Ocean Coalition members;
- Share information on good quality online courses, job and internship opportunities by providing links to reliable sources;
- Help to identify the youth’s needs in capacity building and skills development;
- Help to identify and catalogue the existing capacity building tools;
- Carry out other activities proposed by the Youth4Ocean Forum members to support the youth empowerment

2.2 Support youth actions

The Youth4Ocean Forum will encourage the youth, students and other young people to take Ocean Literacy actions to preserve the health and sustainability of the seas and oceans through different activities at local, regional, national or international levels.

To achieve this objective, the Forum will:

- Bring support to the Young Ocean Advocates' projects in the field: assist in their development, successful implementation and promotion through the Young Ocean Advocate process, networking, coaching and mentoring services;
- Network with EU representatives, EU4Ocean Coalition members and other stakeholders in the EU4Ocean Platform working groups, at the EU4Ocean sea-basin events, EU4Ocean summit, European and international conferences and events such as European Maritime Day, World Ocean Day, etc.;
- Help to develop local and regional dynamics/activities of Ocean Literacy (through Young Ocean Advocate process, identification of other youth activities in the field as potential candidates, coaching, mentoring, contribution to the Network of EU Blue Schools, participation in sea basin events, etc.);
- Carry out other activities proposed by the Youth4Ocean Forum members in support of local and regional dynamics of Ocean Literacy.

3.3 Support youth lobbying actions

The Youth4Ocean Forum will address, through Ocean Literacy, more widely the European Union youth's priorities linked to democracy, governance, public engagement, active citizenship, ethics, social and environmental justice, inclusion, and solidarity as well as wider societal challenges.

To achieve this objective, the Forum will:

- Share ideas and perspectives;
- Raise awareness of ocean issues;
- Federate and defend the interests of the ocean;
- Define, develop, create, share solutions on ocean issues;
- Bring together youth, experts, NGOs, EU bodies, etc.

Therefore, the Forum will:

- Seek synergies between the EU4Ocean sea-basin events for experts and the youth outreach events;
- Contribute to sea-basin event planning, concept note and agenda development, promotion and recruitment of young participants;
- Organise youth outreach events with the assistance of EU4Ocean Coalition members and DG MARE. These events will be held back-to-back or during the planned EU4Ocean sea-basin events. The Youth4Ocean Forum members will propose a programme of the youth outreach component and a list of potential youth participants and speakers, in synergy with local youth organisations. Following the event, they will help to prepare a two-page summary of their sea basin event;
- Help to identify and select Young Ocean Advocates who will make pitch presentations of their projects at the sea basin events;
- Contribute to the networking event/the EU4Ocean summit with assistance of Nausicaá, ACTeon, World Ocean Network, other EU4OceanCoalition members and DG MARE. The Youth4Ocean Forum members will propose a programme of the youth outreach component and a list of potential youth participants and speakers, in synergy with local youth organisations;
- Participate in other EU events, such as European Maritime Day, World Ocean Day, European and international conferences, etc;
- Carry out other actions proposed by the Youth4Ocean Forum members in support of conveying a strong voice for youth.

III - YOUTH4OCEAN FORUM COMPOSITION

The aim is to create a Youth4Ocean Forum made of young people from a diversity of youth groups and strata, including those already engaged in the Ocean Literacy activities but also new individuals who aim at addressing this thematic.



