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Seeing together the ocean: challenges and contradictions of the ocean decade

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Abstract

Context: The Decade of the Ocean to 2030 was declared by the United Nations through the 2030 Agenda for the Ocean and the Blue Economy. However, the growing economic exploitation of the ocean is negatively impacting coastal populations, recontextualizing the continuity of ancestral ways of life and practices.

Objective: Therefore, it is necessary to understand and analyze the contradictions present in this global agenda. To do so, it is essential to adopt a theoretical-methodological framework of plural investigation that encourages the effective and critical participation of all, i.e., an emancipatory and transdisciplinary framework rooted in other cultures, values, and knowledge.

Methodology: Through diverse praxes, a dialogical space was constructed in Costa da Caparica in Portugal to advance the perspective of the desired ocean. Thus, a bottom-up and participatory tool focused on the theme "The ocean that the Ocean desires", which involved participants from different fields who deliberated on the current situation and problematized the scenario at hand.

Originality: In this way, it was possible to analyze the alignment of global agendas with local demands.

Results: The debates revealed different meanings between the desired future for the ocean and the current trajectory, including discussions around the concept of Blue Growth. Furthermore, there was an identification of the need to reimagine society's relationship with the ocean, incorporating fundamental rights, such as the right to time.

Social contributions: It is suggested that constructing an oceanic societal trajectory requires new directions aligned with the pursuit of a more just and ecologically wise society.

Keywords: 2030 Agenda, blue degrowth, knowledge co-construction, transdisciplinarity, transition zones

Olhando juntos o oceano: desafios e contradições da década do oceano

Resumo

Contexto: A Década do Oceano, 2021 a 2030, foi estabelecida pela ONU, conectando-se com a agenda de Economia e Crescimento Azul. Entretanto, a crescente exploração econômica dos oceanos está afetando de forma negativa as populações costeiras, recontextualizando a continuidade dos modos de vida e práticas ancestrais.

Objetivo: Assim, faz-se necessário entender e analisar as contradições presentes nessa agenda global. Para tanto, é preciso adotar um quadro teórico-metodológico de investigação plural, o qual estimule a participação efetiva e crítica de todos, i.e., um quadro emancipatório e transdisciplinar a partir de outras culturas, valores e conhecimentos.

Metodologia: A partir de práxis plurais, construiu-se um espaço dialógico na Costa da Caparica, Portugal, para avançar sobre a perspectiva do oceano desejado. Assim, desenvolveu-se uma ferramenta *bottom-up* e participativa, com foco na temática "O oceano que o Oceano quer", na qual envolveram-se participantes com diferentes áreas de atuação, que debateram a situação atual e problematizaram o cenário em questão.

Originalidade: Dessa forma, foi possível analisar a aderência das agendas mundiais com as demandas locais.

Resultados: Os debates revelaram diferentes significados entre o futuro desejado para o oceano e a trajetória atual, incluindo a discussão em torno do conceito de Crescimento Azul. Além disso, identificou-se a necessidade de reimaginar a relação da sociedade com o oceano, incorporando direitos fundamentais, como o direito ao tempo.

Contribuições sociais: Indica-se que a construção de uma trajetória societal oceânica requer novas direções que estejam alinhadas com a busca por uma sociedade mais justa e ecologicamente sábia.

Palavras-chave: Agenda 2030, decrescimento azul, coconstrução do conhecimento, transdisciplinaridade, zonas de transição

Mirando juntos el océano: desafíos y contradicciones de la década del océano

Resumen

Contexto: La Década del Océano, 2021 a 2030, fue declarada por la ONU con la Agenda 2030 para el Océano y la Economía Azul. Sin embargo, la creciente explotación económica de los océanos está afectando negativamente a las poblaciones costeras, recontextualizando la continuidad de los modos de vida y prácticas ancestrales.

Objetivo: Por lo tanto, es necesario entender y analizar las contradicciones presentes en esta agenda global. Para ello, es preciso adoptar un marco teórico-metodológico de investigación plural, que estimule

la participación efectiva y crítica de todos, es decir, un marco emancipatorio y transdisciplinario basado en otras culturas, valores y conocimientos.

Metodología: A través de prácticas plurales, se construyó un espacio dialógico en la Costa da Caparica, Portugal, para avanzar en la perspectiva del océano deseado. Así, se desarrolló una herramienta participativa y *bottom up* con enfoque en la temática "El océano que el Océano quiere", que involucró a participantes de diferentes áreas de actuación, que debatieron la situación actual y problematizaron el escenario en cuestión.

Originalidad: De esta manera, fue posible analizar la adherencia de las agendas mundiales con las demandas locales.

Resultados: Los debates revelaron diferentes significados entre el futuro deseado para el océano y la trayectoria actual, incluida la discusión en torno al concepto de Crecimiento Azul. Además, se identificó la necesidad de reimaginar la relación de la sociedad con el océano, incorporando derechos fundamentales, como el derecho al tiempo.

Contribuciones sociales: Se indica que la construcción de una trayectoria societal oceánica requiere nuevas direcciones alineadas con la búsqueda de una sociedad más justa y ecológicamente sabia.

Palabras clave: Agenda 2030, decrecimiento azul, coconstrucción del conocimiento, transdisciplinaridad, zonas de transición

Introduction

At the end of 2017, the United Nations (UN) declared the upcoming decade, from 2021 to 2030, the Decade of the Ocean. With the proposal "The Ocean We Need for the Future We Want," it was announced as a forthcoming "revolution" in ocean science aimed at enhancing knowledge about the oceans through a common framework for implementing this agenda, which is grounded in sustainable development (UNDP, 2023). This initiative has become known as the 2030 Agenda for the Oceans. Concurrently with the 2030 Agenda for the Oceans, concepts such as the Blue Economy and Blue Growth have gained popularity based on the potential for exploration and economic growth through the ocean (Eikeset et al., 2018; Mulazzani & Malorgio,

2017). These agendas share a common discourse focused on the future, economic growth, respect for local realities, and the construction of a sustainable future (Da Ros et al., 2019; Eikeset et al., 2018; Jouffray et al., 2020; Mulazzani & Malorgio, 2017; Shiiba et al., 2021).

