towards ipos

Consultation Report

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1. Executive Summary

What is Towards IPOS?

Towards IPOS is an initiative supported by more than 30 scientific institutions and a growing number of countries. The objective is to develop the International Platform for Ocean Sustainability (IPOS) as the first global demand driven mechanism to bridge the gap between Ocean knowledge, policy and society. The IPOS will help States to accelerate the fulfillment of their international Ocean commitments such as Sustainable Development Goal 14, and Global Biodiversity Framework Targets 2 and 3, among others. IPOS will achieve this by providing demand driven, tailored services that deliver actionable knowledge and policy options that are responsive to the timelines of decision makers. The Towards IPOS consortium was tasked by the European Commission to determine the feasibility of an International Platform for Ocean Sustainability, and to detail the substance and processes of such a platform. [1] This report provides an overview of an in-depth global stakeholder engagement and consultation process that has taken place over a period of 18 months, and the integration of the lessons learnt into the IPOS strategy, design and processes.

Why a consultation process?

The vision for IPOS is that it will accelerate Ocean sustainability by supporting the implementation of Ocean commitments by 2030, and also help to shape a pathway for evidence-based decision making for the Ocean beyond the end of the decade. Given this global objective, IPOS should be co-designed with wide stakeholder engagement to ensure that it represents a solution that is perceived as useful by States and Ocean actors, and is globally supported as an acceleration mechanism. Since its inception, the IPOS concept has evolved considerably as a result of ongoing outreach and stakeholder engagement during global events, bilateral meetings, workshops, webinars and interviews. In addition, a global survey was conducted between July and November 2024 to test the first refinement of the original concept, engaging a diverse, globally representative group of stakeholders across various backgrounds, geographic regions, genders, and generations. The results of this global survey process have been integrated in a further round of refinements which are presented in a suite of Towards IPOS documents[2] and which are summarised here.

How did it work?

Over a period of 18 months - from March 2022 to November 2024 - the global consultation process included a global survey which was sent to 176 respondents around 9 key themes; 27 workshops, global events and seminars; and 9 expert interviews for the development of best practices.

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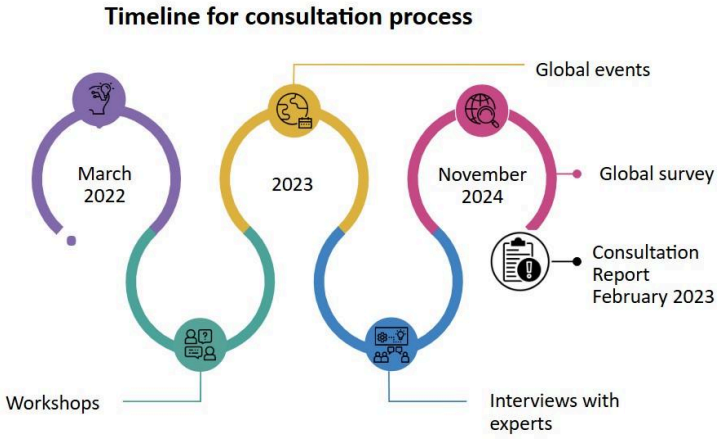
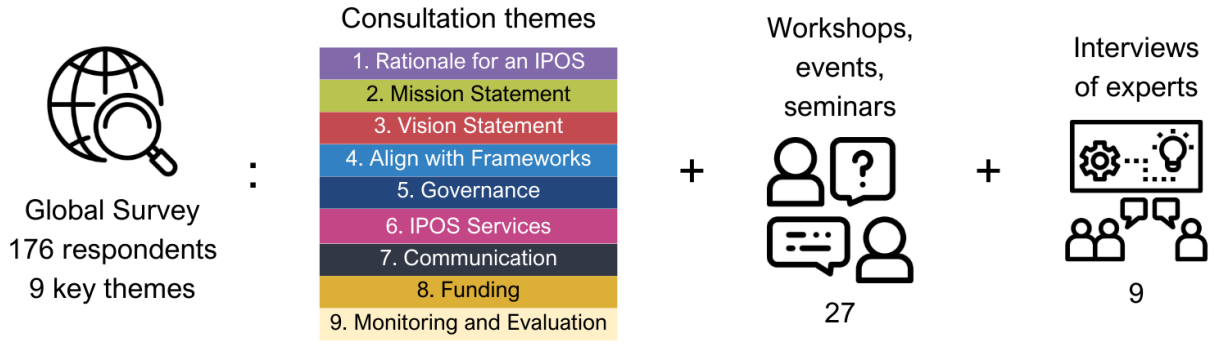
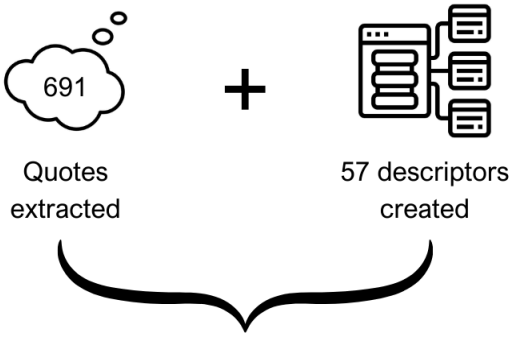
[1] CINEA/2023/OP/0014

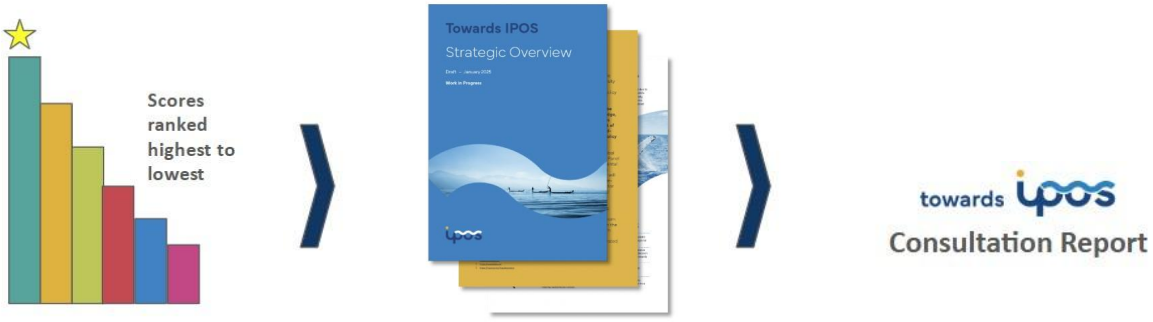
[2] Towards IPOS Strategic Overview, Towards IPOS Handbook of Best Practices, Towards IPOS FAQ-Blueprint, Towards IPOS Equity and Inclusivity Guidelines; Towards IPOS Communication Strategy; Towards IPOS Knowledge Development Committee White Paper

How did it work: Visual Summary





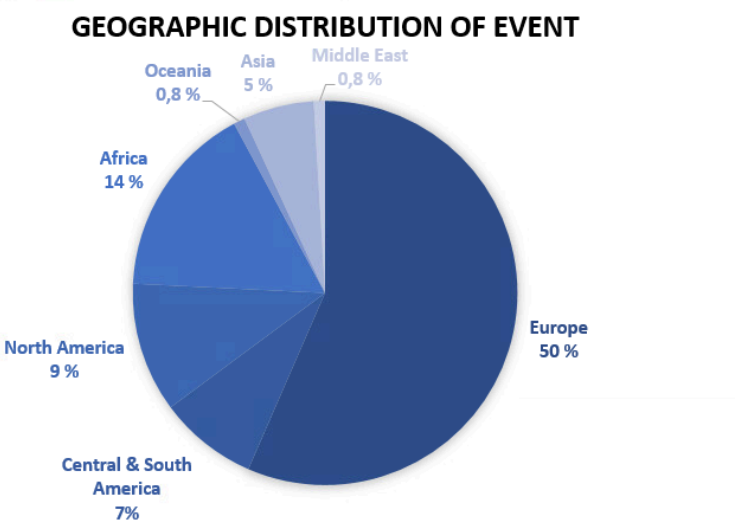


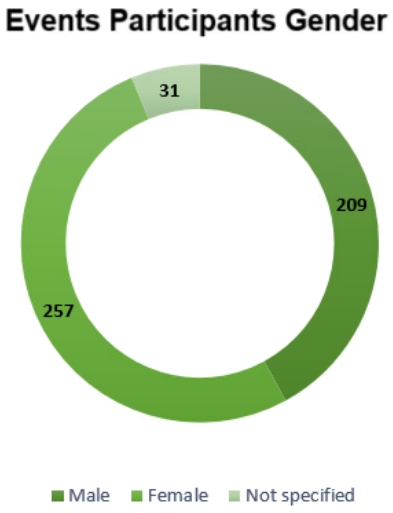


Integration **Report on integration**

Who participated?

The global consultation process engaged **599** ocean actors across the globe, from **51** countries and **244** institutions (see Appendix A). The results demonstrate good gender balance among participants engaged and a slight bias towards Global North participants/respondents. Survey requests were sent to geographically representative ocean actors but the responses received were not equally balanced. However, several key initiatives - including a global event at the UN Decade Conference in Barcelona for Southern perspectives on shaping IPOS, several Early Career Ocean Professionals webinars and bilaterals as well as focused engagements with local community representatives - contributed to broad and inclusive engagement throughout the consultation process.