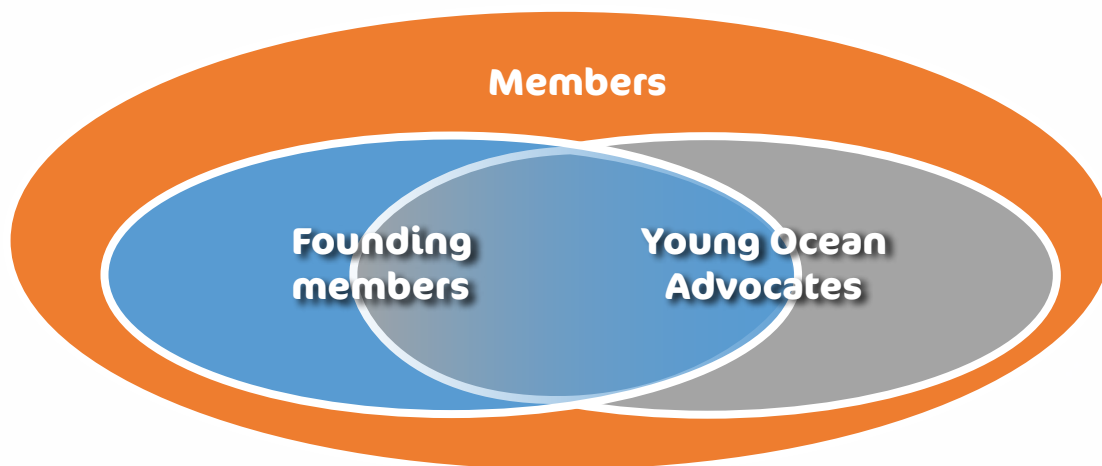


Fig. 3. Youth4Ocean Forum composition

3.1 Youth4Ocean Forum Founding Members

The Youth4Ocean founding members were identified in the preliminary interviews held between February and April 2020, during which interviewees expressed their interest in becoming a founding member. The founding members have co-constructed the Youth4Ocean Forum by defining its values, its governance instruments, functioning guidelines and by defining its first actions. They helped to write the content of the Terms of Reference (this document), determining the eligibility and selection criteria of the EU Young Ocean Advocate process, and deciding on the roles and responsibilities of the different membership options.

Once the Forum is set, the founding members will have the following benefits and duties:

3.1.1 Benefits

- Participate in the Youth4Ocean Forum decision-making processes;
- Facilitate and participate in the Youth4Ocean Forum committees and activities;
- Act as jury members to select Young Ocean Advocates (see selection process in section 4.3);
- Be a link between the Youth4Ocean Forum and the European Commission;
- Be a link between the Youth4Ocean Forum and the European Parliament;
- Be a link between the Youth4Ocean Forum and the Youth European Parliament;
- Act as ambassadors and facilitators of the Forum;
- Keep the title of the Youth4Ocean Forum founding member;
- Apply for the Young Ocean Advocate accreditation and awards.
- Participate in the EU4Ocean sea-basin events and EU4Ocean summit on an equal footing with the other members of the EU4Ocean Coalition;
- Participate in the EU4Ocean final event to be held in one of the EU member states in 2021-2022;
- Participate in EU4Ocean Platform Working Groups (Food from the Ocean, Climate & Ocean, Healthy & Clean Ocean).

3.1.2 Duties

- Promote the Forum;
- Help to mobilise other youth for the Forum;
- Act as first contact points for other youth and help them get to know the Youth4Ocean Forum (e.g. organise regular welcome events for new members to share the foundations of the Youth4Ocean Forum with them);
- Share knowledge, good practice and connect Youth4Ocean Forums members to help develop their projects;

- Be a link between the youth and different organisations that we are part of the EU4Ocean Coalition;
- Be the spokespersons of the Youth4Ocean Forum, explain what the Youth4Ocean Forum is doing (e.g. Ted Talks, local youth events, youth festivals, etc.);
- Participate in at least one committee.

The Youth4Ocean founding members will also:

- Identify first youth projects and advocates for accreditation and awards;
- Help to draft and disseminate the calls for project submission on social media, in their networks, via youth organisations and fora, etc;
- Help to fine-tune award categories, prizes, eligibility, accreditation and evaluation criteria for becoming a Young Ocean Advocate and winning awards;
- Propagate the idea of Ocean Literacy and explain to audiences the need for action, through concrete examples and proposals for action.

3.2 Youth4Ocean Forum Members

Any young European person between 16 and 30, who is committed to or has an interest in the ocean can register to become a member of the Youth4Ocean Forum. The registration is free and open to all.

The Youth4Ocean Forum is hosted on the [official website of the European Union](#), and an EU Login and password must be set up first to be able to register and become a member of the Youth4Ocean Forum and participate in the Forum on the EU website. Steps to register are described [here](#).

