



Global Ocean
Commission

The Future of Our Ocean

Next steps and priorities

Report 2016

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Find out more at www.globaloceancommission.org

This Global Ocean Commission report is dedicated to Foua Toloa (1955-2015). His role on the Commission reflected his role in life as a true Ocean soul and advocate for change and action. Foua was eloquent, thoughtful and inspired the whole Commission and all whom he came into contact with.

Cover photograph © Corey Arnold



Global Ocean
Commission

Letter from the Co-chairs

February 2016

The Global Ocean Commission's report, *From Decline to Recovery: A Rescue Package for the Global Ocean*, was released in June 2014. In it we identified the main drivers of global ocean decline and mapped out a set of eight practical proposals for action to achieve global ocean recovery; these provide an economically and politically feasible roadmap for reversing the deteriorating health of the ocean within five years. Eighteen months after putting forward the proposals, it is time to take stock of how far we have come, and where we are headed.

When the Commission came together to prepare this rescue package, the narrative surrounding ocean conservation was bleak. This was particularly true of the high seas – the focus of our report and 64% of the global ocean – which we likened to a failed State where lawlessness verging on anarchy prevailed, leaving this huge area vulnerable to plunder and neglect.

The Commission and its many partners have worked to raise the profile of the high seas globally, demonstrating the need to take action as a matter of urgency. Threats to the ocean remain severe, but there has been a palpable shift in the readiness of the global community to address this area and important preliminary steps have been taken. Though the road to ocean recovery is long and arduous, there is now a greater realisation of the problems, which is an essential step forward.

We can call 2015 a watershed year for the global ocean. The Commission worked successfully on numerous fronts with its many partners – nationally, regionally and globally – to prioritise the ocean in key decisions. The world came together and pledged to conserve the ocean as a central component of the United Nation's *Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* Agenda. The adoption of a stand-alone Sustainable Development Goal (UN SDG) specifically aimed at protecting and conserving the global ocean and its resources reflects an enhanced political interest in the ocean, and will add legitimacy and momentum to global efforts to protect it. In another landmark moment, the United Nations General Assembly agreed to begin negotiations towards a new multilateral agreement under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), aimed specifically at protecting high seas biodiversity. If countries enter into these negotiations with the clear objective of reversing ocean decline, there is real potential for strengthening the weak and fragmented high seas governance that overshadowed so much of the Commission's report.

There has been practical progress in other areas too. Awareness of the significant impacts of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and its links to human rights abuses and food insecurity is rising, while new mechanisms and technologies are emerging that will help rid our seas and ports of rogue fishing vessels and illegal operators. This is in large part thanks to the leadership of the European Union and the USA. We have also seen increased recognition of the risk to ocean health posed by plastic waste (in particular, the growing body of evidence that micro-plastics are entering the food chain) and encouraging signs that governments and businesses are ready to act. This is one element of the wider need to transition towards circular economic models, which is increasingly informing decisions on all aspects of development, sustainability and conservation.

On a highly positive note, in the period since the Commission's report was released, huge expanses of the global ocean have been protected. In 2014 and 2015, governments pledged to designate new or expanded marine protected areas (MPAs) covering approximately 4.9 million square kilometres. This will raise the proportion of the ocean under full protection to 2%, which is getting closer to the internationally agreed Aichi target of

10% by 2020, though still a long way from the 30% widely recommended by marine scientists. Although these new and expanded MPAs will be a significant advance, achieving the full extent of protection needed will require enhanced levels of political commitment and the ability to establish MPAs on the high seas; this must be a key element of the proposed new agreement on marine biodiversity.

While we are encouraged by the increased awareness of the serious state of ocean health and by these initial positive developments, the fact remains that the battle to save the global ocean is only just beginning. Rather than conserving resources and boosting ocean resilience, humanity has driven the global ocean to the brink of collapse, jeopardising its ability to adapt to and recover from the impacts of climate change. Right now, the trajectory of degeneration outlined in our report is actually growing steeper. Scientific reports tell us that there has been an alarming 30% increase in ocean acidity associated with increased concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. The global sea surface temperature is significantly higher now than 140 years ago, placing enormous pressure on ocean species¹.

