

PARIS SETS ITS CLOCK TO OCEAN TIME...

MONDAY 8 JUNE 2026

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY – JARDIN DES PLANTES, PARIS 5

To mark World Ocean Day, Paris will become the capital of marine exploration for one weekend. At the National Museum of Natural History, in the Jardin des Plantes, **Mission Neptune** presents OCEAN DREAMS from 6th to 8th June, a free open-access programme for all, while the Neptune Forum, held on Monday 8 June, will bring together researchers, explorers, creators, experts, decision-makers and philanthropists.

The Neptune Forum — **access upon registration** — places the Ocean at the crossroads of science, economics, culture and blue diplomacy, serving as a reminder of a fundamental truth: we are all part of one and the same living world within **Planet Ocean**.

01. MISSION NEPTUNE — AN UNPRECEDENTED INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVE

Launched under the high patronage of the President of the French Republic during the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3, Nice 2025), Mission Neptune is an international initiative dedicated to the exploration, understanding, regeneration and governance of the Ocean, rooted in science, economics, culture and blue diplomacy. It forms part of the European Commission's OceanEye programme. Mission Neptune brings together scientific institutions, universities, foundations, companies and NGOs around a shared objective: strengthening knowledge of the Ocean and its role in international cooperation.

As part of this momentum, its circle of founding members brings together, alongside the endowment fund's co-chairs, IFREMER (France's national marine science institute) and MBARI (oceanic research organization, United States), philanthropic partners such as the Oceanographic Institute of Monaco; Voice of the Ocean (supported by patron Carl Douglas, Sweden); Minderoo Foundation (Andrew Forrest, Australia); the University of Khorfakkan (under the patronage of the Emir of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates); OceanX (Ray Dalio, United States); the Tsao Pao Chee Group (Fred Tsao, Singapore); and the Focused on Nature Foundation of Prince Hussain Aga Khan. In France, the CNRS, the National Museum of Natural History, the Institute of Research for Development, and the Tara Ocean Foundation have joined the initiative, alongside numerous oceanographic fleets and institutions worldwide.

French companies have also strengthened their commitment since UNOC in Nice, including AXA, Engie, Veolia, MACIF and BNP Paribas.

Its activities include *Neptune Expeditions*, supported by postdoctoral research fellowships; Neptune Academic Chairs; the *Neptune Explorers Gallery*; and the development of *Neptune Communities*, a new network of explorers chaired by Jean-Louis Etienne.

"If the 21st century is the century of knowledge, artificial intelligence and the governance of information systems, then Ocean conservation lies at the very heart of the question of our time."

— **Andrew Forrest – Chariman Minderoo Foundation,
Patron and founding partner Mission Neptune**

02. THE NEPTUNE FORUM — CHALLENGES AND POSITIONING

Held this year in Paris to mark World Ocean Day, one year after the United Nations Ocean Conference in Nice, the Neptune Forum is an international gathering that places Ocean exploration at the crossroads of science, economics, culture and diplomacy.

The Ocean regulates the climate, sustains most life on Earth, underpins global trade and shapes the human imagination. Today, as major ecological, technological and geopolitical transformations accelerate, it is becoming both a strategic infrastructure for life and knowledge, and a pillar of multilateralism in the age of satellites, digital twins and large-scale data systems. Conceived as a “Davos of Ocean Exploration,” the Neptune Forum brings together leaders, heads of scientific institutions, explorers, philanthropists, business stakeholders, experts and creators to address a central political question: **How can we rebuild a new form of international cooperation in service of life through the Ocean, as a planetary system and a shared common good for humanity?**

03. PROGRAM FOR 8 JUNE — PLENARY FORUM

8:30AM – ONE YEAR AFTER UNOC-3: TAKING STOCK AND SHAPING THE FUTURE OF BLUE DIPLOMACY

Who will govern the oceans in the 21st century? From the high seas to the deep ocean, from the BBNJ to the decarbonisation of maritime transport, from the Nice commitments to UNOC-4: this opening session of the Neptune Forum explores the new frontiers of ocean diplomacy.

10:00AM – NEPTUNE ‘IN THE MAKING’

The first Neptune Expeditions, the launch of the Neptune Research Fellows program, and the unveiling of the Neptune Immersive Galleries, in partnership with the Explorers Club in New York.

2:00PM – EXPLORATION AND KNOWLEDGE AS THE FOUNDATION OF COOPERATION FOR PLANET OCEAN

A global link between scientific expeditions, coastal regions and key figures from the world of the oceans, from Brazil to China... and a message from space.

2.30PM – THE OCEAN NEXUS, FROM GREEN TO BLUE DEAL

Opening Address by Jeremy Rifkin.

3:00PM – AT THE FRONTIERS OF THE UNKNOWN

Introduction by Sylvia Earle: exploration, ocean intelligence and new scientific frontiers to reveal the ocean as a planetary system.

5:00PM – THE LIVING OCEAN

An illustrated address by Prince Hussain Aga Khan, followed by a discussion on ocean cultures, maritime knowledge and the multilateral governance of living systems in a fragmented world.

6:30PM – HIGH-LEVEL INSTITUTIONAL CONCLUSION

Through science, exploration and observation of the world’s oceans.

