



### Virtual Side Event

## Waves of Change: Women's and Youth's Leadership in the Renewable Energy Ocean Economy



#### Co-organizers:

- Ministry of Industry, Trade and Energy, Cabo Verde
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
- The Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centers (GN-SEC) is an innovative partnership that accelerates energy and climate transformation in developing countries.
- The Gender and Energy Compact is a global coalition led by ENERGIA, GWNET, UNIDO, and SEforALL, focused on catalyzing action towards gender equality and women's empowerment in the energy sector.
- Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE)

**Format:** Virtual (teams)

**Date:** 12 June 2025

**Time:** 14:00-15:30 CEST

**Event Website:** <https://genderenergycompact.org/>

**Contact Person:** Katharina Pröstler, E-mail: [k.proestler@unido.org](mailto:k.proestler@unido.org)



### **Short Description**

Join us for an inspiring side event celebrating women's leadership in advancing sustainable ocean-based economies, maritime transport, and coastal community resilience. Co-hosted by Cabo Verde, this event features speakers from the Gender Energy Compact network and passionate youth representatives. They will explore how cross-sectoral partnerships and innovative solutions drive gender equality and achieve SDG 14. Discover stories of entrepreneurship, community-led marine conservation, gender-responsive marine policies, financial inclusion, education, and youth-led activities promoting inclusivity for all. The event will culminate in actionable recommendations on enhancing inclusiveness in ocean energy initiatives, ensuring no one is left behind.

### **Event Description**

The side event "Waves of Change: Women's and Youth's Leadership in the Renewable Energy Ocean Economy" contributes to advancing sustainable ocean-based economies, sustainable maritime transport, and coastal community resilience, ensuring no one is left behind. Hosted by Cabo Verde and co-organized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE), the Gender Energy Compact, and the Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres Program (GN-SEC), the event features speakers from various sectors, showcasing cross-sectoral partnerships and innovative solutions to support SDG 14. Women in coastal developing countries, SIDS and LDCs play a crucial role in driving change and implementing solutions despite facing gender inequality. This event aims to develop recommendations on how to ensure inclusiveness, consider gender dimensions, involve youth, and promote biodiversity when addressing the needs of coastal developing countries to access ocean energy technology, finance, and expertise, leaving no one behind in the ocean economy.

**Event proposal's connection to the Voluntary Ocean Commitments database, such as by announcing new commitments to the database or sharing outcomes from the implementation of existing ocean commitments.**



**Run of Show**

**Moderated by:** Ms. Katharina Pröstler, Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist, (UNIDO)

Time (90 minutes)	AGENDA ITEM	SPEAKERS
5 min	Welcome Remarks	<i>Delivered by the Mr. Carlos Monteiro, Director of Energy Services, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Energy, Cabo Verde</i>
5 min	Opening Remarks	<i>Delivered by Government of Iceland (tbc)</i>
10 min	Keynote Presentation	<p><i>Insights from Ms. Helena Vieira, Coordinator WinBig Project, Coordinator Researcher &amp; ERA CHAIR Holder, Universidade de Aveiro, Aveiro, Portugal</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present data from WinBig Project (blue economy) focusing on Marine renewable energy and robotics- Gender inequality</li> <li>• Personal Journey: Can you please share your journey and experiences that led you to become a leader in promoting gender equality and sustainable blue economy</li> <li>• Role of Women in the Renewable Energy Ocean Economy: Why is it crucial to integrate gender perspectives into Renewable Energy Ocean Economy strategies? How can women’s leadership contribute to a just energy transition in the the Renewable Energy Ocean Economy?</li> </ul>



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenges, Solutions, and Success Stories: What are the main barriers women face in the Renewable Energy Ocean Economy, particularly in accessing finance and leadership roles? What strategies have proven effective in overcoming these barriers? Can you highlight some successful women-led projects in the Renewable Energy Ocean Economy or initiatives and what lessons can we learn from these success stories to replicate in other regions?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Panel Discussion:</b> Women Leading Innovative Solutions for Ocean and Energy Conservation</p>	<p><b>Moderated by Co-conveners of the G&amp;E Compact (SEforALL, UNIDO, ENERGIA, GWNET)</b></p> <p><b>Comments and insights from:</b></p> <p><b>Ms. Amber Hoyte, Operations Analyst, CCREEE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can regional collaborations accelerate the transition to a sustainable ocean energy economy while ensuring women and youth have equal opportunities to lead and benefit?</li> <li>What strategies can help coastal communities overcome barriers to gender and youth participation in renewable ocean energy projects, making the sector more inclusive and accessible?</li> </ul>



