



Advancing Ocean Governance in Africa: Bridging Gaps for Sustainable Development

Drawing from extensive experience in maritime law and ocean governance, particularly within Nigeria and as one of the few Nigerian representatives in the UN Division of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea, this abstract presents insights into advancing ocean prediction science for societal benefits, with a focus on Africa's low-developing nations. Operational oceanography has seen global advancements, yet significant gaps persist in its application and accessibility within African contexts. These gaps, compounded by evolving user needs and the imperative to align with the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, highlight the urgent need to address disparities in ocean prediction science from an African perspective. Key areas for discussion include capacity building, policy alignment, stakeholder engagement, and technology transfer. Capacity building efforts must empower African nations with knowledge, technology, and human resources for sustainable development. Policy alignment is crucial to ensure that ocean prediction science aligns with existing legal frameworks and policy priorities, enhancing governance structures and decision-making processes. Stakeholder engagement is essential to foster inclusive dialogue and collaboration among governments, civil society, academia, and industry, catering to evolving user needs and enhancing service delivery. Finally, technology transfer and innovation are vital for facilitating the adoption of advanced ocean prediction technologies in Africa while promoting local innovation and knowledge exchange. Through this abstract, the aim is to contribute to accelerating the evolution of operational oceanography while advocating for equitable distribution of its benefits for the advancement of ocean governance in low-developing nations, particularly in Africa.

Ifeoluwa Abolade Somorin