What were the key results and how were they integrated? (see Table 5 for full results)

Key results	Integration of key results
IPOS should **not replicate** any existing knowledge processes but should rather **foster synergy, complementarity and non-duplication**.	IPOS **shifted away from its initial framing** as a global knowledge assessment process akin to IPCC, IPBES and WOA and moved instead towards a **demand driven** mechanism which builds on these existing knowledge processes and existing expertise to provide tailored policy options to States.
IPOS should embrace **inclusive and equitable participation** in its governance and knowledge co-production processes.	Inclusivity and equity are **core principles** of the IPOS concept, integrated into its proposed governance framework through inclusivity and equity principles in governance bodies (see 5.1), and knowledge production processes through best practices guidelines; inclusivity and equity guidelines; the establishment of a knowledge network which will develop IPOS outputs through fair and equitable representative multi-actor working groups. Various knowledge systems will be recognised in the co-production of knowledge, including that of rights holders.
IPOS should ensure a **flexible, transparent governance structure** and **resilient funding** from multiple sources.	All IPOS processes, including the mechanisms for establishing governance bodies, selection processes, decision making, criteria for prioritising requests, and ways of working will be **transparent**. **Multiple sources of funding** are being sought to align with the planned objectives to ensure financial transparency and resilience.
IPOS should develop **tailored, clear and engaging outputs** which are useful and accessible to all.	The IPOS Communication Strategy centres on **clear engaging outputs which are accessible** and useful.
IPOS should deliver **services which are actionable, relevant and add distinct value** to the existing knowledge-policy-society Ocean system.	IPOS services have been refined to ensure that they offer **highly relevant contextualised** policy options to decision makers which contribute to **bridging the implementation gap** between global Ocean knowledge and action for Ocean sustainability commitments.

2. Introduction

The Ocean is in crisis, with critical gaps between knowledge, policy, and action threatening its sustainability. To address these challenges, an emerging initiative, Towards an International Platform for Ocean Sustainability (IPOS), was proposed from early 2022. Since then the initiative has gathered significant momentum gaining support from the scientific community, civil society and political momentum. In order to test the proposed strategy and framework that was developed, the Towards IPOS team conducted an extensive global consultation during 2023-2024, engaging diverse stakeholders through a global survey, webinars, bilateral meetings, events and interviews to shape IPOS.

This report synthesizes feedback from this extensive consultation on IPOS's preliminary strategy and proposed framework. A synthesis of consultation participants' perspectives is shared as well as a discussion on the integration of this feedback demonstrating how Towards IPOS has evolved. Collectively these insights have informed and refined the foundation for IPOS to drive transformative action for Ocean sustainability.

3. Consultation Methods

3.1 Consultation Period and Event Types

The IPOS consultation process was conducted between March 2023 and November 2024. It involved a diverse range of events including workshops, seminars, interviews, in-person events and a global survey (collectively referred to as "events"). These events were semi-structured to examine key aspects of the IPOS initiative. Each event incorporated presentations using standardized slideshows tailored to specific consultation themes. Qualitative responses from open-ended questions in the IPOS global survey were also analyzed. Participant numbers and, where available, the type and number of participating institutions were documented for all events to ensure a comprehensive understanding of stakeholder engagement.

3.2 Definition of Consultation Themes

The consultation addressed the following key themes, each critical to the institutional and operational design of IPOS:

Table 1. Consultation Themes

1	**Rationale for an IPOS**
	Establishing the necessity and urgency of the platform to bridge the gap between Ocean knowledge and actionable policy.
2	**Mission Statement**
	Refining a clear, achievable, and inspiring high-level mission statement
3	**Vision Statement**
	Refining a clear, achievable, and inspiring high-level vision statement
4	**Alignment with International Frameworks eg. SDG14, GBF 2 & 3, BBNJ**
	Positioning IPOS in coherence with key frameworks like UN Sustainable Agenda 2030, in particular SDG 14, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction Treaty, and others.
5	**Governance**
	Ensuring inclusive, transparent, and adaptable governance structures.
6	**Services Offered by IPOS**
	Designing demand driven services to provide policy options in response to requests from States and groups of States.
7	**Communication and Dissemination**
	Crafting effective strategies for tailored, impactful communication of outputs.
8	**Funding**
	Establishing diversified funding models for financial resilience
9	**Monitoring and Evaluation**
	Developing frameworks to measure the impact of IPOS outputs and adapt in response to evaluation.

3.3 Data Collection Process

The data collection process was designed to capture consultation participant´s perspectives, incorporating note-taking or recordings from workshops, seminars, and meetings with UN agencies and States while adhering to data privacy protocols. Complemented by in-depth interviews and a global online survey with experts in science, policy, and advocacy, qualitative insights were transcribed using AI and verified by human reviewers for accuracy. To ensure objectivity, IPOS team comments were excluded during data cleaning, focusing solely on consultation participants' feedback. The analytical approach applied structured methodologies using OpenAI's GPT-4o1 Advanced Reasoning model to extract, synthesize, and rank insights, categorizing stakeholder feedback into actionable advice ("DOs") and cautions ("DON'Ts"). A weighted scoring system, considering the frequency of quotes, event occurrences, and consistency across consultations, helped us to prioritize key themes in the consultation report narrative (Appendix B).

3.4 Geographic and institutional diversity of participants in the consultation.

The Consultation Period included 27 global events, workshops and seminars, a global survey and 9 bilateral interviews. The aim of these engagements was to bring together various stakeholders from as wide a range of institutions and geographical backgrounds as possible in order to optimize the diversity of perspectives. Inclusiveness was the high priority of this consultation, with the desire to give a voice to institutions and individuals from developing countries. In addition, the process brought together scientists, policymakers, as well as intergovernmental and UN agencies. In-person events were organised in various locations with virtual participation possible. Virtual meetings and information sessions were held in different time zones to accommodate as many participants as possible.

Regional representation included the European Union, notably the European Commission and its entities, while State representation included Costa Rica, France and the Seychelles, as well as India, China and Brazil.

The breadth of the consultation enabled the Towards IPOS team to meet with or engage with local, regional and global institutions in order to pool knowledge, assimilate feedback to refine the value proposition and increase the effectiveness of the project. Respondents to the survey included independent international experts, non-governmental organisations, representatives of foundations and local projects already underway (e.g. the SeaChange Project in South Africa and the Global Fund for Coral Reefs based in the Philippines).

4. Results

4.1 Methodology

In order to integrate the collective insights gathered from the global Towards IPOS Consultation process, and to report back on how these insights have been integrated, this report presents the results drawn from 27 workshops, 9 in-depth interviews, and 67 completed and 46 partially completed aggregated survey responses [3]. The results encompass the perceptions of 599 individual participants from 244 organizations including experts and think-tanks from academia, civil society, and policymaking sectors. Using AI-assisted, human-supervised analysis (see Appendix B for details), a total of 691 direct quotes provide detailed perspectives on the Towards IPOS preliminary strategies, processes and design. These insights culminated in the identification of 57 descriptors (Appendix C), which have collectively served as a comprehensive roadmap to shape Towards IPOS.

4.2 Scoring

Results are presented (Tables 3 and 4) in order of frequency ranking and are correlated to the Consultation themes above in Table 1. The ranking process is as follows:

Ranking scores take account of three critical metrics:

- **Frequency of Quotes (F)**: The total number of quotes supporting a descriptor/statement.
- **Frequency of Events (E)**: The number of events where the descriptor/statement was mentioned.
- **Frequency-Event Ratio (FER)**: A consistency measure calculated as the ratio of Frequency of Quotes (F) to Frequency of Events (E), reflecting how persistently a descriptor was emphasized across consultations.

The composite score formula was chosen to balance volume, distribution, and consistency of consultation participant's inputs (“descriptors”). Weighting FER more heavily accounted for descriptors consistently raised across diverse contexts, highlighting their broad significance. This ranking method was adopted to give salience to priorities that reflect both the depth and breadth of participants' engagement in the consultation. Result inputs are collated into categories of descriptors which detail what IPOS should focus on achieving (listed as DO’s) and elements that IPOS should avoid (listed as DONTs)

[3] 1. See Appendices for more details.

Table 2. Summary results of top descriptors for DO's and DONT's in order of highest scores

	DO's	DONT's
1	Foster complementarity, synergy and non-duplication with existing initiatives	Avoid exclusive, rigid or philanthropic-dependent governance models
2	Embrace inclusive, equitable, and multi-actor participation	Avoid conflicts of interest and unsustainable governance models
3	Adopt flexible, adaptive and transparent governance structures	Avoid redundancy and unnecessary complexity
4	Craft clear, engaging and audience-tailored knowledge outputs	Avoid narrow, politically-centric or passive framing
5	Integrate with and complement existing initiatives	Avoid ambiguous, prescriptive or elitist language
6	Deliver practical, demand driven and actionable services	
7	Co-produce equitable knowledge with local communities	
8	Act as a global knowledge hub and broker	
9	Deliver decision-relevant, contextualized guidance	
10	Emphasize distinct action-oriented value add	

4.3. Ranked Results in order of highest to lowest ranked score

4.3.1 IPOS Rationale, Mission and Vision and Alignment with International Frameworks

DO: Align with International Frameworks and foster complementarity, synergy, and non-duplication with existing initiatives (Score: 32.40, 78 quotes and 26 events) (1st DO)

"The potential synergies and complementarity with existing mechanisms and organizations of the global ocean knowledge-policy interface, such as the Ocean Panel, the IOC-UNESCO, DOALOS, etc. should also be stated in the mission statement."

A substantial number of participants emphasized the importance of positioning IPOS to work hand-in-hand with existing organizations (e.g., IPCC, IPBES, WOA, IOC-UNESCO, UNEP, FAO, Regional Forum Bodies) and initiatives (UN Decade for Ocean Science, Ocean Panel) to fill gaps, rather than compete or duplicate. By co-constructing around Ocean challenges, leveraging established political alliances, integrating ongoing assessments, learning from IPCC/IPBES models, and tapping into a diverse base of knowledge platforms, IPOS can offer unique, holistic contributions. Ensuring

complementarity means mapping existing efforts, building trust, clarifying how IPOS adds distinctive value (such as translating global findings into local contexts), standardizing indicators, and contributing to increased coherence of ocean knowledge across global knowledge processes such as IPCC and IPBES, as well as increased coherence in national policies with respect to global Ocean commitments. This approach could maximize global impact and relevance, aiming at preventing fragmentation, and positions IPOS as a connective tissue that harmonizes and elevates the Ocean knowledge-policy landscape.

