



BBNJ Secretariat

Chile Host Country Offer

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Preface

His Excellency Gabriel Boric Font
President of the Republic of Chile

 Cristian Rapu
@Ojo de Pez

The ocean is a vital part of Chile's identity, shaping both its history and destiny. Along our thousands of kilometers of coastline, our people, fishing communities, and island and indigenous peoples rely on the ocean not only for sustenance but also for culture, collective memory, and a shared future.

Our country is blessed with an ocean that is productive and teeming with life, a highway for cultures, trade and ecosystems. Stretching from the Antarctic waters to the Humboldt Current and the Atacama Trench, one of the deepest points on Earth, and extending to Rapa Nui, one of the corners of the Polynesian Triangle, Chile's presence spans these waters with a sense of admiration and responsibility.

The vast blue spaces that occupy most of the earth's surface provide fundamental services on a planetary scale. They are a treasure that we must cherish and protect. The ocean is our most important climate regulator. Without it, the climate crisis would be even

more severe and its impacts on daily life would accelerate at a much higher rate.

Humanity has relied on the ocean for food since immemorial times, and the ocean has consistently provided solutions. Global blue foods production has doubled in the past 50 years and currently accounts for 15% of all proteins consumed worldwide.

Today, however, that ocean is at risk. The triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss threaten its health and sustainability. We need urgent action and a long-term vision to develop a truly sustainable blue economy that cares for and preserves this vital space for future generations.

The BBNJ Agreement is a key milestone for the future of the ocean, and Chile wants to be an active part of its protection. Our commitment is to harbor discussions and facilitate a blue multilateralism that looks into the Pacific Ocean—the largest mass of water on

Earth—to establish Valparaíso as the host city for the Secretariat.

This candidacy embodies two core convictions. First, geographical equity within the multilateral system: Latin America deserves, for the first time, to host a universal-membership secretariat. Second, effectiveness in implementation through a venue that combines technical excellence, transparency, accountability, and inclusiveness of all States Parties and civil society.

Valparaíso offers robust infrastructure, scientific talent, and quality of life for international staff, alongside a rich port and cultural tradition that make it truly unique.

I invite the international community to join us in this endeavor. From the Global South, Chile offers an open, efficient, and Party-driven home for the BBNJ Secretariat, one that will ensure the Agreement fulfills its mandate: to protect life in the ocean we share.



Chile and the Future of Ocean Governance



His Excellency Alberto van Klaveren
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile

The development of international law has been one of the cornerstones of international peace. In its 80 years of existence, the United Nations has built a network of agreements, based on international consensus, that provides legal certainty and basis for international cooperation.

This is particularly critical in contemporary challenges that clearly cannot be solved by any single nation. This is the case of climate change, or the biodiversity crisis, that is accelerating both in land and in the ocean. The complexities of these problems call for a coherent and coordinated effort of the international community, taking also into consideration the needs of developing countries and just transition pathways towards the sustainable development we all want.

This is particularly relevant for the ocean, where we need to protect and sustainably use its resources for the benefit of present and future generations. The ocean is connected across the planet through sea currents, that distribute heat, nutrients and chemicals, determining the climate in all continents, providing livelihoods and shaping our cultures.

Our collective responsibility in protecting the ocean has led us to the development of the Law of the Sea. Chile has been a strong supporter of all its compo-

nents, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and efforts to implement it at the regional level, such as the successful negotiation and implementation of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization.

Chile has done also its part at the national level. Despite being among the largest Exclusive Economic Zones of the world, we have managed to protect 43% of its surface. In addition, we have developed fishing regulations that are based on an ecosystemic approach and banned certain practices such as trawling.

We are also committed to the early implementation of the Treaty. Chile has led the creation of the “BBNJ First Movers” initiative, that has established a community of practice of countries that wish to develop Marine Protected Areas in the high seas. This has created the opportunity of voluntary exchange of information and experiences and has also included the participation of other governments and international organizations that can provide support to advance these projects.

Chile has proposed its own MPA in the high seas: the Nazca and Sala y Gómez ridge, which has been declared an Ecologically and Biologically Significant Area by the Convention on Biological Diversity, harboring one of the highest levels of biodiversity in the world.

The BBNJ Agreement calls for a Secretariat capable of turning principles into results: transparency, accountability, efficiency, inclusiveness, and a governance fully guided by Parties. Chile proposes Valparaíso as the host city, presenting a concrete offer: offices of international standard quality, full privileges and immunities, a dedicated “BBNJ visa,” administrative facilitation measures, and a provisional office —if needed— while the permanent site at Parque Barón (a heritage, connected, and functional hub) is being prepared.

Our proposal rests on verifiable capacities: a world-class marine science ecosystem, proven logistics and capacities for organizing international conferences, high-quality public and private services, and Chile’s long-standing record in the Law of the Sea—from the 200-mile maritime zone to the early ratification of the BBNJ Agreement. As an oceanic nation anchored in the South Pacific and committed to carbon neutrality by 2050, Chile can ensure an efficient, sustainable, and inclusive Secretariat, open to all Parties and observers.

With a spirit of cooperation and a Global South perspective, we invite all States to support Valparaíso as the host city for the BBNJ Secretariat—ensuring a swift, robust, and universal implementation of the Agreement.



Executive Summary

Chile presents a comprehensive and forward-looking proposal to host the Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ), grounded in its long-standing commitment to the Law of the Sea, international cooperation and ocean stewardship. As a tricontinental nation present in South America, Oceania (Rapa Nui), and Antarctica, with more than 4,200 km of coastline, Chile combines a deep maritime identity with the institutional strength and stability required for a United Nations headquarters.

Hosting the Secretariat in Valparaíso, Chile’s historic port city and UNESCO World Heritage Site, would bring a universal UN body to Latin America for the first time, enhancing regional representation and strengthening the voice of the Global South in ocean governance. With a proven track record spanning **over 70 years** as host to UN entities, including the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, Chile’s offers demonstrated reliability and capacity to provide an **efficient, secure, and globally connected environment** for international operations.

Chile offers, at its own expense, a world-class headquarters equipped with sustainable infrastructure, conference facilities, and high-speed digital connectivity, ensuring full operational readiness. All privileges and immunities required under UN standards will be granted, alongside comprehensive administrative facilities for Secretariat officials, their spouses and dependents, national representatives, experts, observers, accredited press, and other participants in the BBNJ activities in Chile. These facilities include the **BBNJ Visa**, designed to ensure a **totally electronic, free-of-charge, expedite and inclusive process for those who required it. This means that there will be no need for in-person interviews in a Chilean Consulate. Visas on arrival could also be provided for participants, as needed.**

The proposed site for the Secretariat offices, Parque Barón in Valparaíso, is a **landmark project looking at the Pacific Ocean**, in the restored Simón Bolívar Park, a 400-meter long heritage building offering 11,000 m² of adaptable space. Its exceptional connectivity offers both **immediate local access** (minutes from the National Congress, universities, and major transport links) **and global reach** (just 60 minutes by land from the International Airport), making it a practical and symbolic choice.

Chile’s proposal reaffirms its readiness to partner with the international community in establishing a Secretariat that operates with transparency and inclusiveness, ensuring the effective and equitable implementation of the BBNJ Agreement worldwide.

I. The 5 Principles that Guide Us: Our Vision for the Secretariat

The BBNJ Agreement is a fundamental piece in the global ocean governance, as it covers life on a vast area that is equivalent to almost half our planet. Such responsibility must be exerted on the basis of international law and customary principles to ensure that its application is effective and supported by the international community.

The text of the Agreement already provides fundamental principles, as contained in article 7, which Chile fully subscribes. At the same time, when the Secretariat is in full operation, in our view it should also respond to expectations of Parties, observers and the general public.

Firstly, **transparency** is one of the fundamental elements to respond to those expectations. This element is already enshrined in several sections of the text of the agreement, but in particular in article 48, that states that the COP “shall promote transparency in decision-making processes and other activities carried out under this Agreement.” Furthermore, the article provides specific provisions for transparency in implementation and for access to information and participation by observer States and other stakeholders.

In this regard, it is clear that the Secretariat needs to reflect this approach in its own structure and performance,

in order to better serve these indications and guidelines.

Secondly, the Secretariat must contribute to clear lines of **accountability**. The administrative and decision-making processes will need to have appropriate controls, auditing and reporting mechanisms. This can be the foundation for a healthy and functional relation between the Secretariat and Parties to the Agreement.

As a third principle, Chile is of the view that **efficiency** must be a core element of the performance of the Secretariat. This should cover timely preparation of documents and materials for the Conference of the Parties and for Subsidiary Bodies, as well as during their meetings, ensuring that conference services are well managed.

Inclusivity is a cross-cutting principle the Treaty, and it is crucial that the Secretariat has this element as one of its core principles. From the perspective of Chile, inclusivity has several dimensions. One has to do with the inclusion of every UN government, including those that have not completed their internal process of ratification, approval or accession. As an Agreement that aims at universal membership, it is crucial that it sends a clear signal of inclusivity and participation of future Parties.

Also, Chile was one of the leading governments in promoting the Escazú Agreement in Latin America and the Caribbean, which ensures access to information, participation, and justice in environmental matters. In this spirit, Chile guarantees that, as host country, the Secretariat will enjoy the autonomy required to implement the decisions adopted by the Parties with full neutrality and transparency.

Chile believes that collaboration with all States Parties — including through the engagement of civil society — is key to achieving solid, science-based decisions and strengthening trust among Parties, bearing in mind that they hold the ultimate responsibility for adopting such decisions.