However, the Ocean-Human relationship has a trajectory that has been socially constructed over time and does not begin with these agendas. It is noteworthy that until recently, the narrative was based on the vastness of the ocean and the impossibility of destroying it (Ingold, 2011; Lubchenco & Gaines, 2019). The imagery built from this narrative has crumbled in the face of the global reality of climate change (Dasgupta et al., 2022; He & Silliman, 2019), overfishing (Coll et al., 2008), acidification (Findlay & Turley, 2021), and deoxygenation of seas (Limburg et al., 2020). The new narrative continues to emphasize the vastness of the ocean, but now, given its complexity and the impacts already inflicted, it highlights the difficulty of conceptualizing actions to prevent ongoing collapse (Lubchenco & Gaines, 2019). Both discourses justify the lack of engagement with the issue, viewing the current situation as a consolidated reality rather than a trajectory in construction.

While emphasizing the urgency of promoting sustainability and preventing oceanic collapse, it is also projected that the ocean economy will grow more than the land economy between 2010 and 2030, indicating the expansion of economic activities, especially on islands and in coastal areas (Jouffray et al., 2020). Similar to terrestrial economic growth, Blue Growth today is characterized by the concentration of capital among a few large transnational corporations (Ertör & Hadjimichael, 2020; Virdin et al., 2021). It is estimated that in 2018, the ten largest oceanic transnationals accounted for 45% of the total revenue generated. Following the pattern observed in terrestrial environments, there is a concentration of capital in a few transnationals, and the social sharing of externalities such as the depletion of natural resources, pollution, increased poverty, and restricted access to the environment (Virdin et al., 2021). In this same scenario, some actors with close and historical relationships with ocean and coastal regions, such as artisanal fishers and traditional coastal populations, are finding it increasingly

difficult to maintain their way of life (Brent et al., 2020) and are becoming more vulnerable to extreme climate events (Dasgupta et al., 2022).

By analyzing this situation, several authors have pointed out the intrinsic contradiction of this agenda (Bogadóttir, 2020; Kaul et al., 2022; Neilson & São Marcos, 2019; Salleh et al., 2019). Although inclusion and diversity are part of the scope, adopting a development parameter based on economic growth ends up excluding the multiplicity of cultures and ways of life that often rely on worldviews (Santos, 2015) distinct from the hegemonic goal of economic growth (Salleh et al., 2019).

Considering this contradiction, this investigation aimed to problematize, together with the community of Costa da Caparica in the municipality of Almada, Portugal, the ongoing and desired ocean trajectory in a plural manner based on local situationality (Freire, 1997). To this end, this article provides two reflections on the topic: (a) from a transdisciplinary framework to critically address the issue, fostering a collective plural path that recognizes humans as socionatural beings (Restivo, 1983); and (b) from a community assembly held to rethink the ocean trajectory covered thus far and to discuss the desired actions for the collective construction of convergences, i.e., directions aimed at awakening or strengthening the sense of belonging in the Ocean-Human relationship, grounded in respect for all intrinsic life within this relationship.

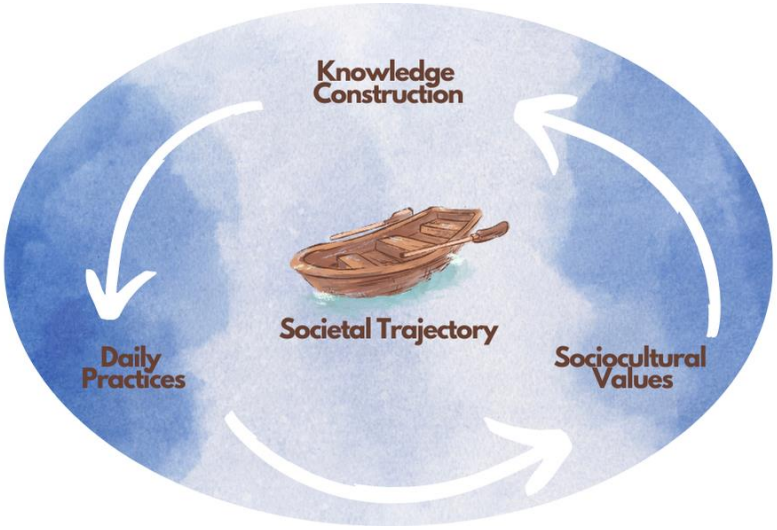
Transdisciplinary approach and the appreciation of diverse knowledge

As a first step, we chose to address some reflections on how the process of knowledge construction occurs broadly within society. Here, we adopt the idea that all knowledge consists, first and foremost, of skills and that every human being is a center of perceptions and agency in a field of practice (Freire, 1997). Knowing does not reside in the relationships between structures in the world and structures in the mind (Freire, 1997) but in praxis, in the relationship of mobilizing knowledge for practical dealing (Freire, 2003; Ingold, 2000, 2010). Thus, it is established by the individual experiencing the world. Therefore, knowledge construction occurs

practically through experimentation, with some guidance or no guidance (Ingold, 2010). In this way, it transcends the dualism between nature/culture by pointing out that knowledge about the environment and, therefore, people's perception of it results from the ways in which people engage with their daily activities and socialization with the environment (Figure 1). Such encounters highlight a positional trajectory in society that awakens or strengthens the sense of belonging (Mesquita, 2023).