The Commission is therefore under no illusion about the immensity and urgency of the task ahead.

Climate change creates chronic conditions that afflict the global ocean, making it all the more urgent that the ocean is relieved of additional stressors. It is also absolutely imperative that the ocean is fully integrated in all climate change negotiations and decisions. It was therefore a top priority for the Commission to place the ocean on the climate agenda before and during the COP21 climate talks in Paris in November/December 2015, where we worked to bring attention to the blue areas of our planet.

Over the life of the Commission, its Commissioners and Secretariat have attended more than 100 events – from global summits and meetings with Heads of State to technical workshops – in order to build global support for action on its proposals and forge strong new partnerships. From Addis Ababa to New York, Samoa and the Vatican, in newspapers and on social media, the Commissioners have worked to mobilise leaders and many different stakeholders to push for a paradigm shift in attitudes. This mobilisation is an essential first step, but until it is reflected in real change out on the water we will not have delivered our objective.

The Commission encourages all the global ocean champions we have met during our journey to remain committed to bearing witness for the ocean, and to keep up pressure on those who damage or dismiss the danger to the ocean. Governments, business and the public should join together to hold to account those responsible for ocean decline.

We are determined that the Commission's proposals should stimulate a steep recovery of the global ocean. On behalf of the Commission as a whole, we are pleased to present this report on our progress and outline our vision for the future ocean.

José María Figueres
Co-chair

Trevor Manuel
Co-chair

David Miliband
Co-chair

¹ Over the past 25 years the rate of increase in sea surface temperature in all European seas has been about 10 times faster than the average rate of increase during the past century: http://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/coast_sea/sea-surface-temperature.

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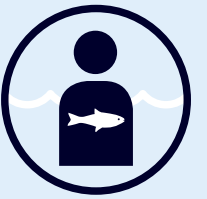
Commission Proposal 1 A UN SDG for the Ocean – Putting a living ocean at the heart of development

To accelerate progress towards reversing ocean degradation and drive the global system for ocean governance, the Commission calls upon UN Member States and all relevant stakeholders to agree a stand-alone Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) for the global ocean, thus putting the global ocean front and centre in the post-2015 UN development agenda.

Given the importance of the global ocean to issues of environmental sustainability, social justice, equity and governance, the Commission strongly supports and wishes to add its voice to the proposals made at the UN Open Working Group on SDGs, which are aimed at a stand-alone Ocean SDG.



The global goals are projected onto the United Nations headquarters in New York. © UN Photo/Cia Pak



Action since the report's release

Securing a strong, stand-alone United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) for the ocean was a core objective for the Commission from the very beginning. The Commission stated in the report that “an Ocean SDG [...] would trigger the kind of action necessary for a recognition that the global ocean is an Earth system that needs to be addressed and managed as a single entity”, and we were encouraged that many others shared this vision. It was due to the efforts of a number of governments (especially from the Pacific Small Island Developing States), as well as the Commission and other organisations, that SDG 14: Life Below Water was included among the 17 goals adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 (see Annex I). As a result, the Commission's attention immediately turned to how best to implement this goal in order to “conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources”.

It is now essential that SDG 14 is backed-up by policy-relevant, measurable indicators that assign clear responsibility for what needs to be achieved and ensure the accurate monitoring of progress. In February 2015, in order to guide the implementation of SDG 14, the Commission submitted a contribution to the Post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiations outlining a set of key indicators relevant to the high seas (see Annex II).

The need to establish stronger accountability for ocean protection was central to the Commission's activities. We believe that the global ocean needs a regular ‘accountability moment’ which would allow the international community to come together to take stock of what progress is, or is not, being made. Throughout 2015 we worked closely with a large group of Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives to the UN in New York known as the UN Group of Friends of Oceans and Seas, and actively supported a joint proposal from Fiji and Sweden to launch a series of UN Ocean Conferences to benchmark progress towards meeting SDG 14 targets and provide an institutional home for an otherwise ‘orphan’ SDG 14. By the last quarter of 2015 the proposal had attracted 95 co-sponsors, and in the last week of the year the General Assembly unanimously adopted Resolution A/RES/70/226, giving a mandate to hold the first High-Level UN Conference on Oceans and Seas in Fiji in June 2017.