Indeed, one last principle that should govern the performance of the Secretariat is that all processes and implementation of the Agreement must be **Party-driven**. The Conference of the Parties has the full power to manage the Agreement, including its decisions and strategic direction.

Through these five principles, Chile is convinced that the Secretariat can play a crucial role in the successful implementation of the BBNJ Agreement, fulfilling its mandates and providing a sustainable governance model.



II. Why Chile?

Oceanic Country

The establishment of the BBNJ Secretariat will find in Chile a country that is deeply connected to the ocean, with a deep and historical relationship with it.

Over the centuries, Chile has developed an ocean culture, and ocean economy as well as a conservation policy that is globally regarded among the most progressive and comprehensive in the world.

Our history and geographical position are at the basis of this connection: Chile extends its territory in South America from the sub-tropical areas until the southern-most land in the planet, Cape Horn and the Magellan Strait that crosses the legendary Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego.

Nature has also blessed Chile with a unique ocean wealth. The cold, nutrient-rich waters that come from Antarctica form the Humboldt Current and provide this corner of the world with one of the richest and more complex ocean ecosystems in the world, the basis for sustainable fisheries and for an economic activity that contributes to the world's food security.

Chile is among the 12 most relevant fishing economies in the world, with 3,4 million tons of fish produced annually (2021) and 8,5 billion dollars of exports of fish and fishing products (2022).

The baselines of the Chilean territory in South America shape a coastline of more than 4,200 ki-

“Chile's foreign policy has promoted trade liberalization in key markets, making us a country integrated with the world. Chile's presence in the Pacific Ocean community has been one of our priorities, where maritime connectivity is a vehicle for getting closer to other continents. I believe the establishment of the BBNJ Secretariat in Chile represents a new opportunity to consolidate this strong commitment to the ocean and continue contributing to a rules-based international order.”

Jorge Sahd

Director, Centre for International Studies,
Catholic University of Chile

lometers. However, this extension can be much longer considering that Chile has more than 43 thousand islands, most of them in the southern tip of the continent, as a result of glacial periods that have created unique landscapes of fjords and channels, inhabited by many endemic species both in land and in the sea.

The value that the ocean has for Chile is also the result of its presence in three continents. In addition to its South American territory, Chile is proudly present in Oceania through Rapa Nui - Easter Island, as well as in Antarctica, as an active and founding member of the Antarctic Treaty.

Our conservation policy has also developed accordingly. Chile has promoted conservation measures and Marine Protected Areas in those three continents, with a balanced criteria, aiming at protecting ecosystems but also to sustainable use of their resources.

The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Chile, with 3,6 million km², projects towards the Pacific Ocean, the largest mass of water on the planet and a vital feature of Chile, identity, wellbeing and security.

The Pacific Ocean is the gateway to more than 90% of our international trade, and for this reason, Chile has an extensive network of ports and services to support this flow. As an example of this, Chile is the 4th largest user of the Panama Canal, for its export volumes through maritime international shipping.

In areas beyond national jurisdiction, Chile also has a presence recognized by international agreements. The International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR Convention, 1979), indicates that Chile is responsible for a large area in the South Pacific. This role falls under the functions of the Chilean Navy.

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For the Rapa Nui people, the BBNJ Agreement represents a sign of hope for the ocean. It is an opportunity to protect species, ensure the continuity of ecological processes, and promote the sustainable use of marine resources, which are essential pillars for the preservation of our culture and life itself in the sea.

This agreement also embodies an opportunity for connection and unity among peoples, by promoting the creation of biological corridors linking different Marine Protected Areas. In our case, we envision a broad conservation strip linking America and Oceania, with Rapa Nui as the natural and spiritual bridge of this marine protection.

Likewise, BBNJ symbolizes a way to bring us closer to continental Chile and also to our Polynesian brothers and sisters, strengthening our dignity, identity, and sense of oceanic belonging. For us, the sea is not a limit: it is the path that unites us, the link that sustains our history and projects future development. Therefore, with deep respect and hope, we support the proposal of Chile and the city of Valparaíso as the seat of the future Secretariat of the BBNJ Agreement, so that this new convention may look out over the vast South Pacific Ocean, Te Vaikava, Te Moana Nui a Hotu a Matu'a.”

Sebastián Yankovic Pakarati

Elected council member
Koro Nui o te Vaikava - Rapa Nui Ocean Council



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Alex Sánchez
@Ojo de Pez

Long-standing commitment to the Law of the Sea

Chile has contributed to the development and implementation of the Law of the Sea for more than seven decades. In 1947, the President of the Republic, Mr. Gabriel González Videla declared, for the first time, that our national jurisdiction extended 200 nautical miles from the Chilean coastline, one of the first assertions of maritime sovereignty of its kind in the world.

This principle was later endorsed by a group of countries in South America in the Santiago Declaration in 1952, which formally adopted the 200 nautical mile as a shared regional doctrine. This landmark declaration would later influence the drafting of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), where the concept became enshrined as the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), a cornerstone of contemporary ocean governance and a guarantee for the effective access to resources for developing States.

Chile's commitment to the development of the Law of the Sea extends well beyond these early milestones. As a founding member of the Antarctic Treaty System (1959), Chile contributes to maintaining Antarctica as a continent devoted to peace, science, and international cooperation, embodying the very essence of collective responsibility.

Over the following decades, Chile continued to make concrete contributions to the International Law of the Sea. It played a leading role in the creation of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPRFMO), which provides a legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of fishery resources in the high seas of the South Pacific. Chile is also a Party to UNCLOS and all its implementing agreements, reinforcing our commitment to the "Constitution of the Oceans" and to increasing international cooperation including the peaceful resolution of disputes through international law.

In the 21st century, Chile has continued this legacy through active and constructive engagement in the negotiation of the Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ). Guided by the principles of equity, inclusion, and sustainability, Chile worked to ensure that the Agreement embodied an ambitious and science-based approach to global ocean governance. It was among the first countries to sign the BBNJ Agreement and the second in the world to ratify it, reaffirming its readiness to lead by example and contribute to the early and effective implementation of this landmark treaty.

A Global Perspective from the Global South

Chile inherits a deep ocean history and tradition, shaped by its geography and its identity as a tricontinental nation in South America, Oceania, and Antarctica. Chile's geography defines its close relationship with the sea and its responsibility toward marine stewardship. This perspective from the South gives Chile a unique understanding of the need for inclusivity and balance in global governance. As a country that has long advocated for equity, sustainability, and multilateralism, Chile's vision for the BBNJ Secretariat aligns naturally with the principles of shared responsibility and cooperation that the Agreement embodies.

The United Nations System remains strongly concentrated in developed countries, particularly in Europe and North America, where most of its global headquarters are located. This geographic imbalance may limit the participation and visibility of developing nations in decision making processes, as well as the equitable distribution of opportunities and resources within the multilateral system. Establishing the BBNJ Secretariat in Chile would therefore contribute to a more representative and balanced UN architecture, strengthening the voice of the Global South in global ocean governance.

1948
ECLAC established
in Chile

Currently, there are no UN headquarters in Latin America with universal membership, despite the region's long-standing engagement with multilateral diplomacy and its vast oceanic territories. Locating the BBNJ Secretariat in Valparaíso would mark a historic milestone: it would be the first universal UN body based in Latin America, bringing decision making closer to regions that are deeply connected to and dependent on the ocean.



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As humanity, we are currently experiencing a triple planetary crisis, and we know that the ocean is our best partner in tackling it. Chile—an oceanic and tri-continental country—has been a pioneer in marine conservation and a key player in ocean policy based on scientific research, making it the ideal location for the BBNJ Secretariat in the global south. The implementation of BBNJ requires constant constructive dialogue and effective international cooperation that activates and establishes robust ocean governance. To this end, we young people promote collaborative and intergenerational work based on an exchange of skills and experiences to continue advancing in ocean protection and global marine biodiversity.”

Jacqueline Jacko González,
President of Sustainable Ocean Alliance Chile

Chile has already demonstrated its capacity to successfully host and operate major UN institutions. The country hosts several important UN regional offices, including the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. Both institutions have operated efficiently and securely for decades, benefiting from Chile's stability, modern infrastructure, and commitment to multilateral cooperation.

World-class destination for the BBNJ Secretariat

Chile offers all the conditions required for modern, efficient, and secure headquarters for the BBNJ Secretariat. As a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) since 2010, Chile combines the institutional solidity of an advanced economy with the perspective and commitment of the Global South. Its proven record of good governance, transparency, and fiscal responsibility has positioned the country as a stable democracy and economy in world standards. In recognition of these capabilities and its technical expertise, the Comptroller General of the Republic of Chile was elected in 2018 as a member of the United Nations Board of Auditors, further underscoring Chile's reputation for accountability and institutional strength within the UN system.

Chile's macroeconomic stability has been consistent for decades, supported by a strong legal framework, an independent central bank, and sound public finances. Chile is recognized as a high-middle income country with sustained economic growth and open trade policies. The country also features more than 35 bilateral agreements for the avoidance of double taxation, including the United States of America. These characteristics ensure a reliable and predictable environment.

Chile's strong global integration is reflected in its extensive network of trade agreements, covering 65 economies and 88% of global GDP, according to SUB-REI. This openness supports robust and growing trade flows, which reached US\$184 billion in 2024. These indicators underscore Chile's economic stability, international connectivity, and institutional reliability.