[3.2.1 Benefits of being a Youth4Ocean member](#)

Members of the Youth4Ocean Forum:

- Have access to functionalities such as the possibility to post articles and comments, whereas the access to view the information, resources and other content on the Youth4Ocean Forum is open to all without login;
- Can organise and take part in activities developed and implemented by the Youth4Ocean Forum in the five sea basins;
- Can attend the EU4Ocean sea basin and EU4Ocean Summit youth outreach events;
- Submit their project to apply for the Young Ocean Advocate accreditation and awards. Members whose involvement and activities for the benefit of the Youth4Ocean Forum have been outstanding may lead to having them accredited as EU Young Ocean Advocates.

[3.2.2 Duties of a Youth4Ocean member](#)

Members are expected to:

- Help bring the main messages and mainstream the ocean literacy to a wider audience;
- Communicate about the Forum and its activities whenever they find appropriate in the related events and use the communication tools/products developed for the Forum (photos, videos, infographics, etc.);
- Facilitate the communication to their local networks to bring new members to the Forum;
- Actively engage in the activities of the Forum. For instance, they will commit to sharing the content of the Youth4Ocean Forum in their social networks, carry out actions in the field, promote the Forum at youth events, and help the community to grow and to act;
- Abide by the Code of Conduct of the Youth4Ocean Forum (see page hereafter).

Code of Conduct of the Youth4Ocean Forum

Members:

- Will be respectful to other members, even if they disagree with them;
- Will not send offensive or harassing material to other members;
- Will not undertake deliberate activities that undermine the purpose of the Youth4Ocean Forum or of other members.

All entries and contributions:

- Will not plagiarise and/or violate copyright, privacy, trademark, database, personal or proprietary rights of any kind;
- Will not contain unlawful, harassing, threatening, violent, defamatory, obscene, abusive, hateful, racially offensive, sexually offensive, religiously offensive content and knowingly false material about other members, any person or entity;
- Will not reveal confidential information;
- Will not contain unsuitable or irrelevant website addresses and URLs;
- Will not promote illegal behaviour;
- Will not involve flooding, spamming or advertising
- Are all public and may appear in public search results. Therefore, members will not post personal details or information they do not want to be available publicly.

Members who violate this Code of Conduct will be sent a notification message about the removal of the offensive contribution by the Y4Ocean Forum team. Members who repeat offenses after receiving a warning will be banned from the Youth4Ocean Forum.

3.3 EU Young Ocean Advocates

Youth4Ocean Forum members can become EU Young Ocean Advocates if they apply, submit their project and have their project accepted.

The candidates for the EU Young Ocean Advocate will submit their projects in the Youth4Ocean Forum section on the Maritime Forum (see section 4.1 below for more details)

Applications will be submitted via an online application form. Applicants will answer a few questions to describe themselves and their project. They will upload supporting evidence about their project such as e.g. photographs or links to short videos (3 min max.) or other material.

The EU Young Ocean Advocates will be selected according to a set of criteria (described in section 4.4) that will be used to assess their project, motivation, commitment and other personal features. The full process is described in section 4.

3.3.1 Benefits of being an EU Young Ocean Advocate

EU Young Ocean Advocates will:

- Have their project presented publicly in the Youth4Ocean Forum section on the Maritime Forum website of the European Commission and promoted on social media by the EU4Ocean Coalition;
- Have their personal profile displayed publicly on the Youth4Ocean Forum website of the European Commission (if they agree to share their personal information);
- Benefit from the support and guidance of members of the EU4Ocean Coalition, to help them carry out their activities;
- Benefit from the coaching/mentoring programme of the EU4Ocean Coalition to develop their projects;
- Have the possibility to participate in the EU4Ocean final event (to be held in one of the EU Member States in 2021), and to win an award for their project;
- Be given opportunity to make pitch presentations in front of a broad audience at sea-basin events, and the EU4Ocean summit;
- Participate in the EU4Ocean sea basin events and EU4Ocean summit on an equal footing with other members of the EU4Ocean Coalition;
- Participate in EU4Ocean Platform Working Groups (Food from the Ocean, Climate & Ocean, Healthy & Clean Ocean);
- Get access to tools and networks to promote the concept of Ocean Literacy further and explain to audiences the need for action, through concrete examples and proposals for action.