As well as promoting strong indicators and greater accountability, the Commission has supported specific SDG 14 targets in other intergovernmental processes, notably those where climate change and trade were discussed at the end of 2015. The Commission developed a clear strategy to link SDG 14.6 (the target to prohibit subsidies that contribute to overfishing by 2020 and to eliminate, also by 2020 those that contribute to IUU fishing) to negotiations within the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference in Nairobi in December 2015. To this end, we engaged with the WTO and government representatives in Geneva with the aim of placing on the agenda a long-awaited agreement on harmful fisheries subsidies. The engagement of global leaders with SDG 14 was highlighted in our short film *SDG 14: An Ocean Opportunity*².

Key Achievements: Proposal 1

The United Nations General Assembly adopted SDG 14: Life Below Water, containing seven ambitious targets that are consistent with the Global Ocean Commission's proposals.

The Commission submitted a detailed contribution to the Post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiations outlining a set of key indicators relevant to the high seas in order to guide the implementation of SDG 14.

The General Assembly adopted Resolution A/RES/70/226, giving a mandate to convene the first High-Level UN Conference on Oceans and Seas to benchmark progress towards meeting SDG 14 targets; this will be held in Fiji in June 2017.

² The film can be viewed at: <https://goo.gl/5F4SDU>

2

Commission Proposal 2 Governing the High Seas – Promoting care and recovery

The Commission calls for:

- **Strengthening the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) through a new implementing agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond national jurisdiction in order to make it fit for purpose.**
- **Universal ratification of UNCLOS and the UN Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA) of 1995, and the establishment of an annual meeting of States Parties to UNFSA to provide a platform for greater accountability.**
- **Regular independent assessment of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) to improve their performance.**
- **Prompt entry into force and implementation of the FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) of 2009.**
- **The appointment by the Secretary-General of the United Nations of a Special Representative for the Ocean, with a clear mission and sufficient resources to significantly improve ocean governance.**
- **Creating Regional Ocean Management Organisations (ROMOs) to promote ecosystem-based management of the ocean.**
- **The appointment of ocean envoys or ministers by Heads of State or Government.**



Action since the report's release

The Commission's report highlighted the weak, fragmented and outdated nature of existing high seas governance, with Proposal 2 identifying a set of measures to strengthen it. Central to these was emphatic support for the idea of a binding multilateral agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. Until 2015 the discussions on high seas biodiversity had been bogged down for more than 10 years, assigned to an ad hoc open-ended working group of the General Assembly. Interventions by the Commission helped to bring these discussions to a favourable conclusion.

Implementation of Proposal 2 was a major focus of the Commission's work immediately following the publication of the report. In just three months, our online petition, Mission Ocean, which focused on the need for this new global implementing agreement on high seas protection, received more than 283,000 signatures from 111 different countries. The petition was received by the Deputy Secretary-General of the UN, on behalf of the Secretary-General, at a side-event during the opening of the 69th Session of the General Assembly in New York in September 2014. Such overwhelming and diverse backing for this agreement clearly demonstrates that high seas governance can attract broad support, well beyond the usual marine conservation community.

To build on this momentum, in December 2014 the Commission, jointly with the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts, convened a roundtable in Monaco bringing together government representatives from 20 key countries engaged in ocean-related negotiations at the UN. This resulted in the 'Monaco Group' of like-minded countries coordinating their strategies in support of the proposed implementing agreement for high seas protection.

Key Achievements: Proposal 2
The United Nations General Assembly decided to establish a preparatory committee to make substantive recommendations on the elements of a draft text of a legally binding instrument under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (A/RES/69/292). This work is to commence in March 2016 and carry on into 2017.

