



The Island Biodiversity Coalition brings island governments and partners together to accelerate island-led climate and biodiversity action and strengthen global recognition of island stewardship of critical ecosystems.

June 24th, 2026

Summary: 9th Island Biodiversity Coalition Meeting

Setting the scene

The ninth Coalition meeting brought together island governments, regional organisations, NGOs, funders and advisers across multiple time zones, from Europe, the Caribbean and Pacific to New Zealand. The aim was to reconnect after a dense month of global ocean and climate meetings and to “connect the dots” between those processes and the Coalition’s work on island biodiversity, climate and oceans, funding pathways, and practical examples of island leadership.

Recent ocean convenings

Members shared reflections from the Our Ocean Conference in Kenya and the Island States Ocean Summit in Japan.

From Our Ocean, people highlighted:

- Strong African leadership and a clear focus on blue economy in the main sessions
- Regional side events celebrating Caribbean progress on marine protected areas and healthy oceans
- Ongoing frustrations with chaotic planning, plenaries designed around dignitary speeches, and limited opportunities for governments to engage donors in substantive conversations about commitments and implementation.

The Island States Ocean Summit was seen as a valuable first step in creating a recurring space focused squarely on islands. Two outcomes stood out:

- A co-chairs’ summary capturing key messages and priorities for island nations

- A pledge of US\$100 million over ten years from the Nippon Foundation to IOC-UNESCO for a sustainable ocean planning and management platform.

Participants appreciated being able to share pain points and innovations in the same room, and to explore how holistic ocean management can support climate resilience, policy and data ecosystems, and access to long-term finance. At the same time, there were open questions about how the new platform will be governed, how regions and coalitions will plug in, and how it will move from ambition to tangible coastal and marine outcomes.

Oceans and the UN climate process

The meeting also looked at the Ocean Climate Dialogue under the UNFCCC and what it might mean for islands heading into COP31.

The Dialogue was described as the product of a decade of work by Pacific and allied countries to bring oceans into the climate regime more systematically. It currently runs as an informal, recurring technical discussion, without a mandate to feed directly into COP decisions, which participants saw as both a step forward and a limitation.

This year's focus included:

- Making national climate plans “more blue” by integrating ocean adaptation, ocean policies and ecosystem-based approaches into NDCs and other communications
- Strengthening synergies between the three Rio Conventions so ocean issues can be addressed across biodiversity, climate and land agendas
- Ensuring that any proposed ocean action is matched with realistic finance, technology and capacity-building support.

Looking ahead, members noted the push to secure a more formal ocean outcome at COP31, building on pre-COP discussions in Fiji and Tuvalu and the COP31 Action Agenda. The aim is to move beyond informal dialogues towards clearer recognition of oceans within the climate process, linked to predictable finance and stronger support for ocean science, data and governance.

Where the Coalition can add value

The discussion then turned to what the Island Biodiversity Coalition and GLISPA can practically contribute in this landscape.

There was a shared sense that the Coalition sits more naturally in the “action agenda” space than in detailed negotiations: its strength lies in bringing forward real island implementation stories, long-term partnerships, and emerging finance pathways. For COP31 and the CBD pre-COP in Fiji, people saw opportunities to:

- curate and showcase concrete island examples on ocean action, biodiversity and finance that can be lifted into global conversations as credible implementation pathways
- use the 20-year mark for GLISPA and the Micronesia Challenge as a platform to demonstrate sustained island leadership and the global relevance of investing in islands.

New finance signals – such as recent philanthropic announcements to close the ocean protection gap – were seen as important to track and connect with island-led solutions that are ready to scale.

Working groups and next steps

To turn these ideas into coordinated action, the Coalition agreed to create a working group structure over the coming months. Four strands were prioritised:

- political engagement and high-level engagement, including a COP31-linked event that celebrates two decades of island implementation and resilience (Kate Brown - lead at present)
- data, reporting and prioritisation, looking at where island efforts are invisible or under-represented in global stocktakes and funding decisions, and what practical fixes might help (Cameron Diver, lead)
- advocacy, policy and coordination, centred on a shared advocacy package, common messaging, and more deliberate collaboration on side events and communications (Amanda Wheatley - colead)
- knowledge products, including an Ocean–Climate–Biodiversity Pocket Guide, to offer partners a concise, usable framing for upcoming negotiations. (Erin Derrington, Lead)

Members were invited to plug into whichever strands aligned with their current work and energy, bringing examples, relationships and ideas for next steps. Notes, supporting documents and a simple action tracker will be shared ahead of the next Coalition meeting on 24 July 2026. Check out leads and group members in the working group link and sign up.

Closing Notes:

9th IBC [Meeting and video link](#); Passcode: 0g&F%8B2

Join the : [Working groups](#)

Next IBC Meeting: July 24th, 2026