

**Global Ocean Day 2026: Youth Leadership & Blue Investment**

## ***Ocean Futures, Financing and Youth Leadership for Future Generations***

**AYLF Global Ocean Day Session | 8 JUNE | 12:00 – 13:30 | 90 minutes**

*If the ocean regulates the future of our planet, why is it still so often overlooked?*

The ocean is central to climate stability, biodiversity, food systems, coastal livelihoods and future generations' wellbeing. Yet ocean protection and sustainable ocean futures remain underfinanced, often disconnected from youth perspectives, and difficult to translate into accessible public conversations. The health of the ocean is deeply connected to our collective futures — even for those living far from the coast.

In order to celebrate Global Ocean Day, this session will explore how **Blue Investment** can support ocean protection, coastal communities and future generations. It will create a collaborative space where experts, young people and partners can examine the opportunities, risks and responsibilities linked to ocean finance, sustainable blue economy pathways, and intergenerational responsibility.

The session is also intended to contribute to the evolving vision of the **Alliance for Youth-Led Futures (AYLF)** by connecting ocean futures, climate resilience, youth participation and practical action in the lead-up to COP31 in Antalya.

### **Strategic Rationale**

Across regions and sectors, ocean governance and finance systems remain too often reactive, fragmented, and underinvested in protection, restoration, and long-term resilience. The costs of inaction are significant and growing, including accelerating biodiversity loss, weakened food security, eroded coastal livelihoods, mounting climate vulnerability, and forgone economic opportunity across emerging blue economy sectors.

In this context, the session addresses a central strategic question for future generations: how can institutions, policymakers, and investors make a stronger case for Blue Investment and sustainable ocean finance under conditions of systemic risk and intergenerational responsibility? The proposed framing recognises that youth leadership and meaningful participation should not be treated as symbolic additions to ocean finance and policy processes, but as foundational capacities that strengthen legitimacy, improve transparency, enhance accountability, and support more future-ready systems.

This discussion is particularly timely as governments, partners, and alliances consider how to translate commitments on ocean protection, like the High Seas Treaty, the sustainable blue economy linked to SDG 14, financing, and implementation pathways in the lead-up to the next climate-conference, COP31 in Antalya.

### **Session Objective**

To position youth leadership and meaningful participation as strategic infrastructure for strengthening preparedness, resilience, and the protection of ocean ecosystems, coastal communities, and future generations' wellbeing, while advancing a stronger value case for Blue Investment, accountability, and multisectoral action on sustainable ocean finance and intergenerational ocean stewardship.

## **Guiding Question**

What does meaningful youth participation in ocean finance and the blue economy look like, and how can it strengthen both ocean protection and intergenerational responsibility? What are the alternative methods to boost regeneration of the ocean?

## **Anchor Talks**

**Siddhi Joshi** – social and cultural impact activist, Commonwealth Scholar and poet, focusing on youth engagement, grassroots leadership, climate challenges, sustainable mobility and Global South-centered perspectives.

**Elpida Dalietou** – youth leader, project manager and policy strategist working across climate action, EU funding frameworks, women's leadership and maritime decarbonisation, connecting high-level policy with youth empowerment and community-driven impact.

**Yves Zieba** – coach and mentor working with blue economy startups, bringing experience on innovation, entrepreneurship, investment readiness and impact in the sustainable blue economy.

**Balša Dragović** – stakeholder engagement specialist at MDR, working across marine conservation, environmental policy, media relations and education for the protection of the Adriatic Sea.

**Ryan Pittsinger** – marine mammal researcher and volunteer supervisor at MDR, working on bottlenose dolphin conservation, field surveys, volunteer training and community outreach.

## **Proposed Format | 90 Minutes**

### **30 minutes — Welcome and Anchor Talk(s): Setting the Tide**

A high-level framing of Blue Investment in 2026, including a rapid snapshot of the BBNJ (High Seas Treaty) implementation and what it means for ocean ecosystems as both a "global common" and an emerging investable asset class. Speakers will introduce how entrepreneurship, blended finance, and innovation can support ocean regeneration, with a glossary "Financial Translator" to make key terms accessible to non-finance audiences.

### **45 minutes — Breakout Sprints: Mapping the Ocean Floor**

Mixed small groups (industry, youth, and general-interest participants) work on a shared "Ocean Floor" Miro canvas, structured around three zones of opportunity-mapping:

- Value Chain — priority risks and growth sectors in the sustainable blue economy

- Accountability Audit — missing links, transparency demands, and greenwashing safeguards
- Consumer & Community Ripple — existing strengths, entry points for non-investors, and shared commitments
- Future-Led Version - youth-generated concepts for blue entrepreneurship

This is the session's mentorship-through-collaboration core, designed to surface investment opportunities and connection points relevant to coastal communities and youth pathways.

### **15 minutes — Recap and Commitments: From Insight to Action**

A collective synthesis of key insights and concrete next steps across three tiers: an industry commitment (e.g., embedding ocean-related risk and impact metrics into existing investment processes), a youth pathway (e.g., AYLF working group participation, blue economy fellowships, or co-designing a youth-led COP31 input), and a general action (e.g., everyday choices in banking, consumption, and civic engagement that support ocean recovery). Outcomes feed directly into AYLF's evolving agenda and strategic positioning in the lead-up to COP31 in Antalya.

### **Breakout Focus**

Participants will be invited to reflect on:

- the principal systemic risks to the ocean
- the ways entrepreneurship and investment can be utilized for ocean protection and regeneration
- alternatives to how youth imagine participating in environmental change and how they can apply themselves
- which financing windows, policy levers, innovative financing mechanisms and accountability mechanisms could help advance this agenda
- what priorities and commitments AYLF, youth leaders, and partners should carry forward

### **Expected Outputs**

The session is expected to generate:

- An **Ocean Map** of different ways to support ocean regeneration through blue investment and how youth could participate
- a **One-page Opportunity Map**
- a **Digital Evidence Gallery**
- a **Public Showcase Webinar** highlighting youth-led recommendations and commitments

### **Strategic Value for AYLF**

This session offers AYLF an opportunity to connect ocean futures, youth participation and sustainable finance in a format that is accessible, collaborative and action-oriented.

By translating Blue Investment into a shared conversation between experts, young people and partners, the session can help strengthen AYLF's positioning around future generations, regenerative systems, and youth-led participation in global climate and ocean agendas.

The session can also serve as a bridge toward COP31 in Antalya, helping identify possible entry points for youth engagement, local partnerships, public programming and future funding opportunities.

***About the Alliance for Youth Led Futures (AYLF):*** The Alliance for Youth-Led Futures is an international coalition committed to amplifying youth imagination and intergenerational collaboration. It unites leading organizations across global health, social design, youth empowerment, climate justice, ocean protection, art, education and digital innovation, including the WHO and WHO Youth Council, Bertelsmann Stiftung, Youth4Planet and Earthbeat, 1GEN, AIME, Rewired Earth, Audiotool, All for One Earth, LunARC, We Don't Have Time, Soulbeegood, Syntezia Sàrl, ARTPORT\_making waves, the Institute for Art and Innovation (IFAI), and The Futuring Alliance (TFA), with more partners joining.

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