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		<p><b>Ms. Julia Tapilatu, Global Youth Leader and Member of the Youth Inclusion Expert Working Group for UN Ocean Decade, Heirs To Our Ocean</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is youth leadership essential in shaping a sustainable ocean economy, and how can gender-inclusive policies enhance young people's role in decision-making?</li> <li>• Can you share successful youth-led initiatives in ocean sustainability that have actively addressed gender equity and created lasting impact?</li> </ul> <p><b>Ms. Evelyn Taboada, former Dean and professor, School of Engineering, University of San Carlos, Cebu City, Philippines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What systemic changes are needed to ensure that women have equal access to leadership roles in the renewable ocean energy economy?</li> <li>• How can we move beyond token representation to meaningful participation of women in decision-making processes in ocean and coastal energy development?</li> <li>• What role do women play in designing inclusive and sustainable marine technologies or ocean energy systems?</li> </ul> <p><b>Ms. Karina Sgarbi, Communications Manager, Global OTEC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can effective storytelling and media outreach help raise awareness and support for gender and youth inclusion in ocean-based renewable energy initiatives?</li> <li>• What communication strategies have successfully inspired more women and young professionals to engage in the marine energy sector, and how can these be scaled globally?</li> </ul>
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		<p><b>Ms. Corinne Dubois from YS Marine Energy Development, an Ocean Energy Europe member</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can technological and business innovations in ocean energy be designed to actively promote youth leadership and gender diversity within the sector?</li> <li>• What role do public-private partnerships play in making ocean energy more accessible to women and young entrepreneurs, particularly in coastal communities and developing regions?</li> </ul>
	<b>Key Takeaways</b>	<b><i>Summarized by Co-Convener of the G&amp;E Compact, Ms. Natália Weber, Project Manager, GWNET</i></b>
	<b>Call for Action &amp; Closing Remarks</b>	<b><i>Delivered by Member State (tbc)</i></b>






### SPEAKER PROFILES

	<p><b>Mr. Carlos Monteiro, Director of Energy Services, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Energy, Cabo Verde</b></p>
	<p><b>Ms. Helena Vieira, Coordinator WinBig Project, Coordinator Researcher &amp; ERA CHAIR Holder, Universidade de Aveiro, Aveiro, Portugal</b></p> <p>Helena Vieira is Senior Coordinator Researcher in Environmental Economics and Sustainable Natural Resources Management at the University of Aveiro/CESAM, Portugal. She leads the ERA CHAIR BESIDE initiative and coordinates a multidisciplinary team focused on environmental and ecosystem valorisation and sustainable business models.</p> <p>Helena manages several European projects, including WIN-BIG, SMARTDEC, and REDRESS. She serves on the Board of the EU Mission “Restore our Oceans and Waters” (2022–2025) and has held leadership roles in European bioeconomy partnerships. Formerly Director General of Maritime Policy for Portugal, Helena has over 24 years of experience spanning academia, industry, and policy. She holds a PhD in Biomedicine from Imperial College London and completed executive training at Harvard Business School.</p>
	<p><b>Ms. Amber Hoyte, Operations Analyst, CCREEE</b></p> <p>Amber Hoyte is an Operations Analyst at the Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE), with over eight years of experience in operations management, executive support, and procurement. She plays a key role in streamlining internal processes, enhancing efficiency, and supporting strategic initiatives that advance renewable energy across the Caribbean.</p> <p>Amber excels in project coordination, cross-functional team management, and developing operational frameworks that improve organizational performance. Currently pursuing a Master’s in Development Studies (Governance and Public Policy) at the University of the West Indies, and holding a Bachelor's in</p>