Figure 1

Societal Trajectory: Conceptual map of the relationships between sociocultural values, daily practices, and knowledge construction



Source: Authors, 2023.

As previously discussed, societal trajectories either compose/strengthen or decompose/weaken the sense of belonging. Without any naive basis, there is recognition that praxis and engagement foster the process of collective knowledge construction and its potential for transforming reality, guided by and guiding sociocultural values (Mesquita, 2023). Based on this recognition, continuing academic research without incorporating the plurality of knowledge

in studies, being grounded in bottom-up construction, and seeking pathways for the confluence of knowledge are incoherent (Franco & Mesquita, 2019).

Pathways for Confluent Knowledge Investigation

This topic begins by seeking ways to promote science without ignoring its own limits and impacts. It also seeks to distance itself from scientific practices that marginalize and/or colonize other forms of knowledge.

As a first approach, critical ethnography (Gérin-Lajoie, 2009) is introduced, particularly the developing concept of *sea-ing*, “a movement proposed as an alternative pathway to demystify, resignify, or merely complement the way humans perceive themselves in their surroundings, the importance of situationality, and the relevance of intellectual justice for egalitarian societies” (Mesquita, 2023). In this movement, critical ethnography practices were similar to the movement of the sea. Rather than merely collecting and analyzing data, it chooses to reconstruct the path up to the present moment, observing the timeline as a movement, a sequence of waves, without a linear structure (Mesquita, 2023). Thus, critical ethnography, by operating within structural conditions and recognizing the importance of situationality that limits individuals and their capacity for self-realization, is oriented toward intellectual justice and egalitarian societies, fostering changes in societal trajectories.

Adding to this framework, the transdisciplinary approach, which seeks to construct a more integrative science involving diverse forms of knowledge and understanding, is highlighted (Russell et al., 2008). Particularly in the socioenvironmental sciences, this approach allows for the exploration of cause–effect relationships and the development of strategic options for relevant public policies, which have proven insufficient and less robust from a conventional scientific perspective than transdisciplinary investigations (Renn, 2021).

Although transdisciplinary investigations have increased the number of publications in recent years, a widely accepted consensus definition is still being developed by different academic schools. In a recent review on the topic, Lawrence et al. (2022) identified common

characteristics of transdisciplinary investigations that are not always explicit in their definition. These are (a) efforts to transcend disciplinary boundaries; (b) appreciation of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary academic investigations; (c) involvement of social actors as participants in the process; (d) focus on real, socially relevant problems; (d) proactive support for action or intervention, seeking transformative outcomes; (d) pursuit of the common good; and (g) reflexivity, understood by the authors as the conscious examination of the broader context to ensure the compatibility of knowledge and tasks throughout the project's development. The aspects outlined in points (c) to (g) have become more prominent since the 2000s, especially with the inclusion of non-academic actors as active participants in investigations (Lawrence et al., 2022). This review also focuses on this type of transdisciplinary investigation, developed alongside non-academic actors, given the importance of recognizing diverse forms of knowledge, including non-academic ones, as previously explained.

Among the challenges encountered in this approach, the difficulty of promoting genuine participation with the engagement of all actors stands out. In this regard, the proposal of co-constructed research has been seen as a highly effective approach to overcoming this issue (Chambers et al., 2021; Cooke et al., 2021; Lawrence et al., 2022; Partelow et al., 2020; Reid et al., 2021; Renn, 2021). The co-construction of knowledge involves collaborative, inclusive, and respectful and engaged research. This can occur at all stages of the research process, from establishing the question, based on the real demands of society, to conducting the study, data collection methods, interpreting results, and applying the generated knowledge. This final step may lead to changes in the initial question and adjustments in the conduct of the research (Cooke et al., 2021). This also implies less control over the research process (Reid et al., 2021).

This dialogical research presents the intrinsic challenge of promoting horizontality in its execution. This implies recognizing the power asymmetries present among societal actors, involving social positions, gender, and race, among other factors. The research construction must balance these asymmetries to promote a genuine opportunity for participation. This issue

was brilliantly addressed by Paulo Freire in his systematization of cultural circles (Freire, 2003). Cultural circles are based on the principles of problematization and the protagonism of the involved actors (Freire, 2003). Initially, they were part of the adult literacy process, but today, they have been used in other stages of education as well as in other disciplines (Carneiro et al., 2014; Souza et al., 2021). This entire framework has the potential to promote the decolonization of knowledge (Dilger et al., 2016; Leff, 2015; Salleh et al., 2019) by addressing other forms of knowledge in a horizontal and transversal manner.

This understanding of knowledge inherently recognizes that there are societies guided by other sociocultural values, bringing different worldviews. However, this knowledge, often considered traditional or local, is frequently associated with being outdated and in need of further development (Dilger et al., 2016).

This perception is deeply rooted in the idea of economic growth propagated by the concept of 'development,' which aims to bring prosperity and comfort to all. However, the reality is that this development has failed to provide widespread well-being and wealth; instead, it has perpetuated a system where a few accumulate wealth at the expense of many (Salleh et al., 2019). In this context, it is necessary to reevaluate traditional practices and move away from the entrenched ideal of unidirectional development. To this end, the idea of plurality, as expressed in the concept of the pluriverse, is seen as promising. The pluriverse offers a cross-cultural compilation of concrete concepts, incorporating diverse knowledge and experiences based on different worldviews and/or values to be pursued, aligned with the ideal of an 'ecologically wise and socially equitable society' as a guide for societal trajectories (Salleh et al., 2019).

