



## **SmartNet Online Networking Event Report**

April 13, 2026 (800 – 930, PDT)

SmartNet: *Sustainability of Marine Ecosystems through Global Knowledge Networks* is a UNDOS-endorsed programme led by two intergovernmental marine science organizations, [ICES](#) in the North Atlantic and [PICES](#) in the North Pacific. Through the coordination of the UNDOS team, SmartNet has been affiliated with multiple [UNDOS-endorsed Projects](#), which share common priority areas, such as the Climate-Ecosystem-Fisheries Nexus, Marine Social Ecological-Systems, and the capacity development of underrepresented communities beyond the ICES/PICES regions. This event was the first attempt to gather representatives of these partner projects to learn about one another's other's activities and explore possible opportunities for collaboration with SmartNet and among these projects.

### **Participants:**

SmartNet co-chairs: David Reid (ICES), Steven Bograd (PICES), Sanae Chiba (PICES)

SmartNet coordinator: Chen 'Catherine' Yang (ODCC)

Representatives of partner projects (see the presenters' list below).

### **Shared Resources:**

SmartNet partner project information with respective contacts, and presentation files at this event are shared among members through the link [Network Event 13April2026](#). The meeting video is available here (click the thumbnail) and will also be posted on the SmartNet website ([Activity update](#)).



### **Agenda 1: Welcome and introduction of SmartNet, including the roles of ICES & PICES**

SmartNet co-chairs opened the event and welcomed the participants. PICES SmartNet co-chair, Steven Bograd, presented a programme summary and provided updates on SmartNet activities from 2025 to 2027. ICES SmartNet co-chair, David Reid, introduced the organizational roles of ICES and its UNDOS-relevant activities. They suggested how SmartNet and the partner projects could most efficiently collaborate by leveraging the existing ICES and ICES organizational frameworks (see [Agenda 5: Opportunities](#)).

### **Agenda 2: Introduction of [ODCC: Ocean Decade International Cooperation Center](#)**

The Ocean Decade International Cooperation Center, China (ODCC) was established in 2024 as one of the UN Ocean Decade Implementing Partners. ODCC supports SmartNet implementation under the MOU with PICES. ODCC Executive Director, Zheng Wei, introduced the role and mission of ODCC and updated its activities.

### **Agenda 3: Presentation of 6 [partner projects](#)**

Among the 10 UNDOS-endorsed projects associated with SmartNet, representatives of five projects presented their project summaries. The 6<sup>th</sup> project, Fishing for Litter, had not yet been endorsed by UNDOS at the time of the event, but the team had already communicated with SmartNet and was considered a prospective partner. For more information about these projects, please refer to the meeting video or the respective project links.

- [GISTS](#): Global Integration of Seabird Time Series (William Sydeman)
- [CLEAR Med](#): Tracking ghost gear and Recovery Resource (Randa Mejri)
- [SafeTurtles](#): Developing best handling practices with fishers (Mariluz Parga)
- [SustainMare](#): Protection and sustainable use of marine areas (Kai Hoppe)
- [INCT-BBA](#): INCT Biodiversity of the Blue Amazon (Manuela Bassoi)
- [Fishing for Litter](#) by BiVRio (Maria Accioly, Pedro Succar)

### **Agenda 4: Brief introduction of the newly endorsed projects**

In addition to the partners mentioned above, five projects were newly endorsed and associated with SmartNet in March 2026. Representatives from three projects attended the event and provided brief introductions. However, as the meeting ran longer than expected, the representatives from MOC and GearUP had to cancel their presentations. Please refer to the project links for more information about their activities.

- [MOC](#): Mariculture Overview in the Caribbean (Caitlyn Reid, had to leave earlier)
- [PAB](#): Pampa Azul Bonearensis (Juan Emilio Sala, could not attend but provided a presentation file)
- [SeaToo](#): Sea Too (Miina Mäki)
- [GearUP](#): Gear Up towards sustainable fisheries (Caecilia Manago, had to leave earlier)

### **Agenda 5: Opportunities for collaboration through ICES/PICES frameworks and events**

As the meeting had already run for more than two hours, there was little time for questions for each speaker and for discussion among the participants. The SmartNet Co-chairs confirmed that they plan to hold similar events in the future, and encouraged participants to stay connected with SmartNet and one another through the shared resources.

The partner projects can most effectively seek opportunities for collaboration with SmartNet through the ICES and PICES frameworks, particularly through [ICES/PICES Expert Groups](#). Both organizations have many expert groups with specific scientific and/or strategic goals, some of which share common scientific areas or societal-ecological themes. Some Expert Groups address cross-cutting issues, such as science communication and the promotion of Early Career Ocean Professionals. Collaboration with these Expert Groups may create synergies and enhance project outcomes. The projects are encouraged to explore Expert Group information on the ICES and PICES websites to identify appropriate counterparts, and, where relevant, ask the respective SmartNet co-chairs to facilitate connections with the specific groups.

- [ICES Expert Group information](#)
- [PICES Expert Group information](#).

Once connections with Expert Groups are established, the ICES and PICES Annual Meetings, which are usually held in autumn, will provide opportunities to organize networking events and joint workshops, and showcase project outcomes through topic sessions.

- [ICES Annual Science Conference 2026](#), Sept 15-18, Brest, France
- [PICES-2026 Annual Meeting](#), Oct 24-30, 2026, Nanaimo, Canada

Note that Workshop/Session proposals should be submitted at least 1 to 1.5 years before the meeting, and therefore, early planning is required.

ICES and PICES also co-convene a series of international symposia (see the table below). One of the upcoming joint organized symposia is the “[Global Symposium on Fisheries Management in an Ecosystem Context \(FIMEC\)](#)”, to be held in Penang, Malaysia, in May 2027. Abstract submission will open soon, so keep an eye on the schedule.



**ICES/PICES co-convening International Symposia**

Symposia Series		
Small Pelagic Fish Symposia (PICES led)	Last in 2022, next in 2026	
Early Career Scientist Conferences (alternates)	Last in 2022, next in 2027	
Effects of Climate Change on the World's Ocean (PICES led)	Last in 2023, next in late 2029	
Marine Social Ecological Symposia (alternates)	Last in 2024, next in 2028?	
Zooplankton Production Symposia (alternates)	Last in 2024, next in May 2029	

Besides the above, the next [Ocean Decade Conference](#) be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in April 2027, will of course be an opportunity for joint activities. Stay connected!