The Commonwealth

**JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION**

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| **Job Title:** | Adviser - Commonwealth Blue Charter (Ocean Governance) |
| **Directorate:** | Trade Oceans and Natural Resources |
| **Grade:** | F |
| **Reports To:** | Advsier and Head - Ocean |

**General Information**

The Commonwealth Secretariat is the principal intergovernmental body of the Commonwealth, responsible for advancing and achieving the shared goals of the association's 56 member governments in promoting democracy, development and respect for diversity.

The Secretariat is headed by the Secretary-General who, as the Chief Executive of the organisation, is responsible and accountable for overall leadership, management and delivery.

The Trade, Oceans and Natural Resources Directorate (TONR) is one of the three Programme Directorates of the Commonwealth Secretariat. It is responsible for delivering on two strategic pillars of the Secretariat's Strategic Plan, namely:

- Sustainable and inclusive economic and social development; and
- Climate-resilient and low-carbon development to respond to climate and ocean emergencies.

A significant part of the Directorate's work is of a consultancy and advisory nature, delivered through a combination of in-house and external expertise.

**Ocean Section**

The Ocean Team is responsible for delivering key Commonwealth strategic mandates relating to the sustainable management of oceans, including those outlined in the Apia Commonwealth Ocean Declaration (ACOD). The Ocean Team supports the development efforts of member countries through the provision of policy, legal, economic and environmental technical assistance and capacity building, in two core programme areas:

- The sustainable governance and utilisation of ocean space and resources, including the delimitation of maritime boundaries, the development of ocean governance frameworks, policies and regulatory regimes, and the development of sustainable blue economies; and

- The Commonwealth Blue Charter, supporting this Pan-Commonwealth agreement by Heads of Government to work cooperatively on meeting their commitments to the sustainable development and conservation of the ocean (including SDG14), implemented through ten country-led action groups.

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**Job Summary**

Reporting to the Adviser and Head - Ocean, the post-holder will spend the majority of their time on the ongoing programme management of the Commonwealth Blue Charter and the implementation of the recently adopted ACOD.

The Commonwealth Blue Charter was adopted at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 2018. At the 2024 Commonwealth Ocean Ministerial Meeting in Cyprus and later at CHOGM in Samoa, the programme moved in to a new implementation phase with mandates such as assisting governments access innovative blue finance and the implementation of the ACOD, which includes areas such as, marine pollution, blue carbon, the 30x30 agenda and others.

The Commonwealth Blue Charter continues to be one of the Commonwealth's flagship programmes. It is member driven and led by Commonwealth Blue Charter Champion countries, who have voluntarily stepped forward on issues important to them. To date, eleven countries have stepped forward to lead on eight different topic areas relevant to sustainable ocean development and conservation.

The Commonwealth Blue Charter Adviser will play an important role in driving the ACOD and Blue Charter forward.

Where appropriate, the post holder will provide specialised strategic, policy and technical advice concerning critical elements of oceans governance and the development of ocean-based economies. In particular, the post-holder will be responsible for:

**High-Level Management and Technical Strategic Leadership**

(a) Ongoing programme management of the Commonwealth Blue Charter and the implementation of the recently adopted ACOD;
(b) Working with the Ocean team to support the implementation of the ACOD;
(c) Developing and maintaining key strategic and funding relationships to support the Strategic Plan and Secretariat CHOGM mandates;
(d) Taking direct responsibility for the management of a portfolio of Commonwealth Blue Charter projects. Providing specialised technical and policy advice for supporting member states in their participation of Commonwealth Blue Charter Action Groups and implementation;
(e) Contributing to the development of strategic Commonwealth policy position papers on matters of ocean governance, the Blue Charter, and other related areas;
(f) Undertaking and managing research, analysis and syntheses activities, and identifying proposals and options to enhance support to member countries in the Blue Charter and ocean governance;
(g) Leading research on the identification of new and emerging ocean governance, and presenting analysis of information gathered and reviewed from diverse sources with plausible recommendations to governments and the Blue Charter Action Groups;

(h) Developing and taking forward the organisation of expert meetings, policy dialogues and other events to inform member governments and target institutions on issues related to ocean governance and the implementation of the Commonwealth Blue Charter;
(i) Supporting high-level Commonwealth meetings such as the Commonwealth Ocean Ministers meeting;
(j) Identifying how the Commonwealth Blue Charter can be strengthened so that it results in Commonwealth Member countries receiving significant revenue from Blue Carbon and other relevant policies; and
(k) Supporting technical assistance programmes by providing strategic advice, and critically assessing requests in areas articulated in the Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Plan related to ocean governance and the Blue Charter.