This is not a proposal against the Western model of unidirectional development but rather a recognition that other forms of knowledge, worldviews, and ideals can also be valid and are often more aligned with common well-being (Kaul et al., 2022; Neilson & São Marcos, 2019; Salleh et al., 2019). It is emphasized that poverty and environmental degradation are not mere byproducts or failures of this development paradigm; they are intrinsic results of its operation,

which is essentially based on inequality (Krenak, 2022).

Some Lenses to See Development

The frameworks of cross-cutting and co-constructed research allow for a critical examination of the hegemonic model of development and the consolidation of science. Additionally, it is important to analyze the situationality of the research groups in relation to this developmental paradigm. For this purpose, support is sought from analyses promoted by Political Ecology (Leff, 2015; Martínez Alier, 2018), Environmental Justice (Martinez-Alier, 2017), and Blue Degrowth (Ertör & Hadjimichael, 2020).

Political ecology has a broad framework and can be understood from several perspectives. Among these, one can highlight the critique of the current economic and developmental model, which is driven by an intrinsic urge to possess, control, and accumulate, emphasizing the urgency of considering ways to rebuild based on the reappropriation of nature and the reterritorialization of cultures, both materially and symbolically (Leff, 2006). In this context, political ecology contributes by studying and proposing ways to deconstruct the current economy (Leff, 2015). Another perspective, now focused on Latin America and the Global South, views its role as a process of reflection-action, as a counterhegemonic science, and as a promoter of the dialog of knowledge (Machado Aráoz, 2017). A broader perspective focuses on the analysis of poverty and environmental degradation as part of distributive ecological conflicts, with ecological distribution understood as the social, spatial, and temporal patterns of access to natural resources and environmental services. Social, cultural, economic, political, and technological factors are considered determinants of ecological distribution (Martínez-Alier, 2018). Here, there is a particular interest in analyzing the use of power to secure access to resources and environmental services or to shift the costs of pollution according to ethnicity, social class, caste, or gender (Martinez-Alier, 2017). Therefore, it is equally a movement for environmental justice, linking environmental justice with political ecology (Martinez-Alier, 2017).

The proposal of economic degrowth aligns with the accumulation of research and

evidence from both the fields of political ecology and environmental justice. The former clearly indicates that economic growth is incompatible with environmental sustainability or an 'ecologically wise' society, while the latter highlights the perversities in the social asymmetry between the gains from environmental exploitation, which benefit a few, and the 'externalities' it promotes, causing enormous damage to traditional and/or low-income populations (Asara et al., 2015; Demaria et al., 2013; Martinez-Alier, 2017).

Despite theoretically promising sustainable development, Blue Degrowth has emerged as a critical interpretation of the global Blue Growth strategy, which, in practice, results in problems and damage similar to those caused by terrestrial economic growth. There are studies related to blue environmental (In)justness (Bennett, 2018; Bennett et al., 2021; Chuenpagdee, 2020; Schreiber et al., 2022) as well as the need to promote Blue Degrowth, given the incompatibility of growth agendas with sustainability (Bogadóttir, 2020; Ertör & Hadjimichael, 2020; Hadjimichael, 2018).

Thus, considering the crisis of the developmental model, both terrestrial and now marine, there is a need to rethink decisions and paradigms and to realign trajectories based on the evidence that without a structural sociocultural transformation, technological and managerial innovations will not suffice to solve the current crisis (Salleh et al., 2019). To this end, the construction of the Ocean Parliament was sought.

Ocean Parliament

The Ocean Parliament is a tool developed by the Ocean Literacy Observatory (http://olo.blue/parlamento-oceanico/), adapted from the proposal by the Zuloark Architecture Collective, which has promoted dialogical and participatory sessions in transdisciplinary and transcultural spaces. It is open to all civil society and promotes a movement of countercolonization (Santos, 2015) of the Ocean. The goal has been to adopt the Ocean Parliament as a proactive pedagogical and research tool, not only in the constitution of an Ocean Charter—an organic and constantly evolving manifesto, initiated in its First Session held

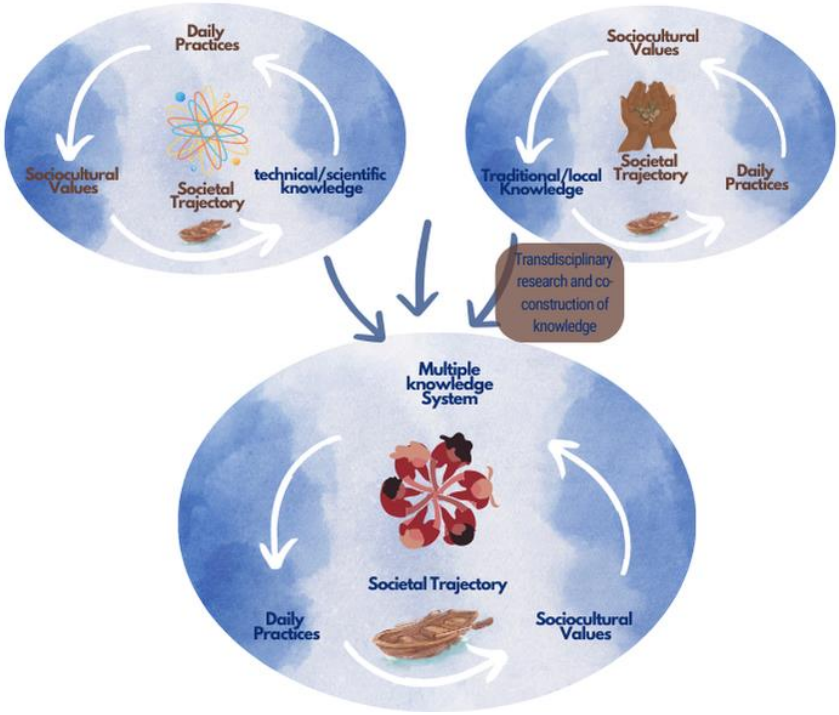
in 2018—but also to sustain a discussion of frontier knowledge, fostering a new consciousness about the Right to the Ocean. The adopted theme was 'The Ocean that the Ocean Wants,' aiming from the invitation to dialog to reflect on the sense of belonging to the Ocean.