Chile's strong economic profile is matched by a high quality of life, reflected in its classification as an **'A' (non-hardship) duty station** by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). These overall conditions of life and work align with the country's progressive commitment to social policies and human rights, including the **legal recognition of same-sex**

marriage and comprehensive anti-discrimination laws, ensuring a welcoming and inclusive environment for international staff and their families.

In terms of infrastructure, Chile stands among the world's best connected nations. It has the third fastest broadband internet connection globally, according to recent international ranking, and continues to expand its digital infrastructure through submarine fiber optic cables that link South America, Oceania, and North America. In addition, Chile is one of the first countries in Latin America to deploy nationwide 5G technology, enhancing its capacity for high speed, reliable, and secure communication. This level of digital readiness ensures seamless connectivity, robust data management, and efficient operational coordination.

The country also provides world class financial, health, and education services, meeting UN standards for the operation of international organizations. While Santiago, the capital of Chile, provides a wide range of services, Valparaíso is an equally compelling location. Located directly on the Pacific coast and near famous Chilean vineyards, Valparaíso and its surroundings offer, within a 30-minute radius, an ample array of public and private services that guarantee excellent living and working conditions for international staff and their families, including high-complexity hospitals, international schools, and cultural and sports centers.

Chile has a proven track record as a host country for major UN institutions and high level international meetings. The ECLAC and the FAO Regional Office have operated successfully in Santiago for decades. Chile has also hosted key international conferences and events, such as Our Ocean 2015, the NAP Expo 2023, APEC, Panamerican Games, Iberoamerican Summit, among others, demonstrating its logistical capacity and commitment to multilateral cooperation.



Chile represents a **cost-effective option** for the United Nations System, aligning with the UN80 Initiative to optimize efficiencies and effectiveness. **The overall cost of operations could be significantly lower than in locations hosting other universal-membership Secretariats** (e.g., CBD, UNFCCC, IMO, UNESCO, Minamata, ISA), offering the UN a sustainable and fiscally responsible location without compromising on quality, accessibility, or security.

This assessment is supported by several international and domestic benchmarks, most notably the Retail Prices Index (RPI)—a key UN measure of the cost-of-living for international staff at duty station relative to New York. The lower RPI directly translates into reduced post-adjustment allowances for international staff. Consequently, **Chile's cost-of-living index is below that typically found in the aforementioned Secretariat locations and even in comparison with several countries in the Latin American region¹**. Furthermore, Chile's labor market offers competitive conditions for local recruitment, ensuring high-quality staffing at sustainable operational costs, in line with UN standards.

TRADE AND ECONOMIC INDICATORS OF CHILE

Indicator	Value
Number of trade and economic agreements in force	35 agreements
Economies covered by Chile's trade agreements	65 economies
Share of global GDP covered by Chile's trade agreements	≈ 88% of global GDP
Total foreign trade (Jan–Oct 2025)	US\$145.66 billion
Growth of total trade vs. same period 2024	+7.8%
Total foreign trade (First half of 2025)	US\$97.07 billion
Export growth (First half 2025)	+6.7%
Import growth (First half 2025)	+10.4%

¹ <https://icsc.un.org/Home/GetDataFile/8773>

Natural laboratory & global hub on ocean sciences

Chile stands out globally as a natural laboratory for ocean science and climate research, offering unique geographical and ecological conditions that span from the cold Humboldt Current and the vast Atacama Trench in the Pacific to the Antarctic convergence zone. This diversity makes Chile one of the few countries capable of integrating scientific observation across temperate, sub-Antarctic, and polar marine ecosystems.

The country has a strong academic and research ecosystem, with more than twenty universities and institutes offering programs and conducting world class research in marine biology, oceanography, fisheries, and climate science. Chile features several internationally recognized centers of excellence under the Millennium Science Initiative, which form the backbone of Chile's marine research capacity. These include:

- Millennium Institute of Oceanography (IMO), dedicated to deep-sea exploration and climate ocean interaction;
- Coastal Social-Ecological Millennium Institute (SECOS), which integrates science and community knowledge for sustainable coastal management;

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As a scientist dedicated to ocean conservation, I want to highlight the vital importance of science for protecting marine ecosystems. The BBNJ agreement represents a historic step, a global framework that has generated enormous opportunities for the national and international scientific community to organize behind a common project such as the exploration and protection of the high seas. From the Center for the Ecology and Sustainable Management of Oceanic Islands (ESMOI) and in collaboration with experts from all over the world, we are leading unprecedented studies for the southeast Pacific, highlighting the natural and cultural importance of the high seas and its amazing seamount chains. This strengthens Chile's position as an international leader in the collaborative research and conservation of high-seas marine ecosystems.”

Carlos Gaymer

Director Center of Ecology and Sustainable Management of Oceanic Islands (ESMOI)

- Millennium Biodiversity Institute of Antarctic and Sub-Antarctic Ecosystems (BASE), a leader in biodiversity studies in extreme environments.
- Millennium Nucleus Center of Marine Conservation (CCM), focused on marine protected areas and biodiversity restoration;
- Millennium Nucleus Ocean, Heritage & Culture (OHC), which explores the intersection of marine science and cultural identity;
- Millennium Nucleus Center for Ecology and Sustainable Management of Oceanic Islands (ESMOI), which supports conservation of Chile's insular territory and the Millennials;
- Nucleus Upwelling system, environmental local and lasting impacts (UPWELL), which investigates the environmental and socio-ecological impacts of one of the world's most productive marine currents, the Humboldt Current.

Additional programs such as Millennium Nucleus Marine Agronomy of Seaweed Holobionts (MASH) and Millennium Nucleus for Ecology and Conservation Temperate Mesophotic Reef Ecosystems (NUTME) further demonstrate the depth and diver-



sity of Chile's marine scientific leadership.

Many of these centres of research are also based in the capabilities of Chilean universities that have long been working on ocean science.

This includes strong research capacities in the universities in Valparaíso, but also in other important research centers in other parts of Chile, like the University of Concepción and the Catholic University of the North.

Chile's infrastructure for ocean observation is equally impressive. The country operates one of the most advanced research fleets in the Southern Hemisphere, including the Research Vessels (R/V) Cabo de Hornos, one of the most modern scientific platforms of its kind; the Ice-breaker Almirante Viel, the largest Antarctic research vessel ever built in South America; and the R/V Dra. Barbieri and R/V Abate Molina, used for coastal and oceanographic prospecting, respectively. These vessels enable Chile to conduct continuous research across its vast EEZ and beyond, providing robust logistical capacities.

The Chilean Navy plays a key role in supporting national and international research activities, including the maintenance and replacement of oceanographic instruments in the high seas. Notably, Chile contributes to the Stratus mooring, one of the longest-running continuous surface observation systems in the Pacific Ocean, vital for climate and oceanographic studies.

The scientific and operational capacity equips Chile to offer first-rate technical support to the work of the BBNJ Secretariat, from data collection and research coordination to capacity building and international scientific cooperation. Hosting the Secretariat in Valparaíso would provide a symbolic and practical connection to the ocean and also situate it within one of the world's most dynamic centers for ocean science.



R/V Dra. Barbieri



R/V Abate Molina



R/V Cabo de Hornos



R/V Almirante Viel



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The Forum for the Conservation of the Patagonian Sea and Areas of Influence considers the entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement (High Seas Treaty) as a very significant step for global marine management and conservation, especially in a context where threats to ocean health demand urgent and coordinated responses. The Forum supported Valparaíso's candidacy to host the technical secretariat of the Agreement through a declaration endorsed by the 30 civil society organizations that comprise it, during its international meeting held in the city. The statement emphasized the global importance and value for multilateralism of Valparaíso becoming the seat of the treaty, as the first UN headquarters in a Latin American country.

As a network of organizations from Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, and southern Brazil, with more than 20 years of experience promoting cooperation for the conservation of the Patagonian Sea, we stand ready to contribute to the implementation of the treaty. We will foster the active and cross-cutting participation of civil society organizations from the region in its mechanisms, with a focus on transparency, equity, integrated ocean management, and environmental justice.”

Daniela Castro

Coordinator of the Chile Node of the Forum



Javiera Cespedes
@Ojo de Pez

Broad commitment to sustainability

Chile's geographical diversity, stretching from the Atacama Desert in the north, one of the driest places on Earth, to the temperate rainforests, glaciers, and fjords of Patagonia in the south, has shaped a deep national awareness of environmental stewardship. This remarkable variety of ecosystems, many of them unique and globally significant, underpins Chile's longstanding commitment to sustainability and the protection of nature as an integral part of its development model.

Chile is legally committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 at the latest, a goal established through its Framework Law on Climate Change. This legislation enshrines climate action as a state policy, mandating emission reduction targets, adaptation plans, and climate governance mechanisms across all sectors. The country has also strengthened its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement, placing ocean protection and the blue economy at the center of its climate agenda.

In recent years, Chile has become a global leader in the expansion of renewable energy, rapidly transforming its energy matrix. Today, more than 60% of the country's installed capacity comes from renewable sources such as solar, wind and hydro.

43% of Chile's marine jurisdictional areas are protected.

Historical data show that Chile has been a carbon negative country for many decades. The last record of carbon neutrality in Chile was 2003. The rapid growth of the country created a fast expansion of energy demand that led to reliance on fossil fuels.

This is quickly being addressed, as Chile has become a country with very significant investments in renewable energy. In 2024, with almost US\$6 billion of investments, marked a new record in the expansion of this sector, with a 231% increase compared to the previous year. This trend will continue in the future, as the process of electrification of the economy advances.

