

Protecting our seas: UK leadership in the year of the Global Ocean Treaty - Environment APPG parliamentary reception

Monday 23rd February 2026

- In attendance: Fleur Anderson MP (Chair of the Environment APPG), Minister Emma Hardy MP, Kaleem Luthra (EJF), Sandy Luk (Marine Conservation Society).
- Fleur Anderson opened the evening by stressing the need to maintain momentum and support a Sargasso Sea Sanctuary as a first act under the Global Ocean Treaty, as well as the need to ban domestic bottom trawling to safeguard the long-term sustainability of our oceans and fishing industry.
- Minister Emma Hardy emphasised that the Global Ocean Treaty marks the start of a new phase of collective responsibility for our oceans. She noted the government is now working at pace to deliver the secondary legislation needed to ratify the Treaty.
- Kaleem Luthra from EJF warned of the damage caused by Illegal, Unreported & Unregulated (IUU) fishing, which is the third most lucrative natural-resource crime. He highlighted that there's cause for hope, as witnessed by the coming together of governments around the High Seas Treaty.
- Chief Executive of Marine Conservation Society Sandy Luk discussed how widespread public backing was central to the Treaty's success, and that working closely with communities will be vital to strengthening marine protection in the years ahead.