As initially presented, the narratives surrounding the Ocean have done little to promote engagement and a sense of belonging, whether due to the maxim of the ocean's immensity and the impossibility of anthropic action affecting it—which has proven fallacious—or due to the global realities of climate change, overfishing, acidification, and deoxygenation of the seas, which generates a feeling of helplessness (Lubchenco & Gaines, 2019). Both perspectives fail to understand the oceanic reality as part of an ongoing trajectory.

In this sense, the Ocean Parliament also serves as an important tool during the Decade of Ocean Science, which focuses on the science needed for the future we want. As previously mentioned, the socioenvironmental crisis demands transversality and different forms of knowledge for its resolution and cannot be detached from the ethical commitment to avoid the colonization of knowledge. By adopting a co-construction approach and weaving the transdisciplinarity of knowledge, it seeks to include perspectives and knowledge often not represented in the Blue Growth proposal. Thus, it also serves as a tool for those previously excluded to assert their place within the political arena of claims (Rancière, 1996) (Figure 2).

Figure 2

In a society where some are 'non-part' of the whole, there is a misunderstanding about 'knowledge.' Here, co-constructed and transdisciplinary research is relevant for weaving together diverse forms of knowledge and fostering changes in societal trajectories



Source: Authors, 2023.

How does the Oceanic Parliament happen?

Initially, it was necessary to consider the venue and structure for the activity. In principle, there should be (a) chairs arranged in a half-moon or circle, (b) an object where keywords of the debate can be noted, and (c) a comfortable chair, thus fulfilling the physical structure requirement. Once the structure for the activity is ensured, the preparation phase for the day and invitations begins.

Ideally, there are (1) a facilitator to lead and energize the discussion, who is tasked with providing initial reflection on the day and a point of dialog among other guests, fostering the

conversation that starts at the center and reverberates among all members of the circle. This person needs to have deep knowledge of the topic being discussed and the day's dynamics, as well as be comfortable facilitating the debate among participants. Someone actively engaged in the topic with relevant knowledge, whether traditional, local, technical, or scientific, is sought; (2) dynamic guests, two or three individuals to share their experiences and perspectives on the topic, challenging other participants to engage in the event's proposal. These individuals should be able to delve into topics with reflective depth to promote individual and collective reflection on the theme. The diversity of knowledge, whether traditional, local, technical, or scientific, enriches the discussion, and careful consideration should be given to finding diverse profiles; and (3) focal guests, who will contribute their experience to the dialog among all participants and to the systematization of the ideas discussed in discussion groups. Once again, individuals with knowledge and experience related to the theme, whether traditional, local, technical, or scientific, should be capable of providing insights into the topic and facilitating the exchange of experiences and knowledge. Thus, the selection and acceptance of these individuals are important steps that, once secured, allow for the event's promotion and invitation for participation, aiming to involve diverse groups that can contribute to the dialogical circle.

The Ocean Parliament lasts for two hours, during which time initial speeches should be allocated to those tasked with energizing the discussions. Following this initial reflection, participants are invited to organize into groups, along with individuals who have agreed to foster and systematize the debate. This discussion stage lasts for approximately half an hour, after which everyone returns to the parliament for a collective debate on the reflections of each group. To synthesize the debate, participants create a visual representation. This stage lasts for approximately half an hour, with a final time for everyone to individually sit in the parliament's chair and state their opinion on (1) a right of the ocean that needs to be protected; (2) a right that needs to be abolished; and (3) a right that still needs to be established. This last stage should contribute to the Ocean Rights Charter.

In this II cycle of the Ocean Parliament, a three-tiered bench in a half-moon format was used, allowing all participants to be accommodated, along with a whiteboard and a chair for final reflection. The selection and invitation of facilitators and promoters were performed carefully, and sufficient lead time was provided for their preparation. The promotion efforts aimed to reach diverse groups.

The ocean that the Ocean desires

The opening speech aimed to welcome the participants, emphasizing the importance of each individual present for the realization of the Ocean Parliament and therefore the need for active listening and engagement in discussions. The concept of the Ocean Parliament was introduced, originating from the Urban Parliament (https://zuloark.com/projects/universal-declaration-of-urban-rights/) of the Madrid-based architecture collective Zuloark. In Madrid, this urban parliament marked the beginning of a movement to redefine urban space, particularly collective spaces. Throughout the collective's journey, various spaces were occupied and redefined, such as abandoned squares, which were then self-managed and collectively reclaimed, reinforcing the notion of living architecture (https://arquitecturaviva.com/works/la-noche-en-blanco-at-parque-del-gallinero-madrid).

Following the historical background of the Parliament proposal, the day's dynamics were presented, with the final step of declaring rights being omitted. The intention was for this final reflection to occur only after a series of exchanges on the topic.

Subsequently, a perspective on society's relationship with the Ocean was discussed. This paper provides a brief overview of the concept of Blue Growth, the pursuit of "sustainable" exploitation juxtaposed with the reality of ocean acidification, rising temperatures and sea levels. Among the reflections, the potential role of the Decade of the Ocean was addressed. The day's invitation was to contemplate the ocean that the Ocean desires, challenging participants to think beyond anthropocentric roles, considering other life forms, including non-human ones, and recognizing that envisioning what is desired is the first step toward realization.