Renewable energy storage, which is a critical element for decarbonizing the economy, has also had an explosive growth, showing that Chile is an attractive market for these green technologies, with original targets for 2030 achieved in 2025.

Complementing these conservation measures, Chile has enacted advanced legislation on recycling and circular economy, including the Extended Producer Responsibility Law (REP), which promotes waste reduction, eco-design, and sustainable consumption patterns, and one of the first national-level legislations in the world banning single use F&B products, including plastic, poly-coated paper, and cardboard. These initiatives reflect a systemic approach to environmental policy.

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The protection and conservation of ocean biodiversity is a task that our country first undertook with the creation of Marine Protected Areas and then with the ratification of the BBNJ Agreement, the high seas treaty that protects biodiversity. In this case, our country also proposes that our city of Valparaíso be the headquarters of that Secretariat. This idea is supported by various nations and represents an important change in having a UN agency in the South Pacific. It would be a great opportunity that would allow us to generate more knowledge and scientific information to protect the biodiversity of our ocean, and that this could be done from the Chilean coast.”

Ricardo Lagos Weber

Senator for the Valparaíso region.
Vice President of the Senate



“

It would be a great privilege for Valparaíso to become the Host City. From our long coastline, and with the ongoing challenge of continuing to create marine protected areas, our country and its people are increasingly aware of the importance of preserving and protecting the ocean. It would also be a powerful call to everything that can be built, while raising awareness of the current difficulties we face in achieving it.”

Bárbara Hernández

Chilean extreme open-water swimmer and world champion in ice swimming



Fernando Ruz
@Ojo de Pez

clinging and circular economy, including the Extended Producer Responsibility Law (REP), which promotes waste reduction, eco-design, and sustainable consumption patterns, and one of the first national-level legislations in the world banning single use F&B products, including plastic, poly-coated paper, and cardboard. These initiatives reflect a systemic approach to environmental policy.

Together, these achievements demonstrate Chile's broad and coherent commitment to sustainability, grounded in law, science and action.

Chile is committed to the BBNJ implementation beyond the Secretariat

Chile is fully committed to ensuring the effective and inclusive implementation of the Agreement, particularly by strengthening the participation and capacities of developing states. Guided by the principles of cooperation, transparency, and solidarity, Chile has worked proactively to facilitate technical dialogue, promote regional coordination, and mobilize resources for the early stages of the BBNJ's operationalization.

A central aspect of this commitment has been Chile's role in **capacity building and regional strengthening**. In August 2024, Chile organized the Workshop on the BBNJ Agreement for CLAM Negotiators in the Valparaíso Region, creating a platform for legal and technical training for officials and experts from Latin American countries.

Building on this initiative, in October 2024 Chile hosted a Regional Workshop on the BBNJ Agreement for Latin America and the Spanish Speaking Caribbean, co-organized with the United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) and ECLAC. The event brought together negotiators from national capitals, regional organizations, and academic institutions to advance a shared understanding of the Agreement's obligations and opportunities for collaboration.

Chile has also contributed financially to the BBNJ Trust Fund, which supports the effective participation of developing countries in the Preparatory Commission (PrepCom) and future sessions of the

Conference of the Parties. These contributions reflect Chile's belief that success of the BBNJ Agreement depends on the full engagement of all regions and the equitable distribution of technical and financial support.

Beyond these actions, Chile has maintained an early and continuous dialogue with relevant stakeholders at both the national and international level—including academia, civil society, the private sector, Indigenous Peoples and local communities—to identify priorities and mechanisms for the implementation of the Agreement. This approach ensures that national and regional expertise is aligned with the global objectives of the BBNJ framework.

In keeping with its tradition of fostering inclusive and cooperative multilateralism, Chile launched the BBNJ First Movers Initiative. This coalition aims at bringing together different proposals of Marine Protected Areas or Other Area - Based Tools in the high seas, creating a community of practice where

everyone can learn from each other to accelerate proposals for consideration of the BBNJ COP.

In continuity with its decades-long leadership in ocean governance, Chile's engagement with the BBNJ process exemplifies its dedication to turning commitments including 30 x 30 target into action. The country's ongoing efforts in regional facilitation, capacity building, and global cooperation ensure that the Agreement is implemented with legitimacy, inclusiveness, and scientific rigor.



Leader in the international ocean agenda

Chile has emerged as a global leader in ocean diplomacy, consistently advancing initiatives that link marine protection, climate action, and sustainable development. Over the past decade, Chile has played a central role in elevating the ocean to the heart of the international environmental agenda, promoting cooperation between science, policy, and multilateral governance.

In 2015, Chile hosted the Our Ocean Conference in Valparaíso, an event that brought together world leaders, scientists, and civil society to mobilize commitments for marine conservation. The conference marked a turning point in global ocean governance and Chile contributed with concrete, action oriented initiatives.

That same year, Chile launched the "Because the Ocean" initiative, a diplomatic effort that led to three successive declarations bringing together countries promoting the inclusion of the ocean in the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Chile has played a pivotal role in linking ocean and climate agendas. Its leadership helped secure the formal recognition of ocean-climate interactions within the Paris Agreement and "culminated in COP25 under the Presidency of Chile — the "Blue COP — which established the Ocean-Climate Dialogue, now the only permanent UNFCCC platform dedicated to this issue.

Beyond climate diplomacy, Chile has been at the forefront of international governance for marine resources. It is a founding member of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, which brings together Heads of State to promote science-based ocean policies. In that context, Chile published its Sustainable Ocean Plan (SOP), outlining national strategies to balance conservation, sustainable use, and social inclusion.

At the national level, Chile has translated its international ocean commitments into coherent domestic policies and instruments, ensuring their effective implementation across its climate and marine governance framework. Since 2020, Chile's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) has incorporated ocean-related measures, placing marine ecosystems at the center of its mitigation and adaptation strategies. This reflects Chile's determination to bring ocean science and climate policy together in a coherent national framework.

As part of its forward-looking agenda, Chile plays a leading role in advancing global ocean governance. It leads the BBNJ First Movers Initiative, co-leads the 100% Alliance for Ocean Management, and contributes to international efforts to strengthen area-based management and integrate ocean action into global climate commitments. Chile has also advocated for a precautionary pause on deep-sea mining within the ISA, underscoring its commitment to evidence-based decision-making and the collective interest.



III. Why Valparaíso?

Valparaíso is one of the most emblematic port cities in Latin America and a living expression of Chile's maritime identity. Founded in 1536, it became a key gateway for trade and navigation in the South Pacific during the 19th century, serving as an important stopover for ships crossing between the Atlantic and Pacific before the opening of the Panama Canal. In recognition of its exceptional cultural and architectural value, UNESCO declared Valparaíso a World Heritage Site in 2003, highlighting its historic neighbourhoods and urban center, and the harmonious coexistence of port infrastructure, steep hills, and vibrant human creativity.

The city is well located and easily accessible. Valparaíso lies only 115 kilometers (1.5 hours) from Santiago, Chile's capital, with direct highway access and excellent public transportation links. The scenic road between Santiago and Valparaíso travels through the famed Casablanca Valley, home to some of Chile's most recognized vineyards. The Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport (SCL), which also serves the city of Valparaíso, is one of the busiest in South America and connects Chile daily and directly with major global destinations such as Paris, Madrid, London, Auckland,