To further accelerate US engagement on ocean governance, the Commission organised a high seas policy dialogue in December 2014 in Washington DC in collaboration with the US Council on Foreign Relations. Key stakeholders, including from the US Department of State and the US Senate, participated in the event.

In January 2015, Commissioners and members of the Secretariat attended the crucial final session of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, which was charged with formulating a recommendation to the General Assembly on the need for a new legally binding agreement under UNCLOS. The Government of Sweden hosted with the Commission a side-event where a Commission Co-chair urged UN Member States to call on the General Assembly to immediately launch negotiations for a high seas agreement during its current session, as was proposed in our report. We are proud to have played a part in the global push to advance this international agreement.

The Global Ocean Commission at the Vatican

In April 2014, in support of greater ocean awareness, representatives from the Commission were honoured to meet Pope Francis and senior members of the Curia, and deliver our vision for the ocean. We discussed all threats to the ocean, with a specific focus on the weak and fragmented governance of the high seas. In June 2015 we were delighted to see His Holiness directly taking up the issues we raised with him, in Paragraph 174 of *Laudato Si'*, his ground-breaking encyclical on the environment, which identified the challenges posed by the lack of strict mechanisms of regulation, control and penalisation that are undermining ocean governance.



Trevor Manuel meeting His Holiness the Pope. © GOC

3

Commission Proposal 3 No More Overfishing – Ending harmful high seas subsidies

It is imperative to address the main drivers of fishing vessel overcapacity, in particular, the issue of capacity-enhancing subsidies. The Commission asks WTO members to urgently adopt a three-step approach to dealing with this problem and so remove the negative financial incentives that maintain a global fishing fleet which has too many boats chasing an ever diminishing supply of fish.

Step 1: Full transparency (disclosure) of fisheries subsidies.

Step 2: Classification of fisheries subsidies in order to identify and distinguish those that are harmful.

Step 3: Immediately capping and then phasing-out high seas fishing fuel subsidies within five years.



Action since the report's release

Fisheries subsidies currently amount to US\$ 30 billion per year globally, 60% of which directly encourages unsustainable, destructive and even illegal fishing practices. The Commission is committed to raising awareness about this major market distortion and injustice and to identifying practical solutions to eliminate these subsidies. We take the view that WTO Members have a global obligation – now further reinforced by SDG target 14.6 – to begin phasing-out harmful subsidies without further delay. For this reason, action to achieve Proposal 3 to date has focused on reviving the issue and securing results at the WTO in Geneva, where the decision to ban harmful subsidies at a global level must be taken.

In December 2014, the Commission held a workshop on Mapping Options for Progress on Fisheries Subsidies, in partnership with the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), where the majority of participants were negotiators from Geneva-based Permanent Missions. The discussions informed our subsequent lines of work: firstly, to underscore the injustice of fisheries subsidies, which are primarily awarded by a handful of more prosperous states; and, secondly, to highlight the direct link between ending harmful subsidies and meeting SDG target 14.7, in which States pledge to “increase the economic benefits to Small Island Developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries...” by 2030.

The Commission held a number of productive meetings with individual high-level officials of the WTO and its Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives, and also engaged with WTO delegates, secretariat and civil society representatives

Key Achievements: Proposal 3
Despite the failure of the tenth WTO Ministerial Conference in Nairobi at the end of 2015, the Commission's actions to raise awareness and facilitate dialogue at the WTO throughout the year contributed to the reactivation of discussions about and growing momentum behind proposals to limit subsidies. At last, after four years of stagnation, these appear reinvigorated, with 28 Trade Ministers formally committed to controlling fisheries subsidies and greater transparency³.

by organising a fisheries subsidies panel in Geneva in June 2015, hosted by the Permanent Mission of New Zealand, as well as a working session at the WTO Public Forum in October 2015.

The aim of these events was both to place subsidies on the agenda of the tenth WTO Ministerial Conference held in Nairobi in December 2015 and to empower like-minded countries. Despite action by the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States and the 'Friends of Fish' group, the intricacies of WTO politics maintained the obstacles that have prevented decisive progress for over a decade. However, now that progress has been made in Nairobi on agriculture export subsidies, it is hoped that the horse-trading will cease as it is to the detriment of fisheries conservation issues, though whether this can happen in time to meet SDG 14.6 by 2020 remains to be seen.