	<p>International Relations, Amber brings a policy-informed approach to operational management.</p>
	<p><b>Ms. Julia Tapilatu, Global Youth Leader and Member of the Youth Inclusion Expert Working Group for UN Ocean Decade, Heirs To Our Ocean</b></p> <p>Julia Tapilatu, a 24-year-old marine conservationist from Indonesia, holds a master’s in Ecology and Conservation Biology from Texas A&amp;M University and a bachelor’s in Marine Science from the University of Papua. A Global Youth Leader with Heirs To Our Ocean (H2OO) and a member of the UN Ocean Decade Youth Inclusion Expert Working Group, she champions equitable, youth-driven ocean solutions.</p> <p>She founded <i>Our ConservaSea</i>, a youth-led initiative focused on marine education, ocean pollution, and community-based conservation in the Coral Triangle. Julia works to raise awareness, empower coastal communities, and promote sustainable ecotourism—bridging science, culture, and youth leadership for a resilient ocean future.</p>
	<p><b>Ms. Evelyn Taboada, former Dean and professor, School of Engineering, University of San Carlos, Cebu City, Philippines</b></p> <p>Dr. Evelyn Buque Taboada is a senior technical expert and independent consultant specializing in green technologies, circular and blue economies, climate change mitigation, and sustainable development. She has held key academic and industry roles, including Dean of Engineering at the University of San Carlos and COO of the world’s first mango waste biorefinery. An expert in project management and technology transfer, she also serves on national engineering committees. Dr. Taboada holds advanced degrees in biochemical engineering, biotechnology, chemical engineering, and intellectual property from institutions in the Philippines, the Netherlands, Italy, and Switzerland.</p> <p>A well-published researcher, she has received multiple awards, including two WIPO Gold Medals and recognition for engineering excellence in ASEAN and the Philippines.</p>



	<p><b>Ms. Karina Sgarbi, Communications Manager, Global OTEC</b></p> <p>Karina Sgarbi is an award-winning journalist with more than seven years of experience reporting in Brazil, specialising in environmental, health, and gender-related issues. She also brings over six years of experience in institutional and digital communications across Europe.</p> <p>At Global OTEC, she leads the company’s communications strategy, overseeing media relations, social media, video production, and digital campaigns to support the organisation’s global mission and outreach.</p>
	<p><b>Ms. Corinne Dubois from YS Marine Energy Development, an Ocean Energy Europe member</b></p> <p>Corinne Dubois is a senior expert in renewable energies specializing in wave, wind, and tidal power, with over 35 years of international experience. She is the founder and president of Ys Energies Marines Developpement (France) and Are Uira (French Polynesia), companies focused on marine energy project development. Corinne also leads Meteolien, a consultancy in wind and ocean renewable energy modeling.</p> <p>She has contributed to numerous global renewable energy projects, capacity-building initiatives, and academic programs, and serves as an invited professor in France and Polynesia. Corinne holds an Electrical Engineering Master’s degree with a renewable energy specialization.</p>
	<p><b>Natália Weber</b> has a particular focus on coordinating GWNET’s Mentoring Programme Portfolio. She is an Energy Engineer passionate about creating a more sustainable world.</p>



### **ABOUT THE GN-SEC**

The Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centers (GN-SEC) is an innovative partnership that accelerates energy and climate transformation in developing countries.

### **ABOUT THE CCREEE**

The Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE) is an institution of CARICOM dedicated to promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency investments, markets, and industries in the Caribbean

### **ABOUT THE LDC Group on Climate Change**

The Least Developed Countries (LDC) Group on Climate Change consists of 44 countries across Africa, Asia, the Pacific, and the Caribbean, negotiating as a bloc at UN climate talks to secure a fair and ambitious global response to climate change. They focus on ensuring that the interests of the most vulnerable nations are represented and addressed in international climate policies.

### **ABOUT THE GENDER ENERGY COMPACT**

The Gender and Energy Compact<sup>1</sup>, established during the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Dialogue on Energy in 2021, represents a coalition of more than 91 stakeholders, including governments, private sector organizations, academia, civil society, youth groups, & intergovernmental organizations, together committed to supporting a just and inclusive energy transition that is gender-responsive, youth-inclusive, locally led and globally connected.

Despite the critical interlinkages between SDG 7 (Affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all) and SDG 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), women remain underrepresented in energy decision-making processes. Recent data shows that women account for less than 20% of the global energy workforce. Additionally, gender-responsive financial planning across energy projects remains scarce, with only 18% of official development assistance for energy being allocated for gender equality, compared to 45% across other sectors. The limited availability of sex-disaggregated data, coupled with a lack of awareness of gender dimensions, further makes it difficult for policymakers and practitioners to make informed decisions in the energy transition process.

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<sup>1</sup>[https://genderenergycompact.org/assets/2022/06/1June2022\\_Multi-Stakeholder-Gender-and-Energy-Compact.pdf](https://genderenergycompact.org/assets/2022/06/1June2022_Multi-Stakeholder-Gender-and-Energy-Compact.pdf)



**Against this background, the G&E Compact co-convened by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy (ENERGIA), Global Women’s Network for the Energy Transition (GWNENET), and Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL), focuses on prioritizing two primary goals:**

- Ensuring women have equal opportunities to lead, participate in, and benefit from the energy transition.
- Providing women with equal access to and control over sustainable energy products and services