Some Views of the Ocean

The first contribution reflected on the processes of change and resignification. Through an examination of the evolutionary trajectory of cetaceans, which transitioned from a terrestrial ancestor to a fully aquatic life cycle, participants were encouraged to contemplate this movement from land to water from a human perspective. A second provocation was to reverse the gaze and consider the movement from water to land, focusing on whaling and the terrestrial structures established as a result, such as whaling stations. In the case of Portugal, in the Azores Islands, the first structures date back to the early 19th century and were modernized over time until the prohibition of whaling due to the risk of species extinction. Today, some of these old stations have been completely refurbished and repurposed as museums. These changes in physical structures reflect more significant shifts in society, such as the societal perception of what is sacred, changes in sociocultural values, and consequently, the way society relates to the ocean (Brown & Humberstone, 2016). Finally, the need for more holistic and integrated knowledge as a driver for the choices we make and the forms of connection we seek in Western society posed a challenge.

The second presentation reflected on the necessity but also the difficulty, of engaging youth in this topic. The perspective of climate change as an immutable fact to which absolutely nothing can be done deserves attention. However, this opens up other reflections. One of these factors is increasing vulnerability, which affects society in different forms and at different intensities but impacts everyone (Bennett, 2019). This underscores the need to seek alternative pathways, incorporating diverse knowledge and perspectives that do not solely aim for economic growth and the development paradigm (Salleh et al., 2019). In this regard, it is important to consider the role of academia as a space for change, which needs to advance in the debate and incorporation of alternative perspectives and knowledge, but in practice, there are immense difficulties in establishing another type of knowledge construction.

Facilitated Dialogs

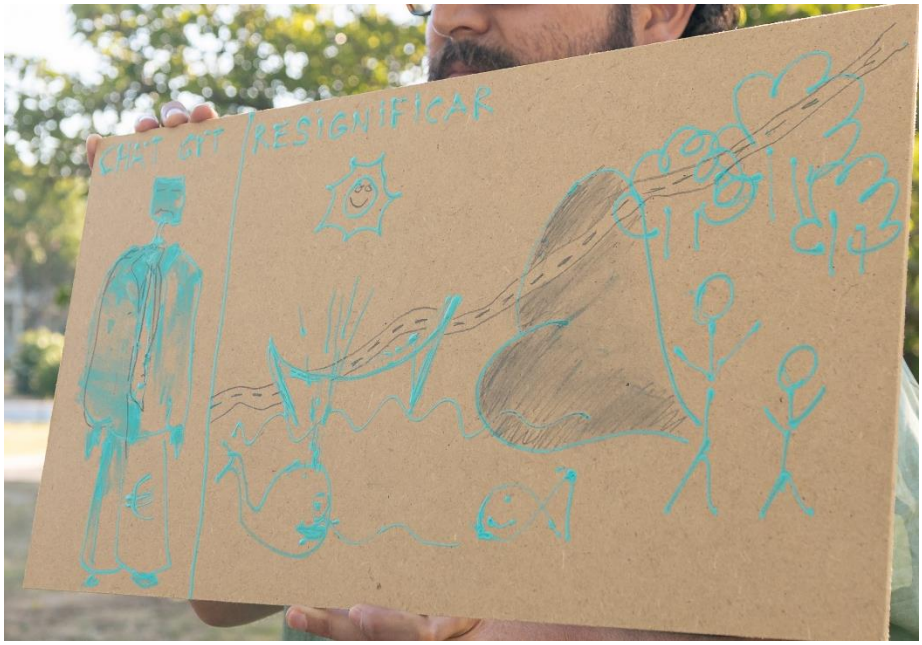
Following the sharing of these reflections, participants were invited to divide into smaller groups to facilitate dialog and provide an opportunity for everyone present to participate. The groups were divided based on three focal guests, with the facilitators forming a separate group.

The Science We Desire

The group reflected on the socioenvironmental challenges faced today, such as climate change and inequalities in the impact of these changes on populations, which ultimately exacerbate social inequalities. From the perspective of these socioenvironmental challenges, there is an awareness that no single knowledge alone can overcome this challenge (Figure 3). At the same time, academia today struggles to adopt transdisciplinary practices and projects capable of incorporating non-academic knowledge, as well as respecting the necessary time for such investigations. It follows a more comfortable, mechanized, and computerized path of learning processes, without primarily questioning for whom that knowledge is being produced and how this knowledge generation process can provoke changes. These questions do not always address the "gap" in knowledge and are often based on local experiences. Although there are other ways of doing science more aligned with these purposes, it is important to highlight the need to reframe the space for generating knowledge aligned with the desired future, which is more egalitarian and ecologically sensible. In this sense, science aimed at the Decade of the Ocean demands transdisciplinary studies and transformative co-construction processes (Nielson & São Marcos, 2019; Renn et al., 2021) involving worldviews (Santos, 2015) connected to values of "good living" (Acosta, 2016) and higher quality of life (Salleh et al., 2019).

Figure 3

Photograph of the drawing generated by the group, explicitly stating the need for reframing



Source: Authors, 2023.

Artisanal Fishery Space

One of the groups reflected on the challenges of artisanal fishing within the context of Blue Growth. Artisanal fishing has never received much attention from public authorities, despite being a centuries-old activity. The current situation shows a moment of greater crisis, where European Union regulations have not favored the activity. In contrast, by prohibiting direct sales to consumers, they have increased their dependence on intermediaries, who in turn have gained greater power to set low prices. The low profitability of the activity has jeopardized its continuity and is also related to the reduction of fish stocks, which are in completely asymmetrical competition with industrial fishing. Ultimately, the group chose to display a blank board (Figure 4), representing the invisibility of artisanal fishers, as well as the significant challenges to be faced.