3.3.2 Duties of a EU Young Ocean Advocate

Young Ocean Advocates are expected to be active in the Youth4Ocean Forum and in particular to:

- Continue to develop and carry out their projects actively;
- Participate and/or contribute to the set-up of youth activities: education, outreach, coaching, etc.;
- Actively promote the Youth4Ocean Forum;
- Participate in the Youth4Ocean Forum decision-making committees, meetings and activities;
- Contribute to the strategic development of the Youth4Ocean Forum;
- Be ambassadors of the Youth4Ocean Forum and of initiatives supporting the sustainable use of the ocean;
- Contribute to Ocean Literacy initiatives developed by the EU4Ocean Coalition, and collaborate with members of the EU4Ocean Platform and of the European Network of Blue Schools;
- Contribute actively to the planning, programme development, organisation and promotion of events organised by the EU4Ocean Coalition – including at the sea basin scale, helping in particular to attract young participants and contributors to these events;
- Mobilise their networks for expanding the Youth4Ocean Forum outreach, bring in new members and interested youth including from beyond the traditional marine/ocean sectors and from all social groups.

3.4 Membership Duration

The initial phase of the EU4Ocean Coalition initiative is 24 months and members will be able to contribute to the activities and growth of the Youth4Ocean Forum from the time they join until the end of the EU4Ocean initiative/Youth4Ocean Forum and possibly beyond.

3.5 Withdrawing membership

Participation of young people in the Youth4Ocean Forum is entirely voluntary. When applying, young people will be encouraged to commit to allow sufficient time to actively contribute to joint activities, including scaled up campaigns.

Young people will be free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason, or a notice period.

IV - EU Young Ocean Advocate Selection

4.1 Application process

The application process to become EU Young Ocean Advocate will take place on the Youth4Ocean Forum website, where applicants will complete an application form on line at any time. Calls for submitting youth projects will be made every three months. To diversify and raise interest, calls can be challenge driven or related to advocacy campaigns on one of the EU4Ocean topics. They will also be made at major ocean related events and on other occasions. Regular deadlines for submission will be defined in accordance to sea-basin and outreach events and the final EU4Ocean summit.

4.2 Types of projects

The projects submitted can take many forms, and be at various stages of development (concept, in development, ongoing...). Only completed and ongoing projects will be able to compete for awards at the EU4Ocean final Summit, to be held in 2021-2022.

They can also generate a profit, as long as they contribute to a more sustainable use of the Ocean resources or to raise awareness.

Projects can be in various domains and in relation to one or more of the three themes (Food from the ocean, Ocean and climate, Healthy and clean ocean):

- Ocean Conservation;
- Business, Technology and [Blue Economy](#) related to sustainable use of marine resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of marine ecosystems;
- Responsible Research and Innovation to solve marine and societal challenges;
- Community engagement through work with local communities to solve local marine and social challenges and with high social acceptance potential;
- Arts: work or artistic expression relating to the ocean, visual arts (drawing, painting, photography, filmmaking, sculpting, etc.), literature (fiction, drama, poetry) and performing arts (dance, music, theatre).

...and in many activity sectors:

- Marine biology and biodiversity,
- Marine education and Ocean Literacy,
- Marine science communication,
- Marine Protected Areas,
- Maritime Spatial Planning,
- Fishing and aquaculture,
- Marine biotechnologies,
- Maritime transport,
- Marine extraction,
- Deep-sea mining, marine pollution,
- Offshore wind and ocean energy,
- Climate change adaptation and resilience,
- High seas governance and Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction,
- Coastal tourism,
- Water sports,
- Water quality,
- ...and many others.

4.3 Jury

The applications will be reviewed every three months by a jury composed of founding members of the Youth4Ocean Forum, EU4Ocean Coalition members who are experts in the domain of the project and consortium partners of the EU4Ocean Coalition. The jury will also include experts who are based in the relevant sea basin. The jury will progressively integrate Young Ocean Advocates to ensure a long-lasting process and continuity.

There is no limit to the number of Young Ocean Advocates selected.