DO: Integrate with and Complement Existing Initiatives (Score: 15.9, 30 quotes and 21 events) (5th DO)

"The alignment with global targets (SDG, GBF, etc.) was highlighted as a key element to ensure the coherence of the IPOS with the global efforts towards ocean sustainability."

Multiple stakeholders emphasize that IPOS should actively engage with established platforms, align with global targets (e.g., SDGs, GBF), and utilize existing policy structures to amplify rather than replicate efforts. By working closely with governments, cautiously leveraging AI capabilities, standardizing data, and collaborating with key organizations, IPOS can encourage cross-sectoral cooperation. This synergy would avoid creating additional bureaucratic layers and ultimately accelerate a cohesive shift from scattered insights to coherent Ocean sustainability strategies.

AVOID: Avoid Redundancy and Unnecessary Complexity (Score: 7.10, 11 quotes and 6 events)(3rd AVOID)

"Make it clear that while existing organizations may offer some similar services, IPOS can provide unique support by synthesizing knowledge, offering cross-sectoral insights, or addressing implementation challenges at regional, national, or local scales."

Closely linked to the above theme, participants warned against creating another layer of international bureaucracy or repeating what IPCC, IPBES, IOC-UNESCO, or other existing entities already provide to the international Ocean community. A multipolar world and territorial tendencies among institutions demand strategic positioning rather than replication. Also, unmet SDG targets and overlapping mandates can breed skepticism if IPOS merely reiterates known priorities without offering new insights. To maintain credibility, IPOS must carve out a unique niche, streamline efforts, and clarify how it differs from or enhances existing mechanisms, thereby avoiding confusion, competition, and cynicism.

4.3.2 IPOS Governance model

DO: **Embrace Inclusive, Equitable, and Multi-Actor Participation (Score 19.7, 112 quotes and 21 events) (2nd DO)**

"*We are losing out on the indigenous knowledge and insights. We're losing out on alternative perspectives and insights from other countries.*"

IPOS governance should open avenues for diverse knowledge holders, including Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, youth, marginalized groups, private sector, NGOs, and multiple scientific disciplines. Self-nomination of experts rather than national nominations should be allowed as equity and accessibility in participation, and co-construction of knowledge are recurrent themes. These recommendations stress that legitimacy and effectiveness hinge on embracing all relevant voices,

ensuring that decision-making reflects real-world complexities and that no stakeholder nor rights-holders are left behind. A truly inclusive IPOS should foster trust, accountability, and comprehensive solutions to Ocean challenges.

DO: Adopt Flexible, Adaptive, and Transparent Governance Structures (Score: 19.70, 42 quotes and 21 events) (3rd DO)

"Avoid making IPOS a bureaucratic body embedded within the UN system that might hinder its independence or effectiveness. Consider options for maintaining flexibility and avoiding heavy bureaucracy."

IPOS should be capable of responding to dynamic challenges and adapting to unforeseen challenges and complexities. Establishing clear guidelines, open review processes, multiple advisory bodies, and careful procedures for handling requests ensures responsiveness without rigidity. Transparency in data choices, mandates, and ownership of results fosters legitimacy and stakeholder confidence. By balancing formal structures with the ability to evolve, IPOS could remain resilient, proactive, and credible, able to handle diverse and changing Ocean governance contexts effectively.

AVOID: Avoid Exclusive, Rigid, or Philanthropy-Dependent Governance Models (Score: 7.4, 13 quotes and 10 events)(1st AVOID).

"Make sure IPOS is not seen as a top-down, elitist organization disconnected from local realities. Instead, it should be practical, transparent, and accessible."

The underpinning quotes caution against overly narrow funding sources, top-down structures, and excluding non-state actors or marginalized communities. Over Reliance on volunteer labor, ignoring power imbalances, or becoming too bureaucratic can erode legitimacy. IPOS must avoid complexity that adds little value and ensure it does not reinforce inequalities or depend on unstable financial backers. Instead, it should strive for diverse, stable support and flexible, inclusive governance that doesn't alienate stakeholders.

4.3.4 Funding

AVOID: Avoid Conflicts of Interest and Unsustainable Funding Models (Score:8.90, 13 quotes and 10 events)(2nd AVOID)

"Don't rely on unsustainable funding models that overstrain volunteer members."

Consultation participants hereby warned against funders with their own agendas, unsustainable volunteer models, or fee-based memberships causing institution withdrawal. The consideration of strict rules to prevent interference and bias were advised. Moreover, several participants expressed concerns about premature UN hosting, highlighting the risks of excessive bureaucracy, the need for clear funding structures, and the importance of preventing assumptions of unlimited services or preferential access for wealthier countries. These cautions underscore the importance of maintaining integrity, fairness, and autonomy in IPOS's funding approach.

4.3.5 Communication and Dissemination

DO: Craft Clear, Engaging, and Audience-Tailored Ocean Knowledge Outputs (Score: 18.50, 35 quotes and 20 events)(4th DO)

"The outputs need to be scientifically sound but also engaging for the public and decision-makers, who may not be familiar with reading complex graphs or mathematical models."

A broad consensus emerged on the necessity of adapting content for multiple audiences—policymakers, civil society, youth, and the general public. Stakeholders emphasized using short, visually appealing policy briefs, avoiding tragedy narratives, providing digestible summaries, and ensuring that materials are appealing and easy to understand. Discussions highlighted the importance of synthesizing complex data into brief, confident statements, offering timely, relevant outputs when decision-makers need them, and experimenting with various formats, such as case studies, small policy-level workshops, and global forums. Participants of the consultation also urged continuous improvement of dissemination strategies, from building on networks like the UN Ocean Decade to enhancing Ocean literacy among decision-makers and ensuring outputs resonate globally. Overall, these insights underscore a dynamic, audience-specific approach, leveraging clarity, brevity, and visual storytelling to foster meaningful, actionable engagement with Ocean knowledge.

4.3.6 Services offered by the IPOS

DO: Deliver Practical, Demand-Driven, and Actionable Services (Score:15.90, 25 quotes and 13 events)(6th DO)

"Instead of merely advising on policies, provide practical support that helps states and other actors implement solutions effectively."

Multiple quotes underscore IPOS's role in going beyond identifying problems to offering tangible tools, menus of options, and practical guidance that policymakers, states, and stakeholders can quickly understand and implement. Emphasis is placed on being responsive to demands, producing scenario-based outputs, user-friendly metrics, bridging science and policy communities, and enabling continuous access to best available knowledge. By doing so, IPOS could become a trusted source of actionable insights that help achieve sustainability targets and address pressing Ocean challenges effectively.

DO: Co-Produce of Equitable Knowledge with Local Communities (Score:15.90, 25 quotes and 13 events)(3rd DO)

"Avoid treating marginalized communities solely as knowledge sources without recognizing their need for knowledge access. Focus on knowledge exchange rather than unilateral knowledge provision."

An important recommendation which relates to IPOS services is that outputs must be rooted in inclusive, bottom-up knowledge co-production that values Indigenous, local, and marginalized communities. They highlighted the need for transdisciplinary partnerships, long-term commitments, and capacity building to build trust and ensure meaningful engagement. Multiple workshops stressed involving vulnerable groups, integrating their perspectives early, and ensuring their knowledge is recognized, credited, and equitably shared. Calls to account for cultural contexts, develop inclusive glossaries, and learn from prior co-produced processes emerged alongside the imperative to 'move at the speed of trust' and align knowledge with local realities. By weaving together these diverse

insights, IPOS could support resiliency-building equitable solutions that honor multiple knowledge systems and community priorities.

DO: Act as a Global Knowledge Hub and Broker (Score: 14.80, 22 quotes and 15 events)(8th DO)

"Ensure that knowledge produced by IPOS is comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and perceived as legitimate by all stakeholders."

IPOS was often seen as a central node connecting various Ocean knowledge sources, stakeholders, and frameworks; and encouraged to operate as an honest broker[4], conducting horizon scans, building credibility and legitimacy, engaging multiple disciplines and knowledge systems, and continually innovating. By becoming a global hub, here again IPOS services should add value not by replicating existing efforts but by filling gaps, ensuring inter- and transdisciplinary approaches, strengthening capacity, and providing a trusted space where solutions emerge from transparent, inclusive, and well-organized processes.

4.3.7 Rationale for an IPOS

DO: Deliver Decision-Relevant, Contextualized Guidance (Score:11.4, 24 quotes and 11 events)(6th DO)

"Strengthen within-country capacity enhancement to ensure full local relevance and context-specific adaptation. Provide practical support like training programs and toolkits to help countries implement ocean sustainability solutions."

Decision-makers need well-framed options, defined time horizons (e.g., 10–30 years), and clarity on the consequences of various policy paths. IPOS can identify tipping points, emphasize the Ocean's finite nature, track progress, and raise political costs for inaction. By aggregating dispersed knowledge into accessible, scenario-based recommendations and showing what may be lost if action is delayed, IPOS can ensure that evidence is readily usable. This focus transforms fragmented science into implementable strategies, enabling informed, urgent responses to Ocean sustainability challenges.