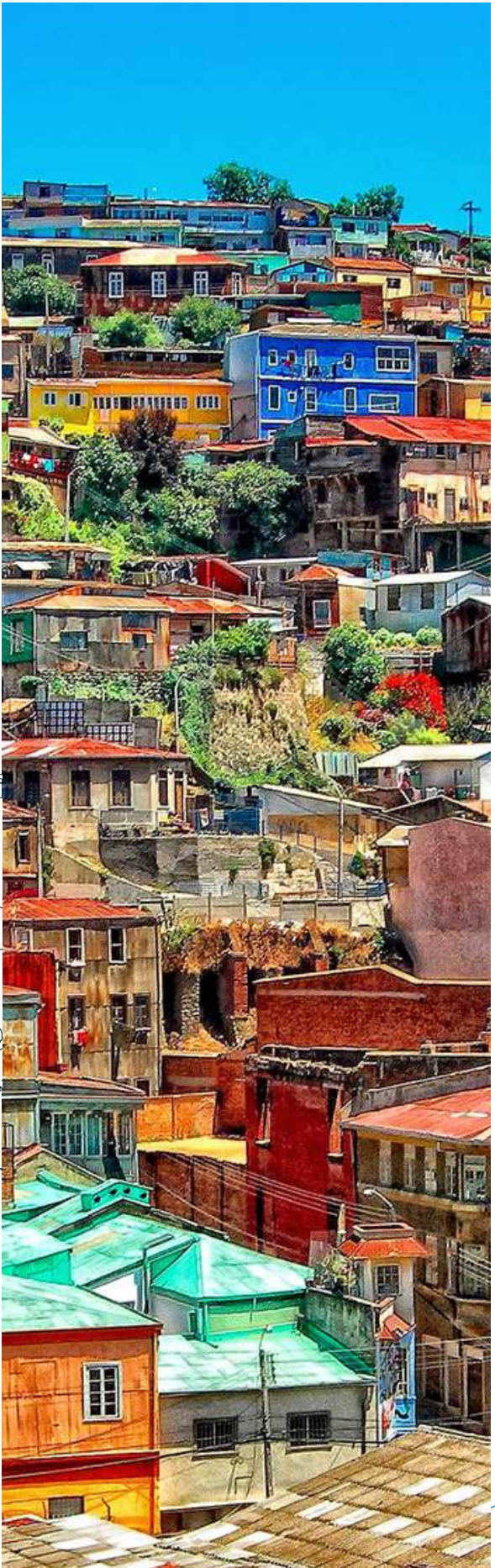
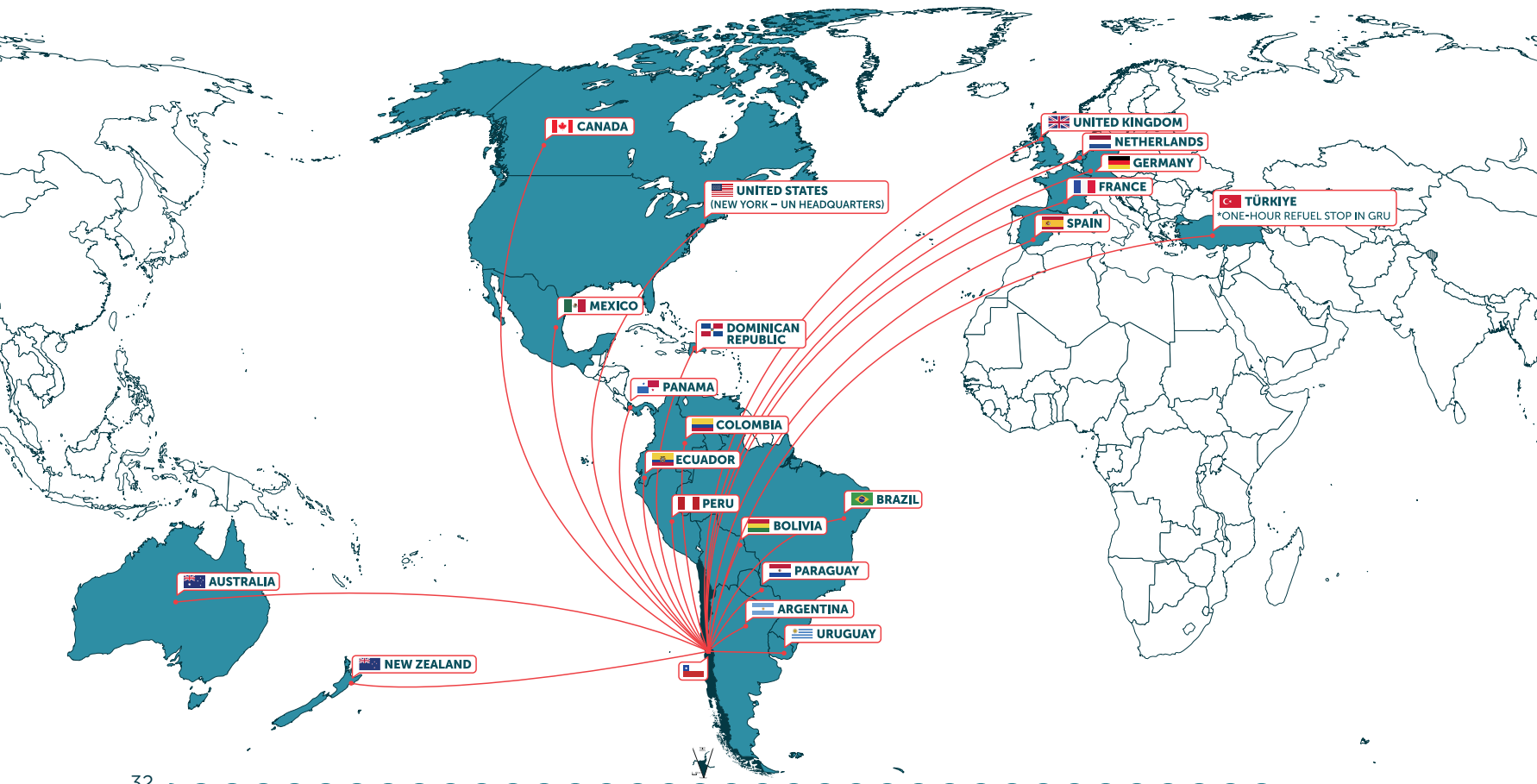
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The BBNJ Agreement represents a landmark in ocean governance and a historic responsibility for Valparaíso and Chile, whose maritime heritage and multilateral commitments are essential pillars of our common future. I am convinced that this instrument will advance the conservation of marine biodiversity and contribute significantly to improving the quality of life of our coastal communities.”

Camila Nieto Hernández
Mayor of Valparaíso



Global Connectivity: Direct Flights from and to Chile



“

Valparaíso stands as the ideal host for the BBNJ, due to its rich historical and cultural tradition, as well as its strategic location on the Pacific Ocean. This port has been a meeting point for migrants and explorers, as well as a center for research and education. Its capacity to act as a logistical and academic hub perfectly aligns with the mission of promoting international cooperation in ocean conservation. We must work together, mobilizing local, regional, and national authorities, and aligning the efforts of academia and civil society. We already have the spaces, and the State will commit the resources necessary to prepare the infrastructure to make it a reality. Our commitment to Valparaíso is firm, and we are determined to make it the seat of the BBNJ. This region is home to the largest marine parks, so this initiative will not only strengthen international collaboration in protecting our oceans but also leave a valuable legacy for future generations, ensuring that our marine resources are valued and preserved for the well-being of the planet. Thus, Valparaíso rises as a symbol of hope and commitment toward the conservation and sustainability of our oceans.”

Kenneth Pugh
Senator for the Valparaíso region



1827

First publication of El Mercurio de Valparaíso, the oldest newspaper in the world published continuously in Spanish



“

The Valparaíso region has a historical connection to the ocean, both for Chile and for the world. We were the first link between the Southern Cone of the Americas and different continents, and people from various nations settled here to build their lives.

The ocean has always been the gateway to our regional capital, the city is full of stories of travel, exchanges, and moments we share with the world. When we learned that work was underway to conserve and regulate the sustainable use of the high seas, we immediately knew that this agreement would be a tremendous contribution to the future of humanity. We offered our subnational government's experience and commitment to these global discussions, to facilitate all the necessary conditions for the world to protect the future of the ocean and its relationship with future generations. We are prepared to welcome the entire global ocean conservation and sustainable use system working to protect all the lives that depend on the ocean.”

Rodrigo Mundaca Cabrera
Regional Governor of Valparaíso

Sydney, New York, Los Angeles, Miami, Atlanta, Dallas, Toronto, and Istanbul with expanding new announced routes that will connect Santiago with main hubs in Africa and Asia. Santiago hosts 72 resident embassies and offers comprehensive services for diplomats and their families. Sharing a time zone with New York for most of the year (+2 hours in winter) facilitates real-time coordination with UN headquarters, diplomatic missions and other international institutions.

Valparaíso and its neighboring city Viña del Mar form a single urban area of over one million inhabitants, combining a strong economic base with a rich cultural and academic life. The region offers 15 hospitals of high complexity medical services, ensuring international standards of healthcare for residents and visitors, as well as more than 10

1858

Founding of the first International school in Valparaíso

including prestigious institutions such as the Pontifical Catholic University of Valparaíso (founded in 1928), the University of Valparaíso (1911), and Federico Santa María Technical University (1931), renowned for their excellence in oceanography, marine biology, environmental law, and engineering. These universities lead research projects on marine ecosystems, climate adaptation, and sustainable development, complementing the extensi-

international schools that cater to diplomatic and expatriate families.

It is also one of Chile's main academic hubs, with 12 universities and over 20 technical institutes,

ve ocean-science academic network across Chile and directly aligned with the BBNJ's objectives.

Valparaíso's institutional importance is also unparalleled in Chile: since 1990, it has been the seat of the National Congress, symbolizing the country's democracy and public governance. The presence of the Legislative Branch reinforces the city's security, administrative capabilities, and accessibility for high-level political engagement. In addition, the city is the seat of several key ocean-related institutions, including the Chilean Navy, the Hydrographic and Oceanographic Service, the Vice-Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture, the National Service of Fisheries and Aquaculture, the Fisheries Development Institute, and the National Maritime Museum, among others.

Beyond its infrastructure, Valparaíso offers a vibrant and inspiring environment. With its urban layout, shaped by 45 hills descending toward the Pacific, the city hosts numerous international cultural festivals, museums, and artistic spaces. It also boasts a thriving tourism and hospitality sector with world-class hotels, conference facilities, and connectivity to nearby attractions such as the wine valleys of Casablanca and Aconcagua, the Andes mountains with premier ski destinations, and the national parks of La Campana and Peñuelas Lake.

The neighbour city of Viña del Mar, located only 8km away, offers great services and cultural activities. This includes the International Festival of Viña del Mar, which has been organized since 1960 and it is the most relevant of its kind in Latin America.



Valparaíso: History, present and future

The "Jewel of the Pacific" is a vibrant crucible of cultures. Since the 19th century, Valparaíso has attracted **multiple waves of immigrants, including British, Chinese, Croatian, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Spanish, and U.S. communities**. This remarkable cultural fusion profoundly shaped the city's unique character, from the founding of Chile's first stock exchange and fire-fighting company by immigrants to the city's distinctive architectural blend of European mansions and colorful hillside homes.

Its people are a reflection of meetings in time and space that contribute to the port's culture. Early globalization was a reflection of life in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, leading to the Old Quarter of Valparaíso declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2003. Amid the cultural landscapes, historic neighborhoods, narrow streets, ancient trolleys and elevators, immigrants and natives bring together their different cultures and ways of living.