Conflicts of interest: Founding members, Young Ocean Advocates and experts who helped in the development of any of the submitted projects will be excluded from the evaluation of these projects and will not be able to serve as their jury members.

4.4 Selection process

Once submitted, the projects will be examined by a jury and will go through the following selection process:

- Stage 1: Screening against the eligibility criteria of applicants and projects.
- Stage 2: Applicant and project assessment according to the assessment criteria.
- Stage 3: Young Ocean Advocate final approval by the DG Mare.

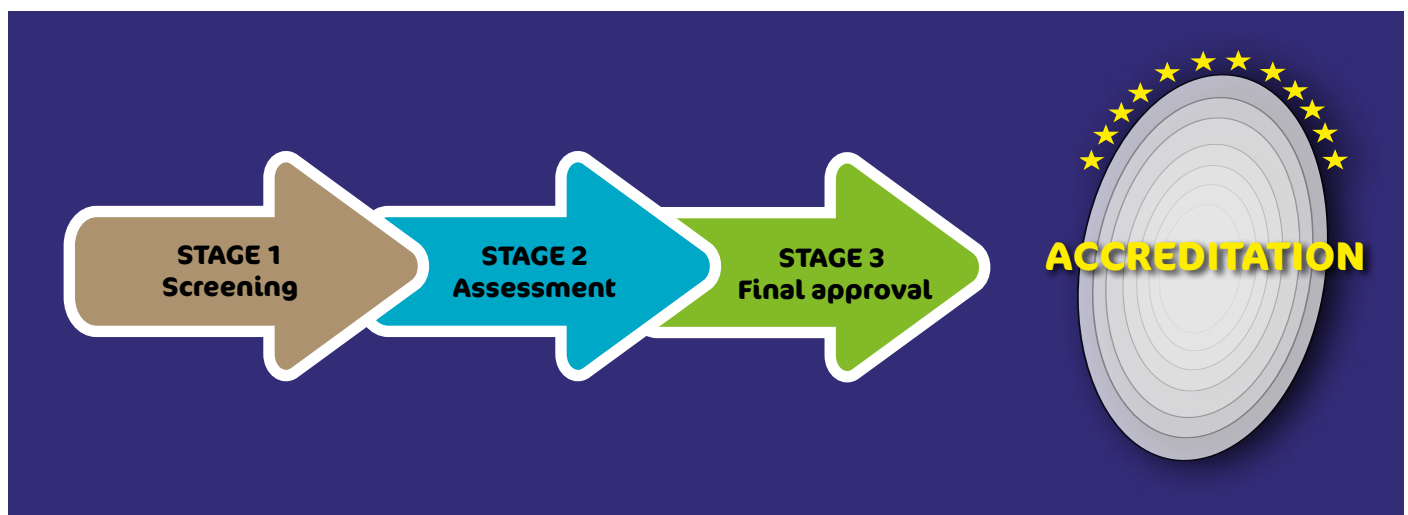


Fig. 4. Young Ocean Advocate and project accreditation process

4.4.1 Stage 1: Screening

4.4.1.1 Eligibility criteria of applicants

Applicants will:

- Be between 16 and 30 years of age. Flexibility is envisaged and the suitability of applicants will be assessed by the jury case by case: promising projects whose authors are two or three years older than the required criterion will not be excluded from the process.
- Be members of the Youth4Ocean Forum.
- Provide a duly completed application form in English.

NOTE

1. *Several applicants: there might be several applicants for a common project and they all must meet the criteria above. Only one person can submit the project through the online application form, and must mention the names of the other applicants. If the project is approved, all applicants will become Young Ocean Advocates.*
2. *The Youth4Ocean Forum founding members are allowed to place their candidacy to become Young Ocean Advocates.*
3. *Language: language should not be a barrier. Candidates can be Advocates at a sea-basins scale and not be fluent in English. In order to be inclusive, the Youth4Ocean Forum members who are fluent in English can help other members to translate their documents in English for evaluation.*

4.4.1.2 Eligibility criteria of projects

Projects will:

- Be relevant to the topics: "Ocean & climate", "Food from the ocean" and "Healthy & clean ocean".
- Address the EU priorities, have a European focus or be specific to one or more of the five sea-basins, with the possibility of increasing the focus on the EU level.
- Aim at shedding light on more sustainable development models, solutions to marine and social challenges, good practice, behaviour, consumption and production patterns and include a clear Ocean Literacy component.
- Have a collective/community dimension.