French trawler in 2012. © Corey Arnold

³ Ministerial Statement on Fisheries Subsidies, released on 19 December 2015: WT/MIN(15)/37/Rev.1

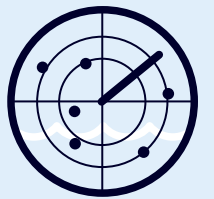
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Commission Proposal 4 Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing – Closing seas, ports and markets

Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing on the high seas has significant negative ecological, economic and social impacts, and disproportionately affects developing countries. To effectively combat IUU fishing, the illegality of the practice needs to be uniformly established, the likelihood of being caught needs to be increased and market access for IUU fish needs to be cut off.

In order to combat, and end, IUU fishing:

- The Commission calls on members of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to require that the mandatory requirements for IMO numbers and tracking already in place for merchant vessels are extended to all fishing vessels fishing in the high seas.
- The Commission furthermore calls upon States and RFMOs to ban the at-sea transshipment of fish.
- All Commissioners are committed to using their influence and to act in order to help fast-track the entry into force of the PSMA by urging all States who are not yet Party to the Agreement to expedite their instruments of adherence or ratification.
- The Commission calls on all stakeholders to work together to build a global information-sharing platform for real-time sharing of data on high seas fishing vessels and their activities so as to deter IUU fishing and promote traceability.
- Seafood retailers and processors must commit to sourcing sustainable seafood, including by adopting effective traceability systems.
- In order to support these goals, the Commission encourages civil society organisations to step up their role as independent RFMOs, flag States and Port States performance watchdogs, and calls upon local, national and international authorities to cooperate with such independent watchdogs.



Action since the report's release

After its release in June 2014, the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Mr Koji Sekimizu, publicly welcomed the report and invited the Commission to address IMO Member States at the October 2014 meeting of their Marine Environment Protection Committee. Our representatives met with Mr Sekimizu and made presentations to IMO Member States on relevant issues, including the need for mandatory IMO numbers and tamper-proof transponders on vessels. Regrettably, despite positive indications at the time, progress on these issues has been very slow, even though we clearly identified the basic and urgent need to extend to all fishing vessels the mandatory requirements for IMO numbers and tracking already in place for merchant vessels.

Since the report's release, the Commission has prioritised action to fast-track the entry into force of the FAO Agreement on Port States Measures (PSMA) to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing. This is one of the key targets of Proposal 4, as well as an important element of Proposal 2. To enter into force the PSMA needs to be ratified by 25 States, but by the end of 2015, six years after it was adopted, only 19 States had ratified the Agreement. The Commission has been working from a list of target States to develop country-specific strategies to fast-track PSMA ratification, and we are encouraged that since the report was published Australia, Costa Rica, Iceland, Mauritius, Mozambique, New Zealand, Palau, Somalia, and St Kitts and Nevis have all become party to the PSMA.

Africa has been a particular focus of the Commission's work, as only a handful of African States have so far ratified the PSMA despite the huge losses IUU fishers inflict on the continent. In July 2015 we made a direct appeal to African States to ratify the PSMA during the launch of the Decade of African Seas and Oceans in Addis Ababa. Earlier input submitted by the Commission is already reflected in the African Union's *2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy*, and discussions are now ongoing to encourage further African support for PSMA ratification in 2016. To complement this, we have also been working with the African Development Bank (AfDB) Group on capacity-building needs for the implementation of the PSMA. Proposals made by the Commission were taken into account in the development of AfDB's new ocean workplan.

The Commission worked in close collaboration with the Government of Chile to develop the Friends of PSMA initiative. At the *Our Ocean* conference held in Chile in October 2015, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Chile, Heraldo Muñoz, announced the launch of this initiative, which aims

to use the experience of nations that have already ratified the PSMA in order to support and assist those currently thinking of, or in the process of, ratification. The initiative is now supported by the Director-General of FAO, with a target of achieving entry into force by July 2016.