04. SPEAKERS — A LINE-UP OF INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

The Neptune Forum brings together a number of leading figures, including:

- **Emilia Arthur** — Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development of the Republic of Ghana
- **Pierre Bahurel** — Director-General of Mercator Ocean International
- **Philippe Baptiste** — Minister of Higher Education, Research and Space
- **Antje Boetius** — President and Chief Executive Officer of the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (MBARI)
- **Gilles Bloch** — President of the National Museum of Natural History
- **Catherine Chabaud** — Minister for the Sea and Fisheries; Sailor
- **Joachim Claudet** — Senior Research, CRIOBE; Director and Ocean Adviser at the CNRS
- **Minhan Dai** — Director of the Fujian Ocean Innovation Center, Chair Professor at Xiamen University
- **Sylvia Earle** — Founder and President of Mission Blue; explorer and former Chief Scientist at NOAA
- **Minna Epps** — IUCN Director Global Ocean Policy; Executive Director BBNJ High Ambition Coalition Secretariat
- **Jean-Louis Étienne** — Doctor, polar explorer and founder of the Polar POD and Persévérance expeditions
- **Cyril Gomez** — COO and Deputy CEO of the Oceanographic Institute, Prince Albert I of Monaco Foundation
- **Vidar Helgesen** — Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), UNESCO; Assistant Director-General, UNESCO
- **Rebeca Grynszpan** — Secretary-General, UNCTAD; Candidate for the UN Secretary-General
- **François Houllier** — CEO of IFREMER
- **Sanna Johansen** — Chief Executive Officer of Voice of the Ocean Foundation
- **Costas Kadis** — European Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans
- **Margaret Leinen** — Director Emeritus, Scripps Institution of Oceanography
- **Marina Lévy** — Director of the Sorbonne University Alliance Ocean Institute
- **Prince Hussain Aga Khan** — Founder of Focused on Nature; explorer, photographer
- **Ted Janulis** — Honorary President of the Explorers Club in New York
- **Bertrand Piccard** — Initiator and President, Solar Impulse Foundation; President and Pilot, Climate Impulse
- **Vincent Pieribone** — Co-Chief Executive Officer and Chief Science Officer of OceanX
- **Olivier Poivre d'Arvor** — Ambassador for the Ocean and the Poles, Special Envoy of the President of the Republic to UNOC
- **Jeremy Rifkin** — President of the Third Industrial Revolution (TIR) Consulting Group
- **Jacques Rougerie** — Architect for underwater habitats
- **Vladimir Ryabinin** — Former Executive Secretary of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
- **Heïdi Sevestre** — Glaciologist, Deputy Secretary of the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP)
- **Lynda Tabuya** — Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Fiji
- **Romain Troublé** — Executive Director of the Tara Ocean Foundation
- **Ashok Adicéam** — Executive Director of Mission Neptune

05. OCEAN NEXUS — THE REFERENCE PUBLICATION OF MISSION NEPTUNE

Following the Neptune Forum, Mission Neptune will unveil Ocean Nexus, its annual publication dedicated to the Ocean as a planetary system of life, knowledge, circulation and power. Designed as the intellectual extension of the Forum, Ocean Nexus will bring together scientists, explorers, decision-makers, economists, diplomats, artists and leading international voices around the major ocean-related challenges of the 21st century.

In a fragmented world where climate, biodiversity, global trade, artificial intelligence, energy and governance are now converging within a single physical space — the Ocean — Ocean Nexus will offer an interpretation of ongoing transformations and emerging architectures of cooperation. The publication will also devote a central place to creativity, maritime imaginaries, ocean cultures, as well as the mysteries and beauty of the marine world. The inaugural address by Jeremy Rifkin will serve as one of its first intellectual markers, following the line of his latest work *Planet Aqua*. This inaugural edition will be distributed ahead of the World Ocean COP1 (January 2027, United Nations, New York) to institutions and communities committed to a renewed governance of life and the Ocean.

06. PRESS ACCESS — ACCREDITATIONS

Journalists wishing to cover the **Neptune Forum** are invited to apply for accreditation through the Mission Neptune press office, managed by WMH Project:

Elisa LABBE - e.labbe@wmhproject.fr - +33 6 14 95 62 26

- ▶ Access to the Forum plenary sessions (8:30am – 7:00pm) upon accreditation
- ▶ Access to the museum's public areas (Dome, installation, Explorers' Cinema) throughout the day
- ▶ HD visuals, full press kit and Ocean Nexus publication available upon request
- ▶ Pool of speakers available for interviews during dedicated time slots

ABOUT MISSION NEPTUNE

Mission Neptune, launched at the United Nations Ocean Conference in Nice in 2025 under the high patronage of the President of the French Republic, is an international initiative dedicated to the exploration and understanding of the Ocean, with the aim of better communicating the essential role it plays in maintaining the balance of our planet. The Ocean regulates the climate, shapes exchanges between continents, yet remains still largely unknown. In response to these challenges, Mission Neptune brings together scientists, explorers, institutions and committed stakeholders to advance knowledge, share it and make it useful to all. Through its activities, Mission Neptune also contributes to strengthening a European Union-driven dynamic around Ocean observation and understanding, within the framework of the OceanEye initiative, which aims to better see, measure and understand ongoing transformations. Based at the Maison de l'Océan in Paris, Mission Neptune brings together an international community of engagement and launches the Neptune Forum, whose first edition takes place on 8th June 2026, on the occasion of World Ocean Day.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

A partner of the Neptune Mission, the National Museum of Natural History is hosting the Neptune Forum in the heart of the Jardin des Plantes. Heir to a long tradition of naturalist exploration, and drawing on its marine stations, invaluable collections, and research laboratories, the Museum is a leading force in the international effort to promote the sustainable and shared management of the oceans.

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HD visuals available upon request · Press accreditation upon registration
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Mission Neptune is a global initiative supporting the operational deployment of OceanEye, within the European Ocean Pact, in partnership with GOOS and Mercator Ocean International.



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