4.4.2 Stage 2: Assessment

The applications will be assessed according to pre-defined criteria.

Each criterion will be given a score between 0 and 10 and will be weighted by a coefficient.

The assessment will consist of two scores: one for the candidate and one for the project. An average of these two scores will be made and:

- Projects and candidates with an average below 5 will be considered as not addressing the expectations and will be rejected.
- Projects and candidates with an average between 5 and 8.5 will be considered as meeting some expectations and will be discussed by the jury to decide about the final selection. Projects and candidates with an average above 8.5 will be considered as meeting or exceeding the expectations) and will be accepted for the final approval by the DG MARE.

4.4.2.1 Assessment criteria of applicants

Young Ocean Advocate Assessment Criteria	Coefficient
Motivation and commitment	1,4
Conceptual thinking	1,4
Leadership skills	1,3
Long term vision	1,3
Open-mindedness	1,3
Communication skills	1,2
Creativity	1,1
Team and partnership management (interpersonal skills)	1,1
Coaching and mentoring skills	1

4.4.2.2 Assessment criteria of Young Ocean Advocate Projects

Project Assessment Criteria	Coefficient
Impact (what significant impact(s) has the activity relative to the size of action)?	1,4
Concept (how will the project drive a change towards ocean sustainability and ocean decade?)	1,4
Idea (clear vision)	1,3
Implementation (how is the concept of activity translated into action?)	1,3
Sustainability and replication	1,2
Effectiveness: attainment of objectives and planned results	1,2
Catalytic role	1,1
Strategic relevance (EU Green Deal, Blue Economy, SDGs...)	1,1
Inclusiveness	1,1
Factors and processes affecting performance	1
Collective approach	1
European Dimension	1
Achievement of outputs	1
Communication of project results to the general public	1

NOTE

1. Members of the Youth4Ocean Forum and the EU4Ocean Coalition will provide mentoring and coaching to implement projects that are in concept phase or planning stages or to improve projects that have been declined.
2. The innovative and promising projects that have passed the eligibility criteria but have been rejected may benefit from advice and coaching tips to succeed the next time they are submitted. Therefore, some applicants will be contacted and given suggestions on how to improve their project and apply again.

4.4.3 Stage 3: Final review by the European Commission

Applications which passed stages 1 and 2 will be submitted for review to representatives of the European Commission, along with recommendations from the jury.

V - Governance of the Youth4Ocean Forum

5.1 Management and coordination

The setup and management of the Youth4Ocean Forum is coordinated and facilitated by Nausicaá (France), ACTeon (France), and the World Ocean Network (Belgium), in close cooperation with other partners¹ of the EU4Ocean initiative. Dedicated support at EU and sea-basin scales will be provided by other project partners and sea-basin focal points².

¹ Communication: The Ecologic Institute, EurOcean

² The Ecologic Institute (Arctic), Nausicaa (Atlantic), s.Pro (Baltic), Mare Nostrum (Black Sea), ACTeon (Mediterranean).

5.2 Decision-making process

The decision process will have three instruments:

1. General assembly to decide on the general strategy of the Forum;
2. Ad hoc committees to decide on specific questions and to plan for and carry out the Youth4Ocean Forum specific activities;
3. Scientific committee to approve scientific content disseminated by the Forum.

5.2.1 General Assembly

The decision-making processes will be re-evaluated every year during the general assembly of the Youth4Ocean Forum to ensure that the existing mechanisms respond to the evolution of the Forum and ensure the participation of active regular members and Young Ocean Advocates in the decision-making process. The general assemblies will be held online or coupled with events of the EU4Ocean Coalition. The first general assembly will be held in 2021.

5.2.2 Ad hoc committees

To address specific questions, ad hoc committees will be formed with volunteers of the Youth4Ocean Forum founding members, Young Ocean Advocates and active members of the Youth4Ocean Forum.