4.3.8 Vision and Mission statements

DO: Emphasize Distinct, Action-Oriented Value-Add (Score:12.50, 20 quotes and 14 events)(10th DO)

*"Avoid duplicating efforts already covered by existing international platforms, such as IPCC and IPBES. Clearly define IPOS's unique position and value added in relation to these organizations.***"**

IPOS should clearly articulate in its Mission statement its unique contributions to the global Ocean governance landscape. IPOS must stand apart by providing faster, more demand-driven, and actionable insights that complement existing structures, clearly articulating its unique selling points. Participants emphasize science-based legitimacy, demonstrating how IPOS differs from existing models, and ensuring it is more operational, authoritative (but not overly prescriptive), and context-aware. IPOS should connect global frameworks (e.g., SDGs), show its added value through visuals and benchmarks, maintain a systemic, inter- and transdisciplinary approach, and foster

[4] An **honest broker** in science-policy interfaces is an impartial intermediary who expands the range of policy options by synthesizing and presenting scientific knowledge in an objective, transparent, and non-prescriptive manner. Unlike advocates, who promote specific positions, honest brokers help decision-makers explore alternatives without pushing a particular agenda.

social-ecological perspectives that resonate with diverse stakeholders and rights holders. By proactively setting agendas, offering clarity on how it accelerates sustainability outcomes, and engaging with decision-makers to transform knowledge into action, IPOS can establish itself as a responsive, influential, and necessary body in the Ocean sustainability arena.

AVOID: "Avoid Ambiguous, Prescriptive, or Elitist Language" (Score: 5.40, 9 quotes and 5 events)(1st AVOID)

"Highlight that IPOS aims to make ocean knowledge accessible by using simple language and fostering interactions between member states and non-state actors, which is not fully achieved by existing organizations."

IPOS should avoid language that may alienate stakeholders. Several cautionary notes warn against using terms like 'verified' without explaining who verifies knowledge, suggesting policies rather than providing options, or implying IPOS will exert direct policy influence. Complex, reactive, or vague wording can alienate stakeholders, while elitist or top-down framings risk losing trust among local communities and less powerful actors. Stakeholders urge avoiding overly lengthy sentences, ambiguous phrases, and reactive language. Instead, IPOS should strive for inclusivity, transparency, and clarity to prevent perpetuating existing asymmetries and to ensure that its mission resonates widely without appearing authoritative or disconnected.

AVOID: Avoid Narrow, Politically-Centric or Passive Framing" (Score: 5.6, 10 quotes, 2 events)(4th)

"Avoid passive phrases like 'enabled by access to'—instead, use more active phrases that convey a sense of agency and urgency."

Avoid limiting statements to vague political actions or implying that knowledge alone will spur change. Refrain from passive wording (e.g., enabled by) and do not overlook the influence of diverse actors—communities, civil society, industry—beyond the state. Leadership, political will, social engagement, and bottom-up pressure are essential. Simply providing knowledge is insufficient; IPOS should acknowledge complexities, avoid suggesting that lack of knowledge is the only barrier, and highlight practical support mechanisms. By steering away from a state-centric, passive, or overly simplistic framing, the vision can reflect the real-world challenges and multiplicity of drivers in Ocean sustainability.

4.3.9 Monitoring and Evaluation

"Establish a system for continuous monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of IPOS services to ensure they achieve the intended goals and make improvements as needed."

No highly ranked descriptors emerged for this theme during the consultation period. However, the importance of monitoring and evaluation is acknowledged in the IPOS Handbook of Best Practices, and methodologies and processes for monitoring and evaluation will be included in the draft IPOS terms of reference.

5. Integration into Towards IPOS

5.1 An update of key IPOS elements after the consultation process

Mission statement:

- **Old:** Operating with an inclusive and systems approach, the IPOS brokers knowledge to deliver independent, timely, contextually relevant, and actionable support in response to States wanting to accelerate their implementation of international ocean sustainability targets and frameworks.
- **New:** "The IPOS aspires to strengthen the capacity of States to implement their global Ocean commitments more efficiently, swiftly and inclusively".

Vision Statement:

- **Old:** The IPOS envisions a world where political action towards ocean sustainability is enabled by access to timely, contextually relevant, actionable, inclusive and verified knowledge.
- **New:** The IPOS vision is a world where access to scientifically robust, timely, contextually relevant, actionable, inclusive, and robust knowledge drives political engagement and diverse actions across all sectors towards Ocean sustainability. Essentially, IPOS focuses on overcoming lack and fragmentation in Ocean knowledge, and on fostering collaboration and inclusive knowledge-production as key stepping stones to delivering practical, equitable, and relevant solutions to critical Ocean sustainability challenges. Thus, IPOS will be a global mechanism to bridge a critical gap between knowledge, decision making and implementation, acting as a catalyst for policy action and supporting States and groups of States to fulfil their international Ocean commitments.

Towards IPOS Services:

Old version

3 services could be delivered by the IPOS

IPOS Service (preliminary)	1 Ocean Action Requests	2 Ocean Sentinel	3 Ocean Quick Connect
Key features	This service allows countries to submit requests for ocean knowledge, which the IPOS synthesizes through a science-based, inclusive and iterative process to provide actionable insights and options to countries. These outputs are prepared by hybrid working groups combining scientists, local communities, civil society and private sector experts, and will be publicly accessible.	This service gathers inputs, suggestions, and alerts from civil society, the scientific community, and the private sector on ocean topics that should be prioritized by governments. The IPOS centralizes and anonymizes these suggestions, presents them to relevant states, acting as a neutral whistleblower for crucial ocean issues, encouraging them to solicit the IPOS through services 1 and 3 on these topics.	This service provides rapid response to urgent requests from countries needing quick access to synthetized, verified information on ocean topics. For instance, it can assist countries delegations in preparing a neutral and accurate knowledge base necessary for international negotiations.
Target users	Countries and intergovernmental organisations	Civil society, scientific community, and private sector	Countries and intergovernmental organisations
Timeline for outputs	Up to 12 months after the request is prioritised by the IPOS	Report made to states every 6 months	Weeks

New version

What are the services that IPOS will provide?

Action Request
- 12 months -

- Countries or groups of countries submit requests for policy-relevant knowledge
- Ad-hoc, hybrid working groups[1] of global and local experts are established
- Co-develop peer-reviewed outputs are tailored to the context of the requesting State(s)

Rapid Response
- Few weeks -

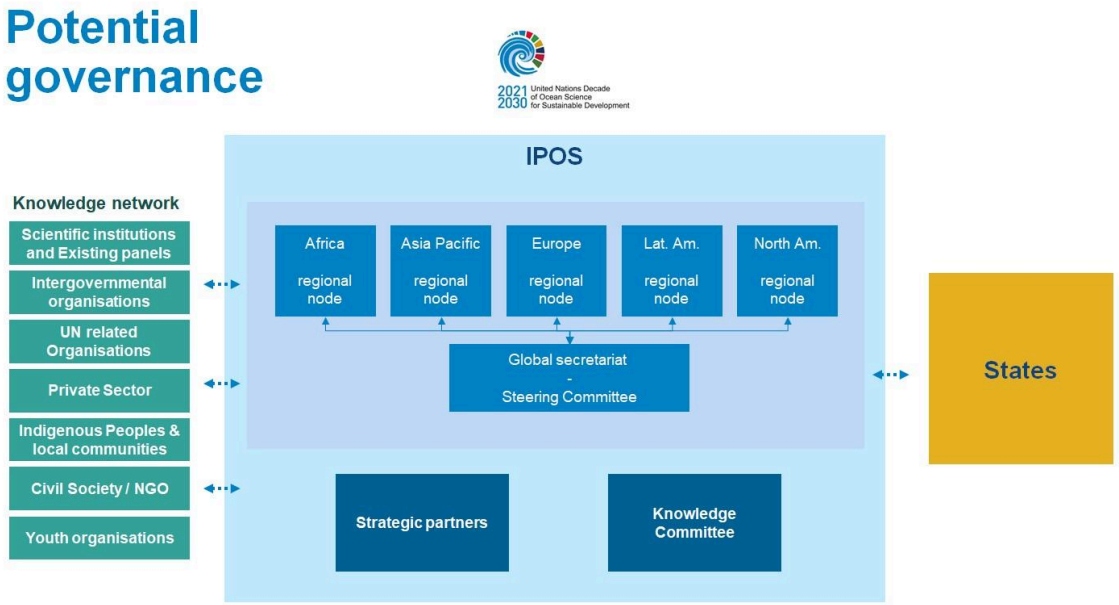
- Provides urgent responses to States requiring time-sensitive access to knowledge
- Synthesizes peer-reviewed information into concise, accessible formats
- Compiles responses and policy options
- Leverages bespoke AI capabilities

Catalyst
- Pull approach -

- Annual global and regional IPOS Insights Reports
- Based on inclusive process for dynamic exchange
- Providing solutions based on shared experience, best practices and emerging scientific and societal priorities

Note: (1) IPOS hybrid working groups will bring together diverse stakeholders to address OAR, and may include experts or staff from existing environmental assessment organizations (e.g. IPCC, IPBES, DOALOS, GESAMP, FAO, IMO), thereby ensuring coherence of knowledge and advice developed and synthesized by the numerous different efforts. (*) Supported by the Knowledge Committee.