Figure 4

Photograph of the blank board, symbolizing the invisibility of artisanal fishing

Source: Authors, 2023.

The issues highlighted reinforce the challenges posed by the Blue Growth Agenda. Small-scale fisheries (SSFs) are crucial for the livelihood of coastal communities worldwide, representing approximately 40% of global fish production. These fisheries directly employ 60 million people, accounting for 90% of those involved in capture fisheries globally (FAO, 2020). Despite their undeniable importance, decision makers often lack adequate public policies for SSFs (FAO, 2020; Schuhbauer et al., 2020). Studies on the implementation of EU fisheries legislation underscore the need to both reduce and expand the rights of artisanal fishers, which are minimally addressed in the new regulations (Hadjimichael, 2018). Moreover, attempts to reconcile capital accumulation from marine exploitation with the promotion of social and environmental well-being often result in policies that exclude artisanal fisheries (Brent et al., 2020). Other studies show how this global agenda has led to environmental injustices detrimental to activity (Bennett et al., 2021; Chuenpagdee, 2020; Schreiber et al., 2022).

Today, the coexistence of artisanal fishing with the growing development of ocean industries represents a significant challenge. The spaces on which SSF depends for

subsistence are rapidly diminishing due to plans for ports, tourist facilities, shipping routes, oil platforms, protected areas, mining, and aquaculture ventures (Brent et al., 2020).

Ocean

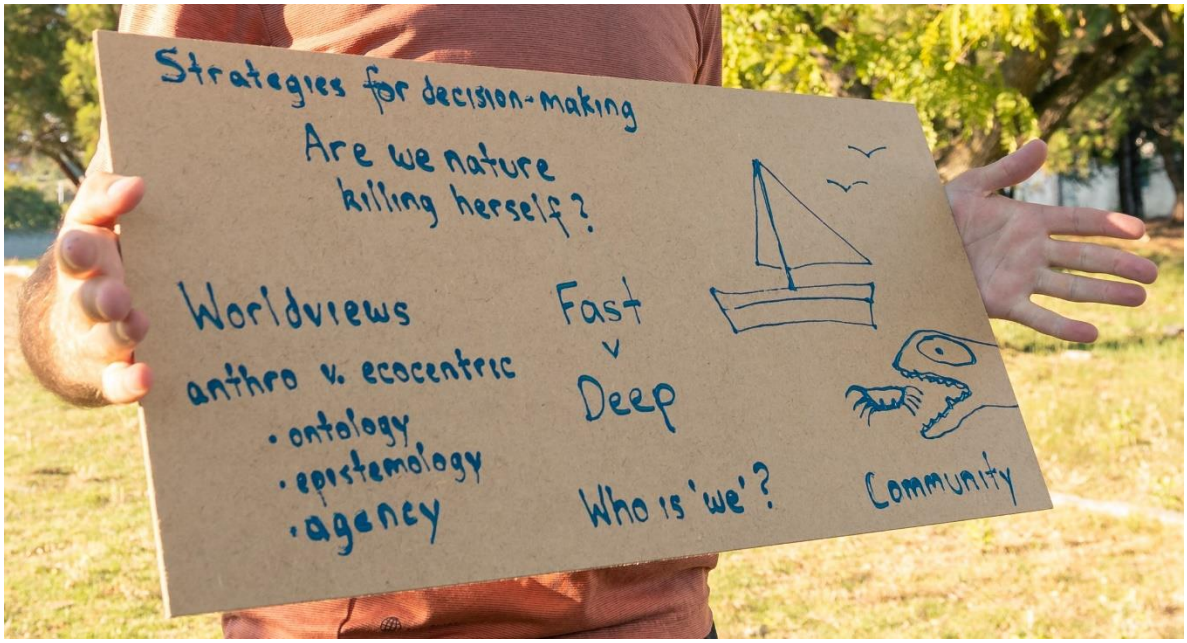
One of the groups reflected on the notion that the ocean is an entity and contemplating that the ocean desires does not change the fact that the ocean will continue to exist in some form, regardless of what is envisioned.

Other worldviews

The group reflected from the perspective of Blue Degrowth. They deliberated on the values and worldviews at play when considering the future from a socioenvironmental standpoint. The need to develop strategies that enable decision-makers to shift from anthropocentrism to a more ecocentric society—one that moves at a slower, less predatory pace—was presented (Figure 5). This necessity aligns with the call to reframe cultural values, allowing for alternative perspectives and ideologies for societal trajectories (Santos, 2015; Salleh et al., 2019). By rethinking oceanic trajectories and debating actions and strategies to forge a new path, the discussion strengthens perspectives on Blue Degrowth (Brossmann & Islar, 2019). The reflection on who "we" is partially echoes the initial discussion of this chapter, where part of society perceives itself as part of the non-part of the segment of society (Rancière, 1996) addressed by global agendas.

Figure 5

Photograph of the drawing created by the group, summarizing the discussion



Source: Authors, 2023.

Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries

During the VII International Congress on Environmental Education of Portuguese-speaking Countries and Communities, held in Maputo, Mozambique, a session of the Ocean Parliament was conducted as a workshop at the event. Following the previously described stages, the participants, represented at this time by the researcher present at both parliaments, were able to bring reflections, particularly related to the need to halt predatory exploitation in deep ocean areas, which are characterized by limited information and opaque governance structures. This exploitation, still driven by a lack of knowledge about its environmental and social impacts (Amon et al., 2022; Morais et al., 2022; Paulus, 2021), is part of the Blue Growth Agenda. Within this framework, the drive to possess, control, and accumulate (Leff, 2006) is now extended to the ocean.