They will take decisions on the following topics: design of an action plan, prioritise activities to be carried out by the Forum, plan activities, define how to use the budget available, prepare the organisation of an event, coordinate the cooperation and contribution to the activities of the EU4Ocean Coalition, define a partnership with external organisations, manage the general functioning of the Forum, etc.

The committees will discuss the subjects and submit their proposition to a vote. Depending the importance of the decision for the Youth4Ocean Forum, the committee will decide whether it should be voted electronically by:

- the committee (majority or unanimity)
- the general assembly
- all members of the Youth4Ocean Forum (polls)

The Forum will pay attention to the opinion of minorities and avoid the [tyranny of the majority](#) bias of the voting process. If strong divisions arise on a question, a smaller committee representing all the points of view may be designated to work on a compromise that will be submitted to a vote.

5.2.3 Scientific committee

To ensure the quality of the scientific content disseminated by the Forum, a scientific committee will validate scientifically engaging content published on the Forum or in the name of the Forum.

The scientific committee will be formed by founding members with a scientific background on a voluntary basis. As the Forum grows, the scientific committees will include active regular members of the Forum and Young Ocean Advocates who have a scientific background.

The scientific content published on the Forum will be validated before publication, especially if it does not come from trusted sources. Scientifically controversial articles can be published if they are based on rational scientific arguments and if there is a comment section to discuss the topic.

Non-scientific articles (e.g. promoting field actions) or articles based on non-academic traditional knowledge from the field can be published without the approval of the scientific committee.

The scientific committee may contact external experts from the EU4Ocean Coalition or other if particular expertise is needed to assess the scientific relevance of a specific content.

The Youth4Ocean Forum representatives in the three thematic working groups of the EU4Ocean Platform will act as links between these working groups and the scientific committee with regards to the scientific content.

5.3 Meetings, events, and activities

5.3.1 Youth4Ocean Forum meetings

It is crucial to have regular dialogue with young people involved as members of the Youth4Ocean Forum to maintain motivation, identify key actions and build a lasting engagement.

Therefore:

- The Youth4Ocean Forum general assembly will meet online at least once a year. A physical meeting combined with online meeting can be envisaged on the occasion of a sea-basin event or other EU event.
- The ad hoc committees will meet to deal with specific topics.
- The scientific committee will meet on an ad hoc basis.
- The Young Ocean Advocate jury will meet every 3 months to assess the projects.

The Youth4Ocean Forum operations and meetings will be facilitated by Nausicaá, World Ocean Network and ACTeon.

5.3.2 Internal communication

The working language of the Youth4Ocean Forum and meetings will be English. The internal communication will be carried out by e-mail and other electronic channels.

Communication is vital to the success of the Youth4Ocean Forum and members of the Forum will be encouraged to contribute the communication activities of the Forum, including where possible, communication in their languages to ensure uptake, impact and societal change.

The webpages about the Youth4Ocean Forum are hosted on the Maritime Forum of the DG MARE of the European Commission. The content provided by members (articles and events) and the internal area (discussion forum etc.) of the Maritime Forum website will be in English, since no multilingual content is permitted.

For regional and local youth engagement, key communications may be as far as possible provided in multiple EU languages, particularly for sea-basin events.

5.3.3 Participation in the EU4OCEAN Coalition activities

Participation and active contribution from members of the Youth4Ocean Forum is expected in the five sea basin events. The organisation of youth activities at sea-basin events will be an integral component of the EU sea-basin event concept note and planning, managed by ACTeon with the input of Seascope Belgium as part of the EU4Ocean Platform activities.

Youth4Ocean Forum members will also be invited to participate and contribute to thematic working groups organised as part of the EU4Ocean Platform. The working groups are organised by the EU4Ocean Platform members and gather stakeholders, decision-makers and other leading experts to address Ocean Literacy challenges in relation to the three topics (Food from the ocean, Climate & ocean, and a Healthy & clean ocean). Three representatives of the Youth4Ocean Forum will take part in the thematic working groups. They will then report to the other Forum members.