The Commission organised events at the North American (March 2015) and Global Seafood (April 2015) Expos to discuss the PSMA, including seafood retailer traceability commitments and the need for multilateral support for PSMA capacity development. At these events we worked to obtain firm commitments directly from global seafood retailers and buyers to back a transition in the seafood supply chain whereby procured fish would be required to come from flag States that are party to the PSMA and to be taken by vessels with tamper-proof transponders and unique identification numbers.

The Commission also recognises a number of other organisations working in this field and commends the work they are doing to bring attention to, and document, instances of IUU fishing all over the world.

Key Achievements: Proposal 4

Since the Global Ocean Commission's report was released in June 2014, nine more States have become party to the PSMA. As of January 2016, only six more ratifications are required to bring the Agreement into force.

The African Union, the AfDB and IMO all publicly welcomed the Commission's report and its proposals. Meetings were held to discuss tabling resolutions at the next African Union Summit on IUU fishing, the PSMA, fisheries subsidies, and regeneration zones.

At the *Our Ocean* conference the Government of Chile announced the creation of the Friends of PSMA group to promote the Agreement's entry into force by bringing States that are party to the Agreement together with those that have not yet joined. This group is now formally supported by FAO and its target is to achieve entry into force of the PSMA by July 2016.

5

Commission Proposal 5 Plastics – Keeping them out of the ocean

Plastics are a major source of pollution on the high seas and a health threat to humans and the environment.

It is important to intensify efforts to address the variety of sources of marine pollution (persistent organic pollutants, hydrocarbons, heavy metals, nitrates, radioactive substances, marine debris, etc.). In particular, the Commission calls for coordinated action by governments, the private sector and civil society to eliminate plastics entering the global ocean including by:

- Minimising single-use plastics by direct government intervention and consumer incentives;
- Creating incentives to promote recycling, including single polymer products and extended producer responsibility;
- Establishing time-bound, quantitative reduction targets;
- Achieving improved waste management;
- Promoting consumer awareness;
- Replicating local initiatives to restrict or ban certain unsustainable uses of plastic materials (i.e. bans on disposable plastic bags, polyurethane packaging, etc.) and clean-up programmes;
- Addressing lost and discarded fishing gear, in particular FADs, to avoid abandonment;
- Encouraging XPRIZE-like innovation around substitution, waste avoidance, recycling and clean-ups;
- Exploring taxation and other levies to establish a Global Marine Responsibility Fund to build waste management capacity, coordinate action to combat marine plastics, grow sustainability initiatives, and change the behaviour of industry and consumers.



Action since the report's release

Much of the Commission's recent work towards the implementation of Proposal 5 has been carried out in collaboration with HRH The Prince of Wales' International Sustainability Unit (ISU). This included participation in a workshop in London in December 2014, where we had the opportunity to meet with representatives of several companies, including Ecover, Logoplaste, Interface and L'Oreal, as well as NGOs such as Ocean Conservancy, WWF and the Ocean Friendly Design Forum.

In March 2015 the Global Ocean Commission and ISU, with the involvement of Ocean Conservancy and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, organised a conference entitled 'Plastic in the marine environment: scaling up efforts to minimise waste' in Washington DC, which brought together the marine waste industry, the plastics industry, and the circular economy community for a solutions-oriented discussion. The event, at which HRH The Prince of Wales called for an end to littering the ocean with plastic waste, attracted widespread global media coverage and has inspired new initiatives and partnerships among attendees, including the formation of a group of donors to better target their investments to address this issue.

The Commission and ISU also co-hosted a high-level working event to discuss plastic waste during *The Economist's* World Ocean Summit 2015 in Cascais, Portugal, in June that year. The working event was attended by, among others, the Chair of the African Union, the European Commissioner for Environment, Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, and the Under-Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy and the Environment at the US Department of State, as well as representatives from Ocean Conservancy, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, Plastics Europe, World Plastics Council, and McKinsey & Company.