**Capacity Building and Knowledge Management**

(l) Undertaking the generation of knowledge and learning on ocean governance issues, with a focus on issues relevant to the Blue Charter Action Groups;
(m) Providing appropriate support to Commonwealth countries to implement ocean governance and Blue Charter measures, including training and capacity-building efforts;
(n) Developing ocean governance and Blue Charter toolkits, manuals, guidelines, model laws and other materials, including online technical support modules; and
(o) Facilitating the exchange of information, the sharing of knowledge, best practices and expertise in ocean governance across the Commonwealth and beyond.

**Resource Mobilisation and Partnerships**

(p) Contributing to resource mobilisation to support member countries to implement ocean governance and Blue Charter actions;
(q) Establishing and strengthening strategic partnerships aimed at advancing the intervention of the Commonwealth Secretariat for the benefit of member countries and their Action Groups; and
(r) Contributing to the enhancement of the Commonwealth Secretariat's visibility and raising public awareness of the Commonwealth Secretariat’s work at national, regional and international scale.

**Tasks, Administration and Management**

(s) Contributing to, and in some cases leading on, planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting on programme performance;
(t) Defining new projects in response to Action Group requests for assistance;
(u) Managing external consultants offering specialist legal, technical and other inputs;
(v) Supporting Blue Charter Action Groups by responding to relevant queries, conducting assessments and capacity needs gaps, drafting training materials and assisting in the priority-setting of pilot projects;
(w) Working with colleagues to develop partnerships and initiatives with multi-lateral and bi-lateral agencies in relation to the focus areas and

maintaining contacts with senior government officials, investors and other international agencies;

(x) Contributing to international seminars, conferences and expert group meetings; and

(y) Adhering to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and the Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy; and

(z) Performing any other duties as may be required from time to time.

The job involves frequent overseas travel.

**Person Specification**

Education

*Necessary*

- An undergraduate degree.

*Desirable*

- A post-graduate degree in a relevant subject such as ocean policy, environmental management, or similar.
- Formal qualifications relevant to the 10 actions groups, blue finance, international law of the sea, international environmental law, ocean science or ocean policy.

Experience

*Necessary*

- A minimum of ten years' experience operating at a senior level dealing with high-level counterparts.
- Prior experience in an international development context, gained in an international or intergovernmental organisation, government ministry or the private sector.
- Good organisational and communication skills and a track record of leading (or co-leading) the development of major initiatives with multiple stakeholders at the intergovernmental level.
- Strong skills in high-level presentations and communications.
- Strong writing skills including in the development of documentation on relevant case studies.
- Demonstrated experience in resource mobilisation with knowledge of private sector funding opportunities.
- Experience building partnerships and networks with international organisations.
- Able to work independently, under pressure and under time constraints.

*Desirable*

- Experience at a senior level concerning the management of maritime-based industries, including blue carbon, renewable energy, tourism, maritime transportation, fisheries, aquaculture, marine bio-technology or related areas.
- Experience in marine scientific research, ocean policy making and/or the law of the sea.

**Competencies**

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| **Respect for Diversity** |
| Works effectively with people from all backgrounds.<br><br>Treats all people with dignity and respect. Treats men and women equally.<br><br>Shows respect and understanding of diverse points of view and demonstrates understanding in daily work and decision making.<br><br>Examine own biases and behaviours to avoid stereotypical responses and does not discriminate against any individual or group.<br><br>Challenges others to rectify biases in behaviour, systems & process. |
| **Communication** |
| Speaks and writes diplomatically and presents in public fora with charisma.<br><br>Demonstrates professional demeanour and executive presence when meeting stakeholders.<br><br>Respects confidentiality and works to strengthen the trusted advisor status of the Commonwealth Secretariat. |
| **Planning & Analysis** |
| Effectively assesses and advises on major programmes/activities at a divisional level.<br><br>Balances focus in order to deliver both Commonwealth Secretariat and member states' goals.<br><br>Ability to interpret incomplete and/or ambiguous information.<br><br>Effectively analyses and assesses new or uncertain critical situations. |
| **Adapting & Innovating** |
| Identifies innovations and opportunities to improve divisional operations/advice and effectively gains buy-in.<br><br>Evaluates impact of innovations and improvement initiatives.<br><br>Remains receptive to and encourages innovative ideas from colleagues.<br><br>Initiates change that will enable programme/team to fulfil objectives in light of changing circumstances. |
| **Adhering to Principles & Values** |
| Sets example and embodies Commonwealth Secretariat principles and values.<br><br>Demonstrably protects the reputation of the Commonwealth Secretariat.<br><br>Interprets and implements Commonwealth Secretariat principles and values.<br><br>Ensures that division/programmes operate in a manner aligned to the values and |

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| principles of the organisation. |
| **Leadership & Development** |
| Takes responsibility for participating in personal professional development opportunities that the Secretariat provides.<br><br>Directs the energy of the organisation towards a common goal.<br><br>Provides an example to others by demonstrating moral courage in the face of challenging circumstances. |

January 2025