Cultural Capital of Chile, the city that Chilean poet and Nobel Laureate Pablo Neruda established his house in Valparaíso. From this house, called "La Sebastiana", perched high on Cerro Florida, Neruda gazed at the colorful landscape of the hills, transforming their vibrant disorder into verses and odes to the sea, even immortalizing a local dish, the "caldillo de congrio", in his poetry.

There are countless walks to be taken through the city, through hills, viewpoints, and labyrinthine stairways, until you reach the shimmering waterfront. Between each turn, funiculars from the 19th century still creak their way up and down the slopes, connecting the upper world of painted houses with the bustle of the port below. Every mural, every graffiti tells a story: Valparaíso itself is an open-air

museum, a canvas of freedom and imagination.

Its museums such as the Pablo Neruda La Sebastiana Museum House, the Museum of Fine Arts (Palacio Baburizza), the National Maritime Museum, the Natural History Museum, and the Organological Museum or Mirador de Lukas (Outlook), gather the port's soul into a symphony of memory and creativity. The nearby city of Viña del Mar, with its castles and gardens, preserves the elegance of a bygone Belle Époque, displaying treasures from Rapa Nui and the Atacama Desert at the Fonck Museum.

The Port City is open to the Pacific Ocean and tells stories of sailors who crossed oceans and left their cultures in the maze of its hills. Today, its art, hospitality, and cuisine reflect that spirit, from seafood markets and taverns serving chorrillanas and ceviches, to the bohemian bars where musicians, painters, and dreamers meet. As local writer Salvador Reyes once said, "Valparaíso is not a place, it is a state of mind."

At night, the hills of the ports are lit by stars, the glamorous streets of Viña del Mar and the entire coastline, from the north to the south of the region, welcomes visitors to share an evening of entertainment, with good atmosphere and good music. The casinos of the region, be it the traditional Municipal Casino in Viña del Mar, or those of Rinconada and San Antonio, add value to the proposed visit.

The legendary Viña del Mar International Song Festival, watched by millions around the world, crowns each summer with its torches and silver seagulls as a symbol of artistic triumph. For over 50 years, this event has brought together the best voices and artists to present their talents. Meanwhile, the Olmué Huaso Festival combines the best of folklore from throughout the country to enchant with Spanish-American rhythms. The Campana-Peñuelas Biosphere Reserve offers an example of trekking through local biodiversity, visited by Charles Darwin in 1834 as part of his historical journey across the world.

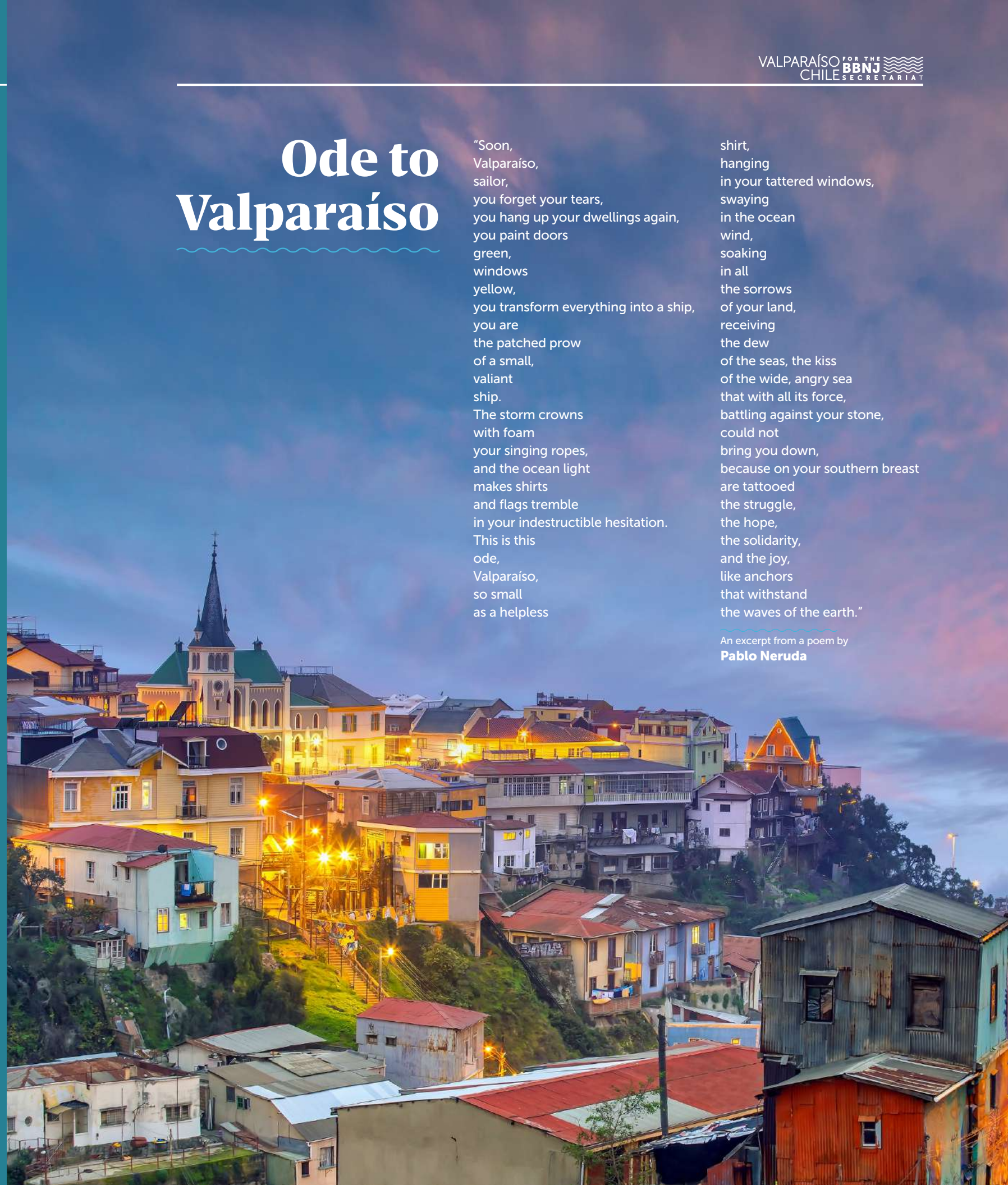
Because, in the end, Valparaíso and its surroundings are a living poem: written by the sea, sung by its people, and painted on its walls.

Ode to Valparaíso

"Soon,
Valparaíso,
sailor,
you forget your tears,
you hang up your dwellings again,
you paint doors
green,
windows
yellow,
you transform everything into a ship,
you are
the patched prow
of a small,
valiant
ship.
The storm crowns
with foam
your singing ropes,
and the ocean light
makes shirts
and flags tremble
in your indestructible hesitation.
This is this
ode,
Valparaíso,
so small
as a helpless

shirt,
hanging
in your tattered windows,
swaying
in the ocean
wind,
soaking
in all
the sorrows
of your land,
receiving
the dew
of the seas, the kiss
of the wide, angry sea
that with all its force,
battling against your stone,
could not
bring you down,
because on your southern breast
are tattooed
the struggle,
the hope,
the solidarity,
and the joy,
like anchors
that withstand
the waves of the earth."

An excerpt from a poem by
Pablo Neruda





IV. Chile's offer

Chile's proposal to host the BBNJ Secretariat meets the highest standards of the United Nations system. **The government of Chile is prepared to provide, at its own expense, a world class headquarters fully equipped to meet the operational, logistical, and technological requirements of the Secretariat.** The facilities will include modern and accessible office spaces, conference rooms, interpretation services, environmentally sustainable infrastructure, and high-speed digital connectivity, ensuring a fully functional and efficient working environment.

The Simon Bolivar Building at Parque Barón combines historical value with modern infrastructure and symbolizes Chile's maritime heritage and commitment to sustainability.

The effective and prompt functioning of the BBNJ Secretariat is intimately connected with its capacity to duly perform its functions. Chile is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for the BBNJ Secretariat, its personnel, and the national representatives, experts, observers, and accredited press that visit Chile to participate in the Conference of the Parties, the meetings of the Subsidiary Bodies, and any other activity organized by the Secretariat.

In this regard, **Chile's offer on privileges and immunities** is based on the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (1946), as well as the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, as appropriate, and also incorporating the best practices and international standards observed in the func-

tioning of other Secretariats, as highlighted by the States delegations during the PrepCom deliberations.

Conscious that a legal regime of the privileges and immunities is not enough to address all the legitimate concerns raised by the States' delegations based on their own experiences with other international entities, Chile echoes the utmost importance of inclusivity of States in the works of the Secretariat and is in position to **offer additional administrative facilities** that guarantee an inclusive and smooth participation in the activities organized by the Secretariat.

Chile is **fully committed to the speedy negotiation and conclusion of the respective Host Country Agreement.** Its offer to host the BBNJ Secretariat has already been backed by **cross-cutting political support** from both the Executive and Legislative branches. For reference, the last Host Country Agreement subscribed by Chile, in the context of the UNFCCC COP25 (2019), took approximately **4 months** to be fully concluded at a domestic level.

Chile is also ready to serve as host country of Conference of the Parties (COPs). At the same time, Chile reaffirms its openness to future COPs being organized in other United Nations headquarters or host countries as State Parties may decide. This position underscores Chile's collaborative approach and readiness to ensure that the BBNJ framework serves all Parties equally, fostering a truly global, transparent, and cooperative governance of the ocean beyond national jurisdiction.