Proposed Towards IPOS Governance Model:



5.2 Integration of consultation results into Towards IPOS (Table 3)

Theme	Score	Theme, descriptors and integration
1	**6th**	**Rationale for an IPOS**
		DO: Deliver Decision-Relevant, Contextualized Guidance (Score:11.4, 24 quotes and 11 events)(6th DO)
		The IPOS is designed to **deliver decision-relevant, contextualized guidance, addressing critical gaps in Ocean governance**. IPOS is envisioned as "the first global demand-driven platform linking Ocean knowledge, policy and society." It aims to "accelerate the fulfillment of international Ocean commitments" such as SDG14 and Global Biodiversity Framework targets by integrating and enhancing existing best available knowledge from organizations like IPCC, IPBES, and WOA and expertise from a wide range of knowledge holders. This deliberate choice to build on existing knowledge and to develop close alignment with established entities ensures that IPOS builds on existing frameworks and initiatives rather than duplicating them. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint; Communication Strategy* The three IPOS services (see 5.1) exemplify its focus on delivering **contextualized guidance.** Action Requests, for example, co-develop policy options within one year by engaging directly with requesting States and relevant experts, ensuring that solutions are grounded in the specific challenges and opportunities of the local context. Similarly, Rapid Responses deliver concise, peer-reviewed outputs within weeks, allowing decision-makers to act quickly under conditions of uncertainty or rapid change. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint* Decision-makers need well-framed options, defined time horizons (e.g., 10–30 years), and clarity on the consequences of various policy paths. IPOS can identify tipping points, emphasize the Ocean's finite nature, track progress, and raise political costs for inaction. By aggregating dispersed knowledge into accessible, scenario-based recommendations and showing what may be lost if action is delayed, IPOS can ensure that evidence is readily usable and useful. This focus **transforms fragmented science into implementable strategies,** enabling informed, urgent responses to Ocean sustainability challenges. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint; Presentations* IPOS services will "deliver actionable knowledge and policy options that are responsive to the timelines of decision-makers," filling a critical gap in translating global findings into localized, actionable strategies. This **responsiveness** ensures that the platform offers tailored, practical solutions that are scientifically robust and directly aligned with the unique socio-economic, cultural, and environmental contexts faced by States and regions. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint*

2 & 3		**Mission Statement**
		Vision Statement
	1st	**AVOID: "Avoid Ambiguous, Prescriptive, or Elitist Language" (Score: 5.40, 9 quotes and 5 events)(1st AVOID)**
		The mission statement avoids elitist or overly prescriptive language by using **accessible terms** like "implement their global commitments." Its focus on delivering services in **response to specific demands ensures that IPOS avoids a top-down** or overly rigid approach. Both statements have been simplified to be clear and direct. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview*
	4th	**AVOID: Avoid Narrow, Politically-Centric or Passive Framing" (Score: 5.6, 10 quotes, 2 events)(4th)**
		The **revised statements avoid passive framing**. The statements do however clarify that the objective is to support States in the implementation of global Ocean targets since ultimately decisions to fulfill these targets have to occur at a national level. Notwithstanding, the principles and design reflect the need for a broad, multi-stakeholder perspective to provide the evidence base to support these decisions. The principle of inclusivity is woven into IPOS governance structures, its processes and its future outputs. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint; IPOS Best Practices Handbook* The vision statement **references inclusivity in the broadest sense**, and less specific than the previous version which was read by some respondents as requiring a broader inclusion of IPOS's commitment to bridging diverse actors in Ocean governance. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview*
	10th	**DO: Emphasize Distinct, Action-Oriented Value-Add (Score:12.50, 20 quotes and 14 events)(10th DO)**
		The Mission and Vision Statements have been refined and simplified to reflect **clear framing of the target audience** (primarily States), clear **scope** (Ocean-relevant global commitments) and **value-add** (demand driven, swift, inclusive, effective). The **objective** to accelerate the implementation of global Ocean commitments in support of Ocean sustainability has also been refined. The mission statement—*"The IPOS aspires to strengthen the capacity of States to implement their global Ocean commitments more efficiently, swiftly and inclusively. "*This clearly articulates IPOS's unique role as a solutions-oriented mechanism to accelerate the implementation of Ocean commitments. The focus on "efficient" and "swift" services support highlights IPOS's intention to respond effectively to specific needs. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blue-Print; Communication Strategy*

4		**Alignment with International Frameworks**
	1st	**DO: Align with International Frameworks and foster complementarity, synergy, and non-duplication with existing initiatives (Score: 32.40, 78 quotes and 26 events) (1st DO)**
		The strategy has been refined to clarify that IPOS design will **focus on synergies** with international frameworks, focusing on **avoidance of redundancy and the imperative to complement and build on existing initiatives.** *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint; IPOS Best Practices Handbook*
	3rd	**AVOID: Avoid Redundancy and Unnecessary Complexity (Score: 7.10, 11 quotes and 6 events)(3rd AVOID)**
		The three unique IPOS services are designed to respond to State/s requests with a focus on contextual relevance. This distinguishes IPOS from global assessment processes that primarily provide high-level global insights. This focus ensures that while building on the evidence base of existing global assessments, IPOS **complements rather than replicates the efforts of these existing entities** by addressing unmet needs to practically implement Ocean targets within the State's context. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint; IPOS Best Practices Handbook*
	5th	***DO: Integrate with and Complement Existing Initiatives (Score: 15.9, 30 quotes and 21 events) (5th DO)***
		IPOS is premised on the understanding that coordination between global endeavors would support a coherent evidence base for achieving sustainability targets. IPOS services (see Table 5) will integrate and enhance the best available knowledge including from global environmental reports such as WOA, IPCC and IPBES in a cohesive manner, consolidating fragmented or siloed knowledge for a holistic approach. Alignment of global scientific findings with national and regional reporting processes would enhance synergy and coherence. IPOS **aims to support integration** and complementarity with established initiatives by **embedding itself within the UN Decade of Ocean Science** for Sustainable Development (Ocean Decade). A **collaborative decentralised governance model is proposed as a unifying mechanism**, which includes regional offices within a coherent global strategy, mitigating the risk that a multi-level approach could otherwise lead to fragmentation. The proposed collaborative and decentralized governance model will actively engage diverse stakeholders, ensuring inclusivity and leveraging synergies with other organizations. **Strategic partnerships** will be sought with existing processes (e.g. OECD, youth organisations) to ensure alignment without redundancy.

		Where in IPOS documentation? Towards IPOS Best Practices Handbook; Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint
5		**Governance**
	1st	**AVOID: Avoid Exclusive, Rigid, or. Philanthropy-Dependent Governance Models (Score: 7.4, 13 quotes and 10 events)(1st AVOID)**
		The inclusion of regional nodes "aligned with one of the existing UN regional institutional frameworks" ensures decentralization in the governance model and reduces the risk of centralized or rigid decision-making. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint; IPOS Handbook of Best Practices*
	2nd	**DO: Embrace Inclusive, Equitable, and Multi-Actor Participation (Score 19.7, 112 quotes and 21 events) (2nd DO)**
		Some respondents felt that while the mission captures IPOS's distinct value-add, its focus on States as the primary audience may inadvertently overlook the interconnected roles of non-governmental actors, such as local communities, scientists, and businesses. The rationale for retaining a State centric focus for the Vision statement is the need for Towards IPOS, as a new entity, to retain a clear and specific objective in a complex arena. Towards IPOS will focus on the implementation of global Ocean commitments, which ultimately must be actioned by States in compliance with their globally agreed targets. This decision does not negate that Inclusivity and equity are guiding principles for IPOS. The importance of multi-actor participation has informed the guidelines for the composition of the IPOS governance bodies, voting and decision procedures within governance structures, the role of the third IPOS service in providing a forum for Ocean actors to raise issues for consideration, and the composition of hybrid working groups which will be created in response to requests. All IPOS governance structures, processes and products will be governed by the IPOS Equity and Inclusivity guidelines and the Best Practices Handbook which have been developed during the period of the consultation process. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint; IPOS Best Practices Handbook; Equity and Inclusivity Guidelines*
	3rd	**DO: Adopt Flexible, Adaptive, and Transparent Governance Structures (Score: 19.70, 42 quotes and 21 events) (3rd DO)**
		The proposed governance model that is inclusive, adaptive, and **avoids rigidity** or exclusivity. The collaborative and decentralized governance model actively engages diverse stakeholders, including UN agencies, governments, scientific communities, civil society organizations, Indigenous peoples, and private sector representatives. This multi-actor approach will follow the IPOS Best Practices Handbook and the IPOS Equity and Inclusivity Guidelines to ensure that IPOS governance is equitable and inclusive. The inclusion of a Global Knowledge Network allows IPOS to connect a broad spectrum of experts and stakeholders to co-produce knowledge and review outputs.

		Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint; IPOS Handbook of Best Practices; IPOS Equity and Inclusivity Guidelines The proposed IPOS governance reflects a **commitment to flexibility and adaptability**, aligning with the call to "adopt flexible, adaptive, and transparent governance structures." A phased launch is planned, starting with a two-year test period, allowing for iterative learning and refinement of its services, methodologies, and governance structures. The test phase will "allow the refinement of IPOS services in a number of pilot geographic regions, and ensure adaptability based on outcomes before gradual expansion into other regions." This reflexive approach ensures that IPOS governance can respond to evolving needs and challenges, maintaining relevance and efficiency. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint* The **commitment to transparency** is underscored throughout IPOS governance structures, processes, communications and guidelines. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint; IPOS Handbook of Best Practices; Communication Strategy*
6		**Services Offered by IPOS**
	6th	**DO: Deliver Practical, Demand-Driven, and Actionable Services (Score:15.90, 25 quotes and 13 events)(6th DO)**
		The Strategic Overview underscores the commitment to delivering practical, demand-driven, and actionable services that bridge the gap between Ocean knowledge, policy, and society. IPOS services will provide rapid holistic knowledge and policy options that are actionable and relevant to decision makers. The three core services—Action Requests, Rapid Responses, and the Ocean Catalyst (see Services in 5.1) —are specifically designed to respond to the particular needs of States and groups of States. These services "offer demand-driven, tailored knowledge and policy options" within timelines aligned to decision-makers' requirements. For instance, Action Requests synthesize diverse knowledge streams to co-develop policy options within one year, while Rapid Responses provide outputs in a matter of weeks, ensuring that the platform meets urgent and medium-term needs with efficiency and precision. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint*
	Joint 6th	**DO: Co-Produce of Equitable Knowledge with Local Communities (Score:15.90, 25 quotes and 13 events)(3rd DO)**
		IPOS also places a strong emphasis on the co-production of equitable knowledge with local communities, acknowledging the critical role of Indigenous and local knowledge systems. According to the Overview, outputs will "draw on local and Indigenous knowledge systems, as well as peer-reviewed academic literature and expertise from the private sector and civil society."[5] This inclusive approach ensures that IPOS knowledge products are contextually relevant and reflect the

[5] The Rapid Response service will not have the capacity to include local and Indigenous knowledge as these responses will be generated within weeks. Complex requests which require the integration of this knowledge will be referred to Action Requests.

		socio-economic, cultural, and environmental realities of local communities. By facilitating equitable partnerships between global experts and local stakeholders, IPOS not only enriches its knowledge base but also builds trust and ownership among those most affected by Ocean governance decisions. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint; Towards IPOS Best Practices Handbook; IPOS Equity and Inclusivity Guidelines* Co-production will be guided by a terminology/glossary still to be developed while the process and exchange will be guided by co-production guidelines and principles. *Where in IPOS documentation? Towards IPOS Best Practices Handbook; Towards IPOS Equity and Inclusivity Guidelines*
	Joint 6th	**DO: Act as a Global Knowledge Hub and Broker (Score: 14.80, 22 quotes and 15 events)(8th DO)**
		As a global knowledge hub and broker, IPOS aims to integrate fragmented Ocean knowledge into a cohesive, accessible framework. The platform's Global Knowledge Network connects diverse stakeholders, including governments, civil society, and the private sector, to foster collaboration and the exchange of best practices. By operating across scales—local, regional, and global—IPOS acts as a vital link between high-level assessments (e.g., IPCC, IPBES, and WOA) and actionable, localized solutions. The Overview describes this role as "the first global demand-driven platform linking Ocean knowledge, policy and society," solidifying its position as a transformative force in Ocean governance. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint*
7		**Communication and Dissemination**
	4th	**DO: Craft Clear, Engaging, and Audience-Tailored Ocean Knowledge Outputs (Score: 18.50, 35 quotes and 20 events)(4th DO)**
		The IPOS Strategic Overview prioritizes the creation of **clear, engaging, and audience-tailored Ocean knowledge outputs**, aligning with the recommendation to craft communication strategies that effectively reach diverse stakeholders. The platform's core services are explicitly designed to deliver "tailored knowledge and policy options" that meet the specific needs of decision-makers and other users. These outputs are developed through dynamic exchanges with stakeholders, ensuring they are relevant, actionable, and context-specific. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint; IPOS Handbook of Best Practices; Communication Strategy* The Overview highlights that IPOS outputs will draw on a wide array of sources, including global environmental assessments, Indigenous and local knowledge systems, and peer-reviewed academic literature. Synthesizing this **diverse knowledge base and communicating with tailored audience-centric tools is a clear focus for IPOS.** Outputs are designed to be both scientifically robust and accessible to non-specialist audiences. Communications will employ a large range of tools including storytelling to reach a wider audience, support policy uptake

		and encourage public participation. Outputs are intended to provide practical tools for decision-making at local, national, and regional scales. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint; IPOS Handbook of Best Practices; Communication Strategy* The platform's commitment to engagement and clarity is further reinforced through its use of innovative tools. For instance, Rapid Responses are supported by a bespoke AI system that synthesizes peer-reviewed literature into concise, accessible formats. These outputs are designed to align with "timelines of decision-makers," ensuring they are not only well-crafted but also timely and actionable. This responsiveness is critical for maintaining the relevance and usability of IPOS's communication efforts. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint; IPOS Handbook of Best Practices; Communication Strategy* The IPOS **tone of voice guidelines** requires language to be accessible and multilingual, yet inspiring, tangible and actionable. *Where in IPOS documentation? Communication Strategy* **To be considered**: IPOS communications could be more focused on the Ocean's significance to human well-being, economic stability and climate resilience. Content could also include a focus on highlighting parallels with land and climate challenges.
8		**Funding**
	2nd	**AVOID: Avoid Conflicts of Interest and Unsustainable Funding Models (Score:8.90, 13 quotes and 10 events)(2nd AVOID)**
		Funding is anticipated from "multiple sources including States' voluntary contributions and philanthropic funding," indicating a **balanced and diversified financial strategy that avoids dependency on any single source**. A diversified and transparent financial strategy will ensure IPOS is not overly reliant on any single entity or funding stream. This approach, in conjunction with fiduciary and transparency principles based on best practices, mitigates the risk of conflicts of interest acknowledging that financial independence is crucial for maintaining impartiality and credibility. *Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint; IPOS Handbook of Best Practices* To further safeguard against conflicts of interest in general, IPOS emphasizes transparency in its operations, funding mechanisms and processes. The Steering Committee, which includes representatives from the Secretariat, Knowledge Committee, and Regional Offices, is tasked with overseeing strategy and operations, ensuring that funding decisions and allocations adhere to IPOS's core principles. Additionally, the phased implementation strategy, starting with a two-year test period, provides an opportunity to refine funding models and ensure financial sustainability before scaling up globally.

		Where in IPOS documentation? Strategic Overview; FAQ-Blueprint; IPOS Handbook of Best Practices
9	**n/a**	**Monitoring and Evaluation**
		Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are critical to examine the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the proposed IPOS processes. IPOS recognises the critical importance of monitoring the impact of its services, and evaluating the utility to States. It also recognises that the mechanism will need to retain adaptive capacity to adapt as lessons are learnt on internal processes and structures. A regular external evaluation process will be included in the terms of reference as well as an evaluation of the effectiveness of IPOS outputs measured in terms of policy outreach and against performance metrics established. The test phase proposed for the first two years will allow for adjustments prior to becoming fully operational at scale. *Where in IPOS documentation? Towards IPOS Handbook of Best Practices; FAQ-Blueprint*

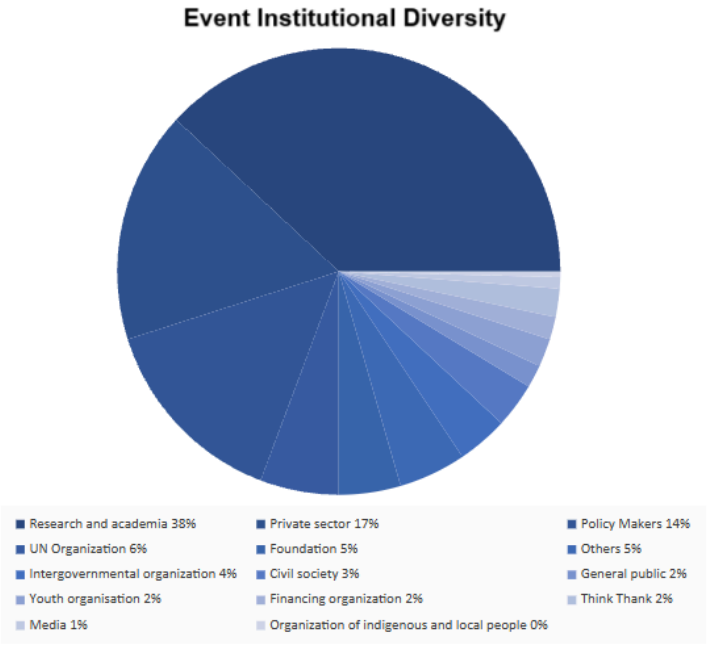
6. Conclusion

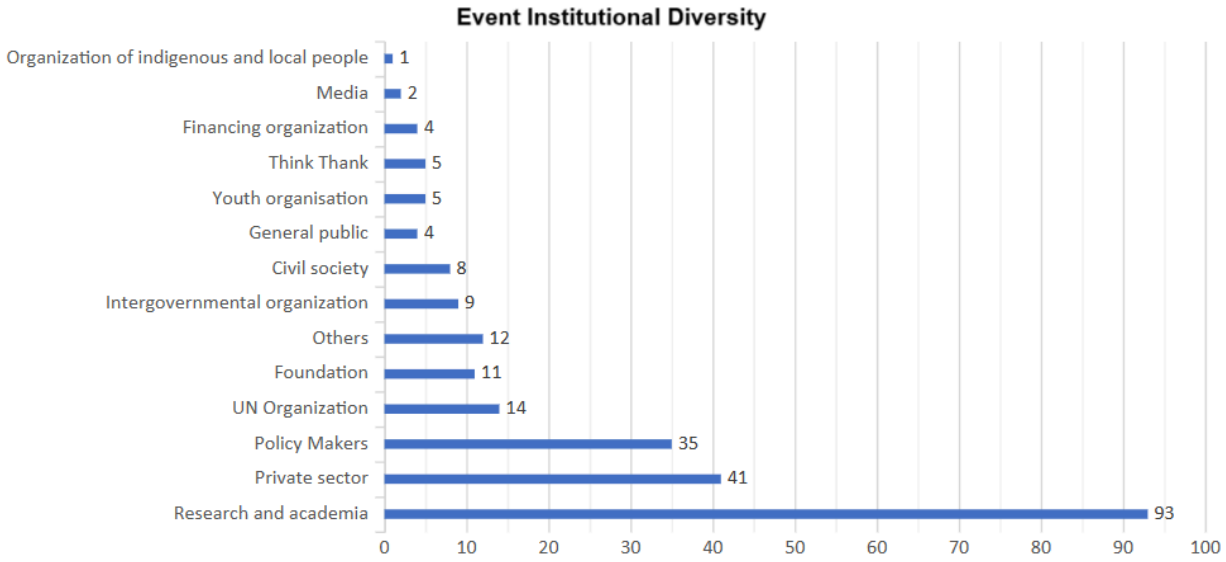
The extensive consultation process for Towards IPOS has provided valuable insights that have fundamentally shaped the platform's design, governance, and service offerings. The feedback emphasized the need for IPOS to complement existing international frameworks, foster inclusive and equitable participation, and offer practical, demand-driven services that directly support the implementation of global ocean commitments. This feedback has been integrated into the development of IPOS, and through incorporating diverse stakeholder perspectives, particularly from underrepresented regions, IPOS is poised to bridge critical gaps between ocean knowledge, policy, and action, ensuring that its outputs are both scientifically robust and contextually relevant.

