

The next wave of science diplomacy: marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction

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Abstract

Science diplomacy is lauded as a catalyst for cooperation in international spaces. International science cooperation is a duty under international law and a necessity in reality. With the international community poised to begin historic negotiations to develop a new international legally binding instrument for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, it is timely to consider what role science diplomacy could play in advancing governance of this vast international space encompassing 64% of the ocean's surface. In this article, three forms of science diplomacy are examined: how international science collaboration could provide a unifying focus in the development of the new instrument (science for diplomacy), what opportunities and challenges this could pose for global ocean science (diplomacy for science), and how scientists, as stakeholders, could help to identify and overcome obstacles (science in diplomacy). Learning from past examples of science diplomacy in international spaces and engaging a diverse group of scientific stakeholders to look to the future would enable ocean science to be a unifying focus for this new agreement.