Collective reflection

All the reflections summarized here were presented and debated among the participants. Common themes across nearly all groups highlighted the need for change and redefinition in several areas: (a) the methods of conducting science; (b) valuing traditional knowledge and practices; (c) worldviews and paradigms that guide societal trajectories; and (d) economic activities disconnected from societal aspirations. The reflection on "who we are" was particularly relevant, contributing to the understanding that "we" (the group participating in the parliament) perceive ourselves as part of the "part of non-part" (Rancière, 1996), underscoring the need to demand equality in decision-making processes. This involves conveying the significance of the demands made here to the other part, making the discussion comprehensible. Therefore, what we seek needs to be declared, verified, and achieved.

Ocean Rights

After this dialogic session, participants who felt comfortable sat in the Oceanic Parliament chair and declared (1) a right of the ocean that needs to be protected; (2) a right that needs to be abolished; and (3) a right that still needs to be established. It is important to consider the situational nature of the rights presented here (Table 1) and that as part of the method, the goal is free expression rather than consensus or a focus on timeless rights (although some may be). Even though they are interconnected, the rights presented here are mostly distinct and involve a range of demands and possible trajectories for their realization.

Table 1

Summary Table of Declared Rights

Right to be constituted:	Right to Abolish:	Right to be protected:
peace;	the State;	everything around us;
time, to delve deeper, to communicate;	large ships;	the ocean as a living being;
ourselves;	time, because we don't have time, it's urgent to change;	time to address all ocean issues;
giving voice to animals;	inadequate waste disposal;	deep ocean;
silence;	bad practices and things in general;	habitat space;
time, to have access to time;	predatory exploitation;	traditional practices;
the truth.	large mineral explorations and industrial fishing	freedom, things are free and should be free.

Source: Authors, 2023.

The Oceanic Parliament holds strong potential as a means of fostering a sense of belonging and providing a dialogical space. Collective reflections have underscored the need for change and the demand for spaces of listening and construction to encompass the perspective of a "collective" future. However, while establishing individual declarations, speeches give way to other nuances—at times deeper—that do not surface in the collective debate, such as the need for time—for silence. It becomes clear that within the current scenario, the aspirations expressed here collide with the aspirations expressed here collide with the agenda set within the developmentalist paradigm of Western society.

Final Considerations

The work developed here demonstrates that the ocean cannot be seen merely as a frontier to be conquered but rather as a vibrant life, a workplace, and a realm of interaction. The marine landscape does not represent a finished external world that exists independently of the beings that inhabit it, nor does it merely embody images or ideas (Ingold, 2000). Instead, it encompasses the intertwined relationships between humans, other beings, and objects within the world. In inhabiting the world, we engage with the rich historical and cultural traditions that have become part of the landscape. It is important to note that these traditions are not exclusive to humans but encompass all beings and objects that coexist in the world (Ingold, 2012). In this sense, it is also important to understand this complex socioecological system as a social construct in constant motion. According to Ingold's proposition (2012), the landscape is constantly being modified by the beings that inhabit it and are modified by it, meaning there is ongoing construction without a final form. Viewing the ocean from this perspective allows us to see it as a site of political construction. Although its formation is continuously influenced by both human and non-human entities, the ocean is currently subject to competing development agendas, driven by diverse actors with differing interests (Peters, 2020). At this juncture, while various delicate relationships within the ocean can be identified, this territory also emerges as a contested space. The dissonance between proposals such as the Blue Growth Agenda and the Blue Degrowth movement, for instance, creates room for certain traditional practices, like artisanal fishing

This dissonance, in the case of artisanal fishing, arises from fishers who view the sea not as an isolating substance but as a dynamic space where they work, live, and interact. Modernization processes have involved the pursuit of control over the ocean and have brought about significant changes in the landscape, such as the installation of port structures, deep-sea mining, aquaculture, and industrial fishing (Brent et al., 2020). By analyzing the effects of Blue Growth on artisanal fishing, at least 13 "types of injustices" have been identified, such as

participatory domination, cultural violation, industrial plundering, and recreational aggression (Schreiber et al., 2022).

These are some of the consequences that are already being observed. It is still important to highlight that the agenda proposed by Blue Growth is the same one that has led to the undesirable consequences experienced in the Anthropocene, including global warming, sea level rise, acidification, deoxygenation, changes in contaminant behavior, changes in fish population growth, and alterations in the structure and ecological dynamics among marine organisms (Franco et al., 2020; Lubchenco & Gaines, 2019; Paulus, 2021; Pauly, 2018; Rockstrom et al., 2009; Steffen et al., 2015; Steneck & Pauly, 2019; Virdin et al., 2021). In this same scenario, coastal communities, which have close and often historical relationships with the ocean, are becoming more vulnerable to extreme weather events (Bennett, 2019; Dasgupta et al., 2022).

Therefore, it is important to better understand the consequences of the changes resulting from this development model, which has led to climate collapse. It is also important to note that there is an asymmetric relationship between power and responsibility in the damage caused (Martínez-Alier, 2018). Thus, assuming that all inhabitants and livelihoods have the same impact and responsibility for the changes brings a conceptual error and makes it difficult to identify those who are responsible. This also hinders deeper changes, such as the idea of promoting the end of economic growth as an infinite and unattainable goal and maintaining society's metabolic levels at current levels. It also hampers the valuation and exchange with other ways of life that do not have economic growth as their primary goal but rather focus on well-being and quality of life. Ultimately, despite "Seeing Together the Ocean," the contradictions exposed here led to paddling in different directions.

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