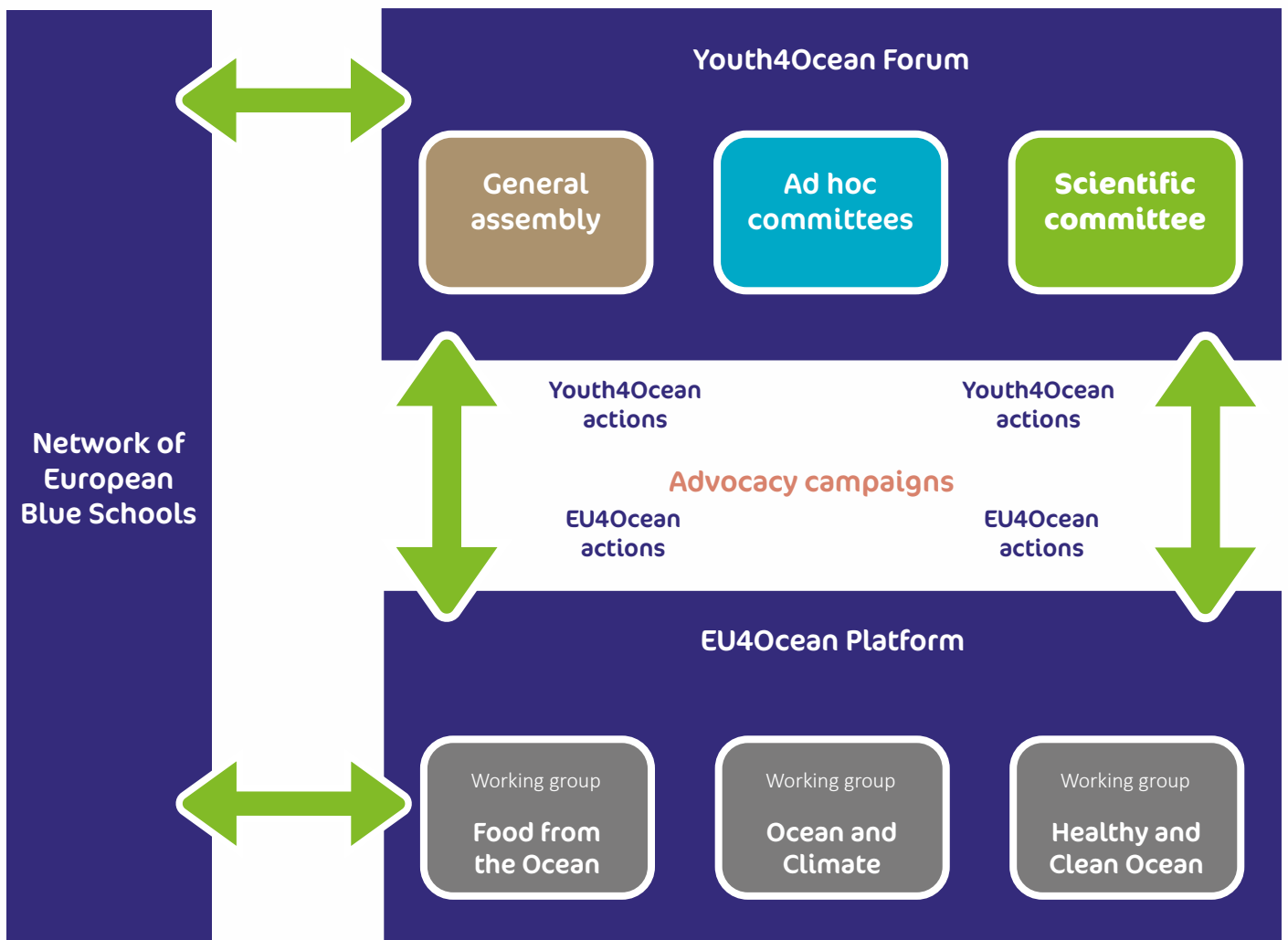


Fig. 5. Interactions of the Youth4Ocean Forum with the EU4Ocean Platform and the Network of European Blue Schools



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Become changemakers for the ocean!**



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