



Human and Ocean health are intrinsically linked. The Ocean plays a key role in global climate regulation and is an essential source of resources for human health-benefits, particularly through seafood, an important source of protein, and novel pharmaceutical compounds with high therapeutic potential produced by marine organisms. Coastal areas also promote the “blue gym” effect, mental and physical wellbeing, providing spaces for physical activity and leisure, and offering social, cultural, and economic benefits.

However, adverse impacts from exposure to natural and anthropogenic sources compromise Ocean health and food security. Climate change intensifies these problems, contributing to biodiversity loss, further exacerbating risks to human health. This complex interaction between human health and wellbeing and the health of the ocean requires a transdisciplinary and multisectoral approach, with the aim of identifying opportunities, gaps, needs, and integrated courses of action.

These concerns are being jointly addressed by the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030 challenges 1 (Understanding and beat marine pollution) and 10 (Restore society’s relationship with the ocean), and by the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 14.

In this context, the Portuguese Ocean Decade Committee is organizing the international conference “Ocean and Human Health,” in partnership with the National Ocean Decade Committees of Belgium, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, United Kingdom and the United States of America, the Monaco Scientific Center, the Portuguese Committee for the IOC, the Lisbon Academy of Sciences, the Portuguese Maritime Academy, and the Portuguese Council for Health and the Environment. This event will take place in Lisbon, on December 11–12, 2025.

The conference will bring together experts in marine sciences, medicine, health and social sciences, as well as policymakers, representatives from the private sector, and civil society organisations, for a broad dialogue and discussion of the questions raised by the relationship between ocean and human health.

More information and the full program will be available soon.

This conference is an activity endorsed by the UN Ocean Decade.