As IPOS moves into its test phase, it is well-positioned to act as a global knowledge broker, offering actionable, tailored guidance that accelerates progress toward international ocean sustainability goals. The platform's commitment to flexibility, transparency, and inclusivity will be essential in adapting to evolving challenges while fostering trust among a diverse range of stakeholders. With a clear focus on supporting decision-makers through timely, evidence-based advice, IPOS has the potential to drive transformative change and contribute meaningfully to the global effort to safeguard our ocean.

Appendix A

Institutional representation





Institutional details

Policy Makers
Ministère Écologie Énergie Territoire
Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères
Élysée - République Française
Scientific advisor for the Président's special correspondent at UNOC
State Department for Shipping and Maritime
African Union Commission
European Commission
US Department of State
White House Office of Science and Technology Policy
Department for Environment, Foor and Rural Affairs
Secretaria de Estado do Mar
Ambassador Republic of Fiji
Ministry of the Environment of Finland
French Ambassy in Canada
Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries
European Union Mission in Iraq
Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Jubbaland
German Federal Government
European Parliament
Ministry of Science and Technology
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Foreign Policy
Minister of Communication
Ministry for Women
Ministry of Foreign Relations
National Congress
Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
Ambassador of Sweden
Ministry of the Sea
State Department for Shipping and Maritime
Assembleia da Republica
Ministère des Pêches Maritimes
Office of the Pacific Ocean Commmissioner
French Embassy
British Government
Organization of indigenous and local people
Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems – UNESCO
UN Organization
United Nations Development Programme

ECOP – UNESCO
UNESCO
Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea
IPOS / IOC-UNESCO
United Nations Environment Programme
Earth Commission
World Climate Research Programme
World Meteorological Organization
United Nations Organization
SDGs Avisory Unit
World Ocean Assessment
Intergovernmental organization
International Oceanographic Commission
Green Dreams NGO
Marine and Coastal Resilience
Union Internationale pour la Conservation de la Nature
Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
Stockholm Resilience Centre
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Pacific Community
Research and academia (1)
Institut de l'Océan, Alliance Sorbonne Université
Alfred Weneger Institute
Nelson Mandela University
Nelson Mandela University
Centro Oceanografico de Gijon
European Academy of Sciences
Geomar (Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel)
Institute of Environmental Science and Technology
French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development
French National Museum of Natural History
Shandong University
South African Environmental Observation Network
University of CapeTown
SCRIPPS Institution of Oceanography (University of California San Diego)
Université Côte d'Azur
Universidade Federal de Sao Paulo
Centro de Humanidades
Western Indian Ocean Early Career Scientist Network
Centre for Sustainable Development

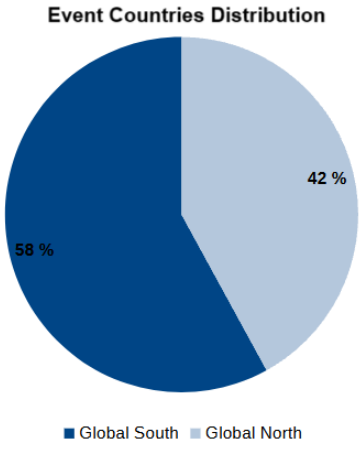
Research and academia (2)
University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh
Unidersidad Nacional
University Santiago de Compostela
Wester Philippines University
Leibniz Centre for Tropical Marine Research
AgroParisTech
International Panel for Climate Change
Institut Pierre-Simon Laplace
King Abdullah University of Science and Technology
University of Algarve
Institut Jacques Delors
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
International Science Council
Institute for the Oceans and Fisheries
National Taiwan Ocean University
Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute
Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
University of Dar es Salaam
University of British Columbia
Pukyong National University
University of Kwazulu Natal
Université de La Réunion
University of Florida
North Carolina State University
Kiambu Institute of Science and Technology
University of Dodoma
Research Institute for Sustainability, Potsdam
Newcastle University
European Institute for Marine Studies
Autonomous University of Barcelona
Wageningen University & Research
Early Career Ocean Professionals
French National Centre for Scientific Research
University NOVA Lisboa
Institut de Ciència i Tecnologia Ambientals
Monaco Scientific Centre
Institute of Marine Research
Institut Océanographique Paul Ricard

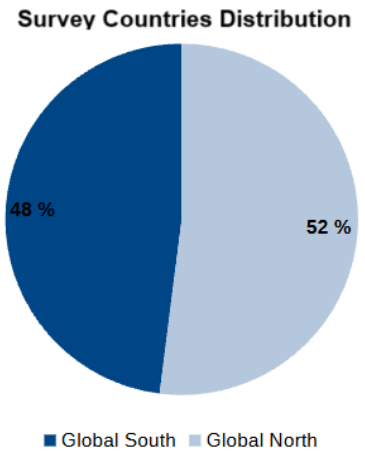
Stockholm Resilience Centre
Universidad Nacional de Costa-Rica
Ocean Nexus
Global Change Institute
Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association
Indonesian Agency for Meteorology
National Research and Inoovation Agency
Paris Institute for Advanced Study
Instituto Oceanografico Universidade de Sao Paulo
European Marine Board
University of South Florida
Université de Montpellier
Simon Fraser University
Centre d'Expertise en Gestion des Risques d'Incidents Maritimes
Ocean Networks Canada
University of Calgary
FQM / Université de Bretagne Occidentale
Institut France-Québec Maritime
Ottawa University
Institut France-Québec Maritime
FiW Aachen
Oregon State University
Oceanopolis
French Research Institute for Exploitation of the Sea
Cardiff University
Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security
Marine and Environmental Sciences Centre
German Marine Research Consortium
University of Washington
Stockholm Environment Institute
CNR ISMAR
Plymouth Marine Laboratory
University of Edinburgh
World Resources Institute
High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy
Institut universitaire européen de la mer
Universidade dos Açores
Finnish Environment Institute
Center for Sustainable Development

Research and academia (3)	Soulfish Research & Consultancy
Norwegian Institute for Water Research	CIMAR
North Pacific Marine Science Organization	High Seas Alliance
European Marine Biological Resource Centre	High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People
National Autonomous University of Mexico	Afriseas
University of Jaffna	SeaChange Project
The African Leadership University	Geo Blue Planter Initiative
Think Thank	Mercator Ocean International
PainelMar	Fecomercio – BA
World Resources Institute	Coopesolidar R.L.
Western Indian Ocean Early Career Scientist Network	Hatch
Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association	OceanExpert
Ocean Governance	Oko-Recherche GmbH
Ocean Hub Africa	ICRI
General public	XST Xpert Solutions Technologiques
Direction Générale des Finances Publiques	Ocean Scientist and Cluster Consultant
Commissariat Général au Développement Durable	Ocean Conservancy
Uganda Police Force	MENA Oceans
LIFE Platform	Innovations Bleues
Media	Entreprises Pour l'Environnement
The Economist Impact	Blue Pangolin Consulting
Ocean Science	AIR Centre
Private sector	Logika Group
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution	Consultant
EcoClimate Vision	ICES
Liquid Trees	**Youth organisation**
International Ocean Science	Eurocean's Youth in Climate and Policy
World Resource Institute	Youth4Ocean
Center for Surf Science	Youth and Environment Europe
Conservation International	Nausicaa
The Nature Conservancy	Global Youth Biodiversity Network
IBF International Consulting	**Financing organization**
SOAHub	Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation
Arena Recycling Industry	Nippon Foundation
JIPO Oceans	Belmont Forum
Mission Blue	Kresk 4 Oceans
Fauna & Flora International	**Foundation (1)**
Ibero Latin American Network of Artisanal Fisheries and of Fish Producers Organization	Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo
AKTEA	Sao Paulo Research Foundation
NOVA FCSH	Africa-Europe Foundation

Foundation (2)
Ocano Azul Foundation
Oceanographic Institute, Prince Albert I of Monaco Foundation
World Wildlife Fund France
World Wild Fund Sweden
Africa-Europe Foundation
Global Fund for Coral Reefs
Ocean & Climate Platform
Foundation for Research in Biodiversity
Civil society
Environmental Consultant
Independent Consultants
Low Impact Fishers of Europe