Four months later, at the *Our Ocean* conference in Chile in October 2015, Commission Co-chair José María Figueres moderated the plenary panel discussion on marine pollution. Wearing a suit made entirely of recycled plastic from landfill in Asia, and sunglasses made from discarded fishing nets, he called for further attention to be paid to the massive problem of plastic waste. During this event we issued a wider call to action, challenging others to develop innovative ideas for product substitution and to make better economic use of plastic waste in order to prevent it ending up in the ocean.

Together, the Commission and ISU have significantly increased the level of attention being paid to ocean plastics, and two organisations in particular have accelerated their work as a result. In September 2015 Ocean Conservancy released its global report *Stemming the Tide: Land-based strategies for a plastic-free ocean*, while the Ellen MacArthur Foundation released a report in January 2016 entitled *'The New Plastics Economy'*. Both reports identify strategies and mechanisms that would stem the flow of marine litter entering the ocean and expedite the transition to a circular economy.

In addition, the Commission has been working to place the issue of plastic waste higher on the African political agenda, and also engaged with the German G7 Presidency 2015.

Key Achievements: Proposal 5

The Global Ocean Commission's partnership with HRH The Prince of Wales' International Sustainability Unit successfully raised political, public and business awareness on the issue of marine debris and plastics. The ISU is committed to continuing with plastics work.

A number of organisations have accelerated their work highlighting the plastics problem and proposed realistic and feasible solutions, particularly Ocean Conservancy and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, which is working in collaboration with the World Economic Forum and McKinsey & Company. Additionally, the Global Environmental Facility now has work streams dedicated to marine plastics.

In June 2015, the G7 Leaders' Declaration agreed to an Action Plan to Combat Marine Litter, which places an emphasis on plastics.

6

Commission Proposal 6 Offshore Oil and Gas – Establishing binding international safety standards and liability



The Commission supports efforts to adopt and improve international safety and environmental standards for offshore drilling on the continental shelf, including regional protocols to establish and implement such standards, with provisions for response-preparedness and capacity-building in developing countries. In line with the polluter-pays principle, the Commission also supports the development of an international liability convention to cover damage to the marine environment from offshore oil and gas installations.

Action since the report's release

The Commission's efforts to further the goals outlined in Proposal 6 focused on dialogue with the IMO and its Member States. In October 2014 a Commission Co-chair delivered the keynote speech at the opening of the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee, while members of the Secretariat participated at both the joint IMO/ILO (International Labour Organization) Ad Hoc Expert Working Group on Liability and Compensation and the IMO Legal Committee Meeting in April 2015.

However, since the IMO postponed further decisions or action on liability regarding offshore oil and gas operations for two years (from April 2015), the Commission was forced to shelve its plan to organise a strategic workshop on the issue. We continue to believe strongly that, as the offshore industry expands, there will be a pressing need to address issues of liability for damage to the marine environment.

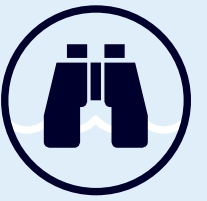
The Commission welcomed the attention in 2015 on the hazards of oil and gas drilling in the Arctic, including initiatives to restrict and prevent such drilling, and stresses the importance of considering the issue of liability given the potential for disaster when drilling in hostile environments such as the Arctic.



IMO Secretary-General Mr Koji Sekimizu meeting with Commission Co-chair José María Figueres. © IMO

7

Commission Proposal 7 Global Ocean Accountability Board – Monitoring progress towards a healthy ocean



The Commission recommends the establishment of an independent Global Ocean Accountability Board. This independent body would monitor and assess whether sufficient progress is being made towards achieving the proposals recommended by the Commission through which to reverse the degradation of, and then regenerate, the global ocean and to secure effective and equitable governance. The Board would benchmark, on a regular basis, the progress being made by the international community towards meeting the specific proposals contained in this report and make this information public.