Privileges and Immunities

Chile's proposal addresses **two main topics**: first, **privileges and immunities**, covering the BBNJ Secretariat, its officials, national representatives, experts, and other participants in its activities in Chile; and, second, **administrative facilities** for Secretariat officials, their spouses and dependents, national representatives, experts, observers, accredited press, and other participants in its activities in Chile.

These facilities include a **BBNJ Visa**, designed to ensure a **totally digital, free of charge, expedite and inclusive process** for those passport holders who need a visa. **The visa approval process does not require a in-person interview in the Consulate.** **Additional dedicated administrative facilities** will ensure a smoother integration of personnel and their families in the country, including social security number or national identification number, access to all-digital public services platform, the possibility of **carrying out paid work by spouses**, and the **recognition of foreign driver licenses for spouses and dependents**, among others.



Secretariat

Chile offers to the BBNJ Secretariat the **legal personality** to contract, acquire and dispose of immovable and movable property, and to institute legal proceedings. These terms are the same enjoyed for example by the **UNFCCC in Germany and the CBD in Canada**. Furthermore, the Secretariat in Chile will enjoy **immunity from jurisdiction and execution** of its property, assets and facilities.

In addition to this, Chile offers to the Secretariat the **inviolability of its premises, archives, and documents**, including immunity from any form of search and seizure.

Concerning taxation, the Secretariat will be **exempt from all direct taxes, payments, contributions, or fees** established by national authorities or obligations related to such payments, contributions, or fees. Likewise, it shall be exempt from customs duties and from import prohibitions and restrictions regarding articles imported or exported by the organization for official use. This exemption will also apply to customs duties, prohibitions, and restrictions regarding the import and export of its publications. Regarding indirect taxation, the Secretariat will be entitled to the reimbursement of Value Added Tax (VAT) for substantive purchases of goods and services for official use.

Moreover, the Secretariat will be **exempt from all financial controls, regulations, or moratoria**. This includes the acquisition of foreign currency, maintaining accounts in foreign currency, acquiring through authorized institutions, holding and managing funds, securities, and gold, and introducing, mobilizing, or transferring them within or outside the national territory. According to international practice, such an exemption will be exercised with due consideration of any observations made by the host country in the exercise of these rights, seeking to address them as much as possible.

In terms of communication, **the treatment of communications will be no less favorable** than that accorded to any other government or organization, including foreign diplomatic missions in Chile. Furthermore, the Secretariat will receive a **guarantee of non-censorship** of its correspondence and communications. The Secretariat will also be allowed the **use of bags** under the same conditions as diplomatic bags, as well as the **use of State railways** under the same conditions as diplomatic missions.



Secretariat Officials

Officials will enjoy **immunity from judicial proceedings and inviolability from personal arrest or detention** for any act performed in the exercise of their official functions. Likewise, they will enjoy **immunity from search and seizure** of their personal and official luggage.

Concerning taxation, Secretariat officials will be **exempt from any form of direct tax** on salaries, emoluments, and indemnities paid by the Secretariat. In addition, if they do not have Chilean nationality, they will be **exempt from any direct tax on income from outside the national territory**.

Regarding movement and residency, officials will be **exempt from immigration restrictions**. Specifically, those who do not have Chilean nationality will be **exempt from any national service obligations**. Furthermore, they will have the **freedom to hold foreign securities, foreign currency accounts, and movable or immovable property**, within the national territory or elsewhere. At the end of their term of office, they will enjoy the **freedom to withdraw from the country, without any prohibition or restriction, their funds, in the same currencies and in the same amounts introduced by them into Chile** through authorized entities.

Secretariat officials will also enjoy the **right to import, free of customs duties and other taxes, prohibitions, and restrictions on import, their furniture and personal effects**. This includes one personal car at the time of initially taking up the position in Chile, provided that the expected duration is not less than one year. Officials will enjoy **freedom of transit** and a **free visa**, as well as receiving a **special card** certifying their status as an official and the enjoyment of these prerogatives.

Finally, diplomatic immunities and prerogatives will be granted to the **Head of the Secretariat and se-**

nior officials with a rank equivalent to or higher than the highest professional category of the United Nations, as well as **their spouses and single children** under 20 years of age, single children under 25 years of age who are studying full-time at universities or higher education centres recognized by Chile, and single children with physical or mental disabilities, regardless of their age.

Spouses and Dependent Family Members of Secretariat Officials

Spouses and dependent family members of Secretariat Officials will enjoy **exemption from immigration restrictions**. In addition, spouses and dependent family members who do not have Chilean nationality will be **exempt from any national service obligations. They will also enjoy freedom of transit** and a **free visa**.

Participants Representing States Parties in International Meetings

Participants representing States Parties in International Meetings will enjoy **immunity from personal arrest or**

detention and against the seizure or embargo of their personal luggage. They will also have **immunity from jurisdiction** for actions performed in the exercise of their official functions, **and inviolability of all papers and documents**. They will also enjoy **freedom of transit**.

Regarding communications, they will have the **right to use codes** and to **receive documents or correspondence by courier or in sealed bags**. Furthermore, they and their spouses will be entitled to **exemption from all immigration restrictions**.

Concerning financial matters and personal luggage, they will be accorded the **same privileges regarding monetary and exchange restrictions** as those granted to representatives of foreign governments on temporary official missions, and the **same immunities and privileges regarding personal luggage** as those granted to members of diplomatic missions of similar rank.

Participants Representing Observer States in International Meetings

Participants representing Observer States in International Meetings will enjoy **immunity from jurisdiction** for actions performed in the exercise of their official functions during their participation. They will also enjoy **freedom of transit**.

Experts and other participants in International Meetings

Experts and other participants in International Meetings will enjoy **immunity from personal arrest or detention and against the seizure of their personal luggage**. They will have **immunity from jurisdiction** for actions performed in the exercise of their official functions, **and inviolability of all papers and documents** relating to the work they carry out on behalf of the Secretariat. They will also enjoy **freedom of transit**.

Concerning financial matters and personal luggage, they will be accorded the **same privileges regarding monetary and exchange restrictions** as those granted to representatives of foreign governments on temporary official missions. Similarly, they shall be accorded the same **immunities and facilities with respect to their personal luggage** as those accorded to diplomatic envoys.

Other Administrative Facilities

- Secretariat Officials and their Spouses and Dependent Family Members

Spouses and dependent family members may undertake **paid work** under the same conditions and requirements as Chilean nationals, with **prior authorization** from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Furthermore, Chile **recognizes same-sex marriage** under its national legislation.

To facilitate their official processes, the **expedited issuance of an identification number or Unique Tax Roll (RUT)** for spouses and dependent family members

shall be ensured, **guaranteeing full access to the national system for accessing all digital public services and certificates through a single password (Clave Única)**. Finally, the **recognition of driving licenses** for spouses and dependent family members will be guaranteed.

- Participants in International Meetings

Likewise, individuals holding **ordinary passports** invited to and **press accredited** to events convened by the Secretariat will be **exempt from the payment of fees** for prior authorization or visas, which will be granted under **full-online and expedite process, without need to attend a consulate**.

BBNJ Visa: A Snapshot

The **Consular Assistance System** (SAC, for its acronym in Spanish) is the digital platform of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile designed to manage consular procedures abroad in a unified and electronic manner. The platform allows Chilean and foreign citizens to request services such as visas, apostilles, legalizations, identity documents, and certificates. This tool facilitates coordination between consulates and the central offices in Santiago, ensuring a **secure, efficient, and transparent flow of information**. Through this system, Chile guarantees a **modern, efficient, and accessible consular service from anywhere in the world**.

The SAC stands **as a concrete example of State digitalization applied to the consular sphere**, operating under **high standards of security and personal data protection**. Its integration with systems such as the Chilean Police strengthens background checks and migration security, while the online appointment scheduling and issuance of electronic visas demonstrate the country's technological and institutional capacity to provide reliable services to the international community.

Chile offers **to expressly include in the host country agreement** the following conditions to facilitate the obtaining of visa by those that require it:



- **Fully-digital process** to obtain the prior authorization or visa, when is needed, **avoiding to attend in-person meetings or interviews to a consulate** to obtain the visa.
- A **dedicated communication channel** between the Secretariat and the host country to facilitate the exchange of information regarding event announcements and lists of accredited participants (e.g., a liaison officer or focal point within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs).
- **Dedicated staff** to facilitate the process.
- The **dissemination of a guide** for participants requiring prior authorization or visa.
- **Exceptionally granting of prior authorization or visa at the international airport**.





Secretariat location: Parque Barón in Valparaíso

As part of the ongoing revitalization of Valparaíso's historic waterfront, Chile proposes Parque Barón, located in the heart of the city's coastal district, as the future headquarters of the BBNJ Secretariat. This area is currently undergoing a large-scale urban redevelopment project that seeks to create another point of connection between the city and the sea, while restoring its cultural and industrial heritage. At the center of this transformation stands the Simón Bolívar Warehouse, built between 1930 and 1937 by architect Eric Jacobsen and engineer Hans Von Kiesling, one of the most remarkable examples of rationalist industrial architecture in South America. Conceived after the 1929 economic crisis to stimulate local development, it was constructed in steel and reinforced concrete.