Geographic distribution





Summary table

Event & Date	Number of participants	Countrie(s) provenance	Represented institutions
Consultation Webinars : with the CSI in support for the IPOS & 2024	25	France / Spain / USA / Germany / Bangladesh / South Africa / Costa-Rica / Philippines / China	*cf Appendix A for details*
Meeting IPBES-GIEC & 2024	17	France	*cf Appendix A for details*
Consultation Workshops with the Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN) community & 2024	18	France / India / Uganda / Peru / South Africa / Rwanda / Belgium / Philippines / Sri Lanka / Saudi Arabia / USA	*cf Appendix A for details*
IPOS x AEF Workshop - Key Take aways & 2024	11	Belgium / France / Kenya / South Africa / Gabon	*cf Appendix A for details*
Consultation Webinars : with the CSI in support for the IPOS & 2024	25	France / Germany / South Africa / Spain / China / USA / Bangladesh / Costa-Rica / Philippines	*cf Appendix A for details*
Consultation Workshop with the European Commission & 2024-09-18	*Not specified*	European Union	European Commission / European Environment Agency / IPOS
Ocean Panel Virtual Information Session, "Accelerating Action for Ocean Sustainability : Introducing the IPOS Consultation & 2024-07-17	20	USA / Ghana / Portugal / UK / Mexico / Fiji / Indonesia	*cf Appendix A for details*
IRD - Co-onstruction Meeting Notes & 2024	*Not specified*	France	IPOS / UNEP
Key points arising during meetings June & June 2024	16	Germany / Sweden / Canada / Finland / Uk Switzerland / Belarus / China	*cf Appendix A for details*
Meeting Notes DOALOS & 2024	4	France / USA	IPOS / UNO / DOALOS
Meeting Notes with UNESCO IOC & 2024-06-13	*Not specified*	*Not specified*	IPOS / UNESCO IOC
Consultation Workshops with the Ocean KAN community -2024	*Not specified*	*Not specified*	*cf Appendix A for details*
Consultation Workshops with the Western Indian Ocean Early Career Scientist Network & 2024	25	Tanzania / Iraq / Kenya / Seychelles / Sweden / Sudan / South Africa / France / USA / Comoros	*cf Appendix A for details*
Towards IPOS x Germany Meeting Note & 2024-06-19	6	France / South Africa / Germany	IPOS / RIFS / German Federal Government
Consultation Workshops with the Youth4Ocean Forum Community & 2024	7	Germany / Italy / France / UK / Austria	*cf Appendix A for details*
Workshop IPOS x FRB on OOSC themes & 2024	*Not specified*	*Not specified*	IPOS / FRB
Presentation of the IPOS : The scientific keystone supporting sustainable ocean policies & 2023-11-15	10	France / Belgium / UK / South Africa	*cf Appendix A for details*
Workshop on Co-Construction Pathways for Transforming Ocean Interfaces & 2023-04-18/2024-01-24	40	*cf Appendix A for details*	*cf Appendix A for details*

Event & Date	Number of participants	Countrie(s) provenance	Represented institutions
The Gateway between ocean Knowledge and policy action Meeting Report & 2024-03-19	21	*cf Appendix A for details*	*cf Appendix A for details*
IPOS Bridging Shades of Blue Workshop Report & 2023-03-24	27	*cf Appendix A for details*	*cf Appendix A for details*
Feedback - Costa-Rica CISOS 2024 & Immersed in Change & 2024	*Not specified*	*cf Appendix A for details*	*cf Appendix A for details*
Ocean Dialogues - G20/020 Towards IPOS : Shaping Ocean Knowledge-Policy Interfaces & 2024-08-23	*Not specified*	*cf Appendix A for details*	*cf Appendix A for details*
Barcelona Towards IPOS Seminar Report & 2024-10-08	12	France / Sweden / Spain / Germany / South Africa / Portugal / Denmark / Bangladesh / Canada	*cf Appendix A for details*
Shaping IPOS : Southern Perspectives on optimizing the science-policy interface & 2024-04-09	48	*cf Appendix A for details*	*cf Appendix A for details*
Towards IPOS x Canadian Ministries Meeting & 2024-07-02	15	France / Canada / South Africa / Morocco	*cf Appendix A for details*
Towards IPOS Status Update and Launch of the Global Consultation & 2024-07-08/03	83	*cf Appendix A for details*	*cf Appendix A for details*
Towards IPOS Best practices / ACM & July 19	*Not specified*	*Not specified*	ICES
Towards IPOS Best practices / DO & May 17	*Not specified*	Kenya	IPBES
Towards IPOS Best practices / DV & June 14	*Not specified*	South Africa	UNDP
Towards IPOS Best practices / EG & May 08	*Not specified*	Norway	Action Platform for Ocean
Towards IPOS Best practices / FMda & July 03-19	*Not specified*	Brazil	FAPESP
INT6 - HO & 2024-05-24	*Not specified*	Germany	Alfred Weneger Institute
Towards IPOS Best practices / JB & May 24	*Not specified*	*Not specified*	*Not specified*
Towards IPOS Best practices / KS & May 09	*Not specified*	*Not specified*	*Not specified*
Towards IPOS Best practices / SG & Not specified	*Not specified*	*Not specified*	*Not specified*

Appendix B

Data Collection and Processing

Data collection was carefully designed to ensure a robust understanding of stakeholder perspectives. Notes were meticulously taken or recordings made during workshops, seminars, and bilateral or multilateral meetings with UN agencies and States (following all data privacy protocols). In-depth interviews and a global online survey with experts in science, policy, and advocacy at national and international levels provided additional qualitative insights. All recorded material underwent AI-based transcription to English. Human reviewers then verified transcriptions for accuracy, ensuring fidelity to participants' original perspectives.

To maintain objectivity, all comments or presentations made by IPOS team members were excluded during a data cleansing process. This ensured that only consultation participant´s feedback and perceptions were analyzed.

Analytical Approach

The analytical process applied a structured methodology to extract, synthesize, and rank insights from consultation data. Detailed prompting engineering procedures for extracting quotes and categorizing feedback using OpenAI's GPT-4o1 Advanced Reasoning model, as outlined in "APPENDIX X" and "APPENDIX Y," were followed. The analysis rendered identification of actionable advice (DOs) and cautions (DON'Ts) across the dataset and relating them to their respective themes, creating a standardized foundation and a replicable approach to data analysis.

Key feedback points were first categorized as "DOs" (actionable advice) or "DON'Ts" (cautions). These were then grouped into synthetic descriptors that concisely captured key themes and highlighted commonalities across events.

Descriptors were ranked using a weighted scoring system to reflect their importance and relevance. The scoring system integrates three key quantitative metrics to assess the prominence and emphasis of each descriptor across multiple consultation events:

Frequency of Quotes (F): The total number of quotes extracted from stakeholder contributions that support or reference a specific descriptor.

Frequency of Events (E): The number of distinct consultation events where the descriptor was mentioned, capturing its recurrence across different contexts.

Frequency-Event Ratio (FER): A consistency measure calculated as the ratio of Frequency of Quotes (F) to Frequency of Events (E), reflecting how persistently a descriptor was emphasized across consultations.

The composite score formula was chosen to balance volume, distribution, and consistency of consultation participants' inputs. Weighting FER more heavily accounted for descriptors consistently raised across diverse contexts, highlighting their broad significance. This ranking method was adopted to give salience to priorities that reflect both the depth and breadth of participants' engagement in the consultation, ensuring that descriptors mentioned frequently and across multiple events hold greater weight in shaping the final prioritization.

Visualizations, such as bar charts with color-coded themes, were used to present the results, allowing stakeholders and analysts to intuitively identify priorities and gaps within the IPOS framework.

Benefits and Limitations of Human-supervised AI-based analysis

This methodological approach offered several distinct benefits and limitations (Table 6). First, the use of human-supervised AI ensured precision and replicability. The AI-driven extraction and descriptor creation allowed for systematic processing of vast datasets, handling large volumes of information efficiently and reducing human error. Additionally, the ability to apply structured prompts ensured consistency across events and themes, enabling the identification of patterns that might have been overlooked in purely human-led analyses. The weighted scoring system further allowed for nuanced prioritization, capturing both the intensity and consistency of stakeholder input. By excluding team-led content during data cleansing, the analysis retained its focus on participant-driven insights.

However, comparing AI-based extraction to traditional human-based qualitative data analysis highlights several trade-offs. While AI excelled in efficiency and consistency, it struggled with interpreting subtle contextual nuances. For instance, AI might aggregate multiple comments about "inclusive governance" into a single descriptor, whereas human analysts might identify different shades of meaning, such as "regional equity" or "Indigenous representation." Moreover, the AI's reliance on predefined prompts limited its flexibility in identifying emergent themes that were not explicitly coded in the analysis framework. By contrast, human analysts might adapt dynamically, uncovering insights that fall outside predetermined categories.

Another challenge of the AI-based approach was its dependency on data standardization. Variations in phrasing or terminology across different regions or cultural groups may have been harmonized by the AI in ways that diluted local specificity. For example, feedback on "local partnerships" from small island nations might have been subsumed under broader themes like "stakeholder collaboration," potentially obscuring unique regional priorities.

Despite these limitations, the approach succeeded in balancing thoroughness with efficiency. It provided a replicable framework for distilling large volumes of stakeholder feedback into actionable insights, a task that would have been more time-consuming and prone to inconsistencies with a purely human-driven process. Future iterations can enhance this balance by integrating AI analysis with iterative human validation, ensuring both depth and scalability in capturing stakeholder perspectives.

Appendix C

Table 6: Summary of Benefits and Limitations of Human-supervised AI-based analytical approach adopted in the IPOS consultation.

Pros	Cons
• Ensures precision and replicability through human-supervised AI processes.	• Struggles to capture subtle contextual nuances and emergent themes.
• Efficiently processes large datasets, reducing time and effort.	• Relies on predefined prompts, limiting flexibility in uncovering unexpected insights.
• Standardized prompts enhance consistency across themes and events.	• May harmonize diverse inputs in ways that dilute regional or cultural specificity.
• Weighted scoring system captures both intensity and breadth of stakeholder input.	• Transformation into quantitative metrics risks oversimplifying complex responses.
• Visualizations make data accessible and actionable for decision-making.	• Uneven participation across regions can impact the prominence of certain descriptors.