

# World Islands Forum 2025

## as part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> United Nations Ocean Conference

### Visibility for island-based solutions

One year after the 4<sup>th</sup> United Nations Conference on Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) in Antigua and Barbuda, the World Islands Forum 2025 will highlight the risks and solutions specific to these territories at the **3<sup>rd</sup> Ocean Conference (UNOC3)**, co-organized by France and Costa Rica in Nice in June 2025.

The 1<sup>st</sup> edition of the World Islands Forum will be chaired by **Mr. Thani Mohamed Soilihi, Minister Delegate in charge of Francophonie and International Partnerships to the Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs**, and supported by **Mr. Manuel Valls, Minister of State, Minister of French Overseas**.

Islands face **multi-dimensional and structural vulnerability**, and are for example disproportionately affected by the consequences of climate change and the collapse of biodiversity. Faced with the **existential risk** posed to certain island states by rising sea levels and the multiplication of climatic disasters. Shedding light on their **strong climate commitments** can enable us to raise the collective level of ambition, **ten years after the Paris Agreement**.

Island worlds are **unique spaces**, with a **fundamental relationship to the sea**, and are already developing **specific solutions and new models for the blue economy**. As such, they are laboratories of innovation. This is particularly true of **our overseas territories, which embody France's insularity**.

### Mobilizing island states and territories in all their diversity

The Forum will bring together **the Heads of island States and Governments present at UNOC3**, from all sea basins, from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific, from the Mediterranean to the Arctic, Southern, Atlantic and Caribbean spaces. **The French overseas territories will also be given a voice, as part of the dynamic integration of these territories into their regional ecosystems**.

In addition to the UN group AOSIS (Alliance of Small Island States), the Forum will involve a number of regional island organizations and conventions (Pacific Islands Forum [PIF], Pacific Community [PC], Pacific Regional Environment Programme [SPREP], Indian Ocean Rim Association [IORA], Association of Southeast Asian Nations [ASEAN], Indian Ocean Commission [IOC], Caribbean

Community [CARICOM], Association of Caribbean States [ACS], Organization of Eastern Caribbean States [OECS], Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation [APEC], Cartagena, Nairobi and Barcelona Conventions, Oslo-Paris Convention [OSPAR], etc.), multilateral and regional development banks, public development banks (including the FICS network), vertical funds, as well as private players, philanthropies, the scientific community and civil society.

The **United Nations** will be a partner of the Forum, following the adoption of *The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS)*, a *Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity*, at the SIDS Conference in May 2024, and the resolution on the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI, A/RES/78/322), supported by France.

### A political meeting on priorities for the islands

From June **8 to 10**, the Forum will bring together the island Heads of State and Government attending UNOC3, and will allow a number of leaders to take the floor.

Two high-level segments will be organized on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> of June and Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> of June, for the opening and closing sessions. The Forum will consist of four **multi-stakeholder** panels, grouped into two sessions, which will enable the Heads of State and Government and other stakeholders present to discuss solutions to the most pressing challenges.

Stakeholders will be invited to put forward **initiatives for the development of the blue economy and finance**, as well as solutions and investments, for the resilience of populations and the preservation of the environment in island territories, in line with the Pact for the Prosperity of People and Planet (4P), now supported by over 70 partners, and the Bridgetown 3.0 initiative.

In the course of discussions, a number of themes may be addressed to meet the need for island autonomy and economy, adaptation and ecosystem preservation, including:

- The creation of oceanic financial instruments or facilitating access to capacity-building programs, ported to development banks or international financial institutions;
- Multidimensional vulnerability in the context of the work of the Pact for the Prosperity of Peoples and the Planet (4P);
- Risk prevention and responses to vulnerability, for example through the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS) initiative;
- Protection of marine ecosystems and the fight against invasive species such as sargassum;

- Plastic pollution, as part of the ongoing negotiations for the future treaty;
- An educational component, with a focus on marine educational areas.

The **opportunities offered by the ocean** must be put to **better use for the islands**, by ensuring a sustainable framework for resource use. This trend needs to be accelerated by **promoting existing models** that contribute to meeting the needs of islands for **agency and an economy resilient to shocks, enabling their adaptation and ecosystem preservation**.

### Provisional agenda\*

Day	Time	Panels		Topics
8 June	3:30pm – 5pm	Session 1	#1 Vulnerability and Innovative Financing	4P, CRDC, CREWS, Coral Bond, launch of bilateral donor coalition on vulnerability, launch of dialogue between banks and vertical funds on vulnerability, Heritage Watch AI
			#2 Connectivity and maritime transports	Submarine cables, cable transport
9 June	10am – 11:30am	Session 2	#3 Pollution	Global Plastic Pollution Treaty, waste treatment, water quality
	2:30pm – 4pm		#4 Biodiversity and natural resources	Fisheries and aquaculture, food sovereignty, ecosystem services, genetic resources, protected and invasive species, sustainable island label
10 June	12:30am – 2pm	Closing session		

\* The agenda may be subject to change depending on the responses of the invited States and territories.