Measuring more than 400 meters in length, the wa-

rehouse is the longest building in Chile and a defining feature of Valparaíso's port skyline. Declared a Protected Historical Building in 2005, it has withstood major earthquakes and decades of maritime activity, symbolizing the city's resilience and industrial legacy. Once restored and adapted, this iconic building offers 11,000 square meters of flexible space, ideally suited for offices, conference rooms, and facilities to support the Secretariat's operations and meetings. For decades, its silhouette formed part of the port's landscape. Repurposed in 2002 as the city's Cruise Passenger Terminal, it welcomed thousands of international visitors and marked the beginning of Valparaíso's waterfront renewal. Today, the Simón Bolívar Warehouse is once again being restored as the centerpiece of Parque Barón, bridging Valparaíso's industrial heritage with its future as a global hub for ocean governance and sustainability.

The location of Baron Park offers excellent urban and transport connectivity. It is served by two Metro stations, each located at both ends of the park, directly linking the site to downtown Valparaíso and neighboring areas. The site is also easily accessible by major roads, public transit, and pedestrian routes, and it is located just minutes away from the National Congress, government offices, universities and research centers of the city.

The large space within the building allows for a two-story structure, using sustainable materials mainly in wood, creating a warm atmosphere while at the same time reflecting the capacities of Chile as a country with a world-class forestry industry and construction standards.

The new structure within the building will occupy around 40% of the Warehouse, and will include office spaces, services required for the members of the Secretariat and other amenities and infrastructure as needed. The option to develop a second floor will also allow common areas and hallways that will look at the vast Pacific Ocean, over the Parque Baron, creating an inspiring environment for the work of the Secretariat.

The space provided can be flexible to allow the potential future expansion of the Secretariat, both in numbers and in functions. Bearing this in mind, the structure will consist of an initial area of offices, along with meeting rooms and a large conference room. This initial stage will be complemented with a second stage to meet the expansion as decided by Parties of the Treaty.

Considering the construction times, this should allow for a timely provision of offices and work spaces when the Secretariat is formed. However, Chile is also ready

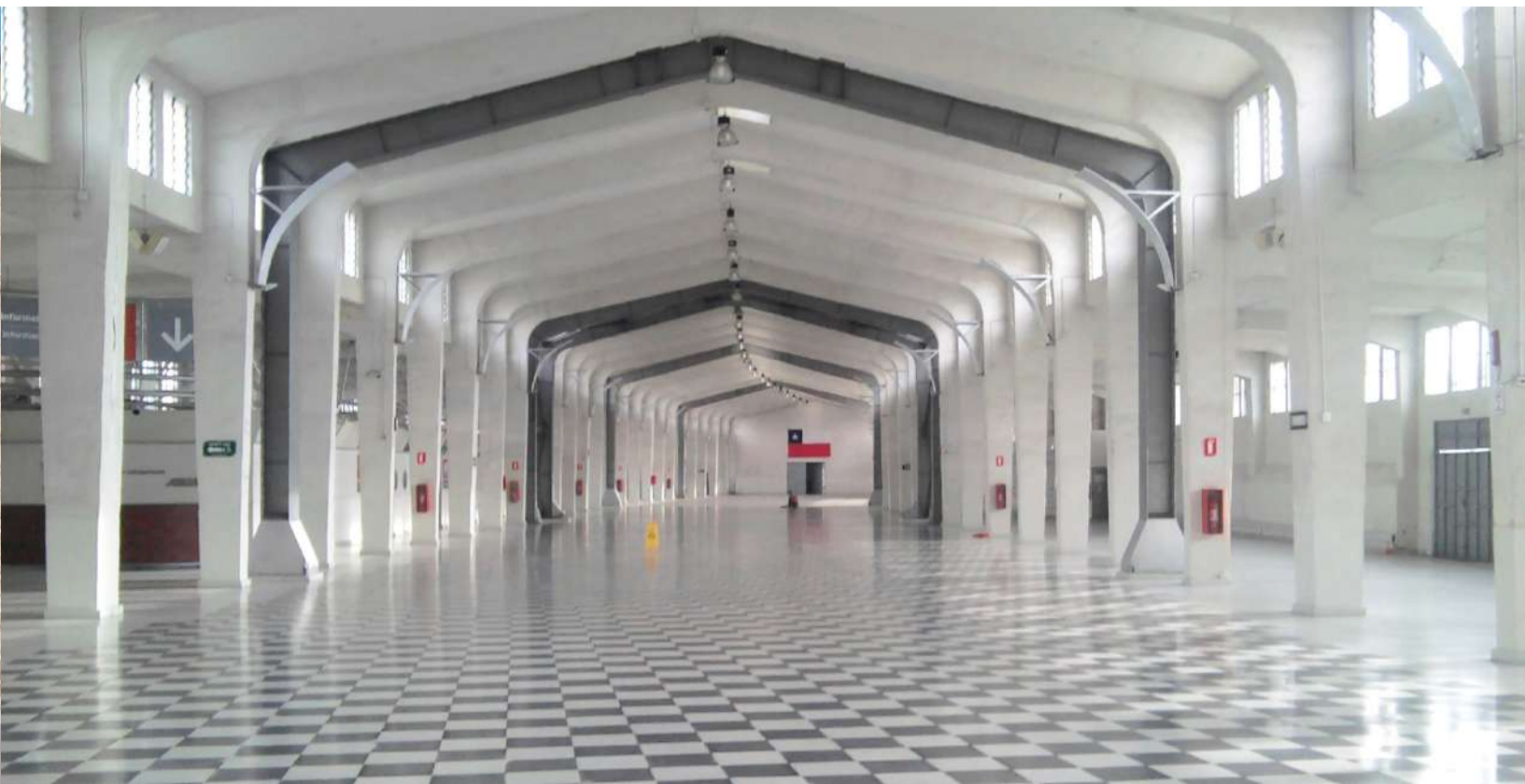
to provide temporary office space in current structures, which would serve for the immediate installation of the Secretariat as needed.

Chile's offer includes world-class services for the functioning of the Secretariat in Valparaíso, covering connectivity, accessibility and infrastructure to allow efficient coordination within the Secretariat and with Parties and observers.

The Conference Room that is envisaged in the proposal has a total capacity of 200 people, or two areas that can be separated to allow two parallel meetings of 100 people each. This is conceived to host meetings of the BBNJ Subsidiary Bodies, with two of such meetings that can happen simultaneously at any time through the year.

The ample space available can also serve different purposes that go beyond the needs of the Secretariat staff itself. Specific spaces can be allocated for Small Islands Developing Countries (SIDS), in line with the full recognition of the special circumstances as reflected in the principles of the Agreement.









V. Moving Forward Together

The story of the South Pacific is one of humankind's greatest achievements. Across successive waves of exploration, its peoples crossed immense distances guided by the stars of the Southern Hemisphere. Through this endeavor, they developed a profound understanding of the ocean as a pathway and a source of connection, knowledge, and identity. This heritage endures in the Pacific nations today and finds deep resonance in Chile, a country whose geography, history, and culture are inseparable from the sea.

Chile's proposal to host the BBNJ Secretariat in Valparaíso builds upon this shared oceanic legacy. It reflects not only a strategic and technical capacity but also a profound respect for the sea as a unifying space among peoples. As a tricontinental nation, present in South America, Oceania (Rapa Nui), and Antarctica, Chile has long been a bridge between regions, cultures, and hemispheres. Its contribution to the Law of the Sea, leadership in the creation of

marine protected areas, and pioneering role in the BBNJ First Movers Initiative demonstrate a commitment that extends beyond national interests to a vision of the ocean as a global common interest.

Establishing the BBNJ Secretariat in Valparaíso marks an historic milestone for the United Nations: the first universal UN body in Latin America, bringing global decision-making closer to the Global South. It would embody the inclusivity, equity, and cooperation that lie at the heart of the BBNJ Agreement. Chile's proven ability to host major UN institutions such as ECLAC and the FAO Regional Office, combined with its strong democratic governance, macroeconomic stability, and world-class digital and physical infrastructure, ensure a secure, efficient, and transparent environment for the Secretariat's work.

Chile also offers a comprehensive legal framework of privileges and immunities, aligned with UN stan-

dards and international practice. These are guarantees that cover the Secretariat, its staff, delegates, experts, and observers. This is complemented by specific arrangements to ensure inclusivity and participation of all delegations, such as the BBNJ Visa. Together, these measures reflect Chile's unwavering respect for international law and its longstanding tradition of cooperation with the UN system.

Valparaíso itself offers a setting rich in symbolism and functionality. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, it stands as a living testimony to maritime heritage and resilience, with its proposed headquarters, the restored Simón Bolívar Warehouse at Parque Barón, linking the city's industrial past to its sustainable urban present. Just one hour from Santiago's international airport and minutes from the National Congress and leading universities, Valparaíso provides both accessibility and inspiration.

Anchored in Chile's scientific excellen-

ce and environmental leadership, the Secretariat would find here a partner committed to advancing a science-based, inclusive, and sustainable global ocean governance.

At the confluence of history and the ocean, Chile offers a setting that embodies the spirit of the BBNJ Agreement, a meeting point between tradition and innovation, between the peoples of the South Pacific and the world. Chile stands as a purpose — driven home for the BBNJ Secretariat, where cooperation, transparency, and stewardship come together to safeguard the ocean and its sustainable use.

As in every voyage and exploration, like for the voyagers and seafarers that showed us the way to know the ocean, we are starting an adventure that requires courage, leadership and commitment. This proposal is an opportunity to have this conversation from the south, where everyone is included and considered, to write a new chapter in this journey.



VALPARAÍSO
CHILE FOR THE **BBNJ**
SECRETARIAT