Action since the report's release

In November 2014 the Secretariat convened a workshop in London to further elaborate the proposal to establish an independent Global Ocean Accountability Board to monitor and assess whether sufficient progress is being made towards achieving the proposals recommended by the Commission. The workshop was attended by several of the Commission's partners as well as benchmarking experts. Participants reaffirmed the need for greater global accountability for meeting ocean conservation commitments. The output of the workshop was a more detailed concept paper for consideration by the Commission, prepared with the assistance of an external consultant and feedback from an extensive range of experts and stakeholders.

At the Commission's final plenary meeting in May 2015, Commissioners agreed that the Global Ocean Accountability Board concept should be further developed and asked the Secretariat to explore potential linkages with the accountability mechanisms being proposed in connection with the implementation of SDG 14. As a result the Secretariat developed proposals that looked at the creation of an independent body whose primary responsibility would be to aggregate information on the ocean and share it with business, NGOs and governments. Such a body could provide accountability for the global ocean through the

consistent and transparent monitoring and tracking of key metrics and by publicly reporting these results to a global audience.

Key Achievements: Proposal 7

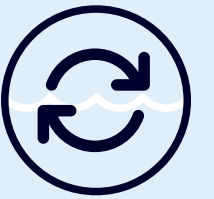
The importance of establishing mechanisms to monitor and report on progress towards meeting ocean conservation commitments, as proposed by the Commission, has become more widely acknowledged since the adoption of SDG 14. The United Nations General Assembly has since adopted Resolution A/RES/70/226, and decided to convene the first High-Level UN Conference on Oceans and Seas, in Fiji in June 2017, to benchmark progress towards meeting SDG 14 targets. This conference, if supported by an independent benchmarking mechanism, has the potential to provide the 'accountability moment' sought by the Commission.

8

Commission Proposal 8 Creating a High Seas Regeneration Zone

We are convinced that our proposals, if implemented, would reverse the cycle of degradation. But there is a long history of good proposals not being implemented. If this happens, and the result is the continued decline of the high seas, it will impact the whole ocean and people and systems across the planet because of the specific regenerative capacity of the high seas.

We are concerned to ensure that if the health of the global ocean does not improve, then consequences should follow to save this vital natural resource. The Global Ocean Accountability Board should provide independent monitoring of progress. If it reports continued decline after a period of, say, five years or similarly short period of time, then the world community of States should consider turning the high seas – with the exception of those areas where RFMO action is effective – into a regeneration zone where industrial fishing is prevented. Such action would need to take account of RFMO functions within EEZs, and would need to include provision for the ban to be lifted as effective proposals for resource management are put in place for the conservation and management of living resources in the respective areas.



Action since the report's release

Restoring the health of the high seas is so vital to the future of our planet that to allow its continued deterioration is simply not an option. That is why the Commission stated in Proposal 8 that if decline continued then the world community of States should consider turning much of the high seas into a regeneration zone where industrial fishing is prevented.

Further scientific and technical research reinforces the rationale behind this statement. A study by a group of eminent scientists and economists, which was entitled *The High Seas And Us: Understanding The Value Of High Seas Ecosystems*⁴ and published by the Commission at the same time as its main report in June 2014, demonstrated that closing the high seas to fishing would provide benefits for food security, climate change mitigation, and biodiversity conservation, while also enhancing ecological resilience against inevitable environmental changes. The study revealed that the high seas perform a vital service worth tens of billions of dollars each year by removing carbon from the atmosphere, and suggested that shutting down fishing on the high seas would actually result in an increase in the global catch and the recovery of overfished stocks within the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of coastal States.

A major obstacle to better management and governance of the high seas, identified by the Commission during its analysis, is the fundamental lack of understanding of their biological and physical elements. To address this shortcoming, and evaluate the potential need for a high seas regeneration zone, the Commission hosted an interdisciplinary *High Seas Symposium* in Oxford in November 2015. More than 40 experts in ocean science, economics and policy came together to identify areas requiring further research and direction. Participants were asked to perform a 'horizon-scanning' exercise to envisage the scenarios: business as usual; a recuperating high seas benefiting from effective governance with a strong implementing agreement that allows for significant high seas MPAs; and a future where the high seas are closed to all extractive human activities. This exercise highlighted the desirability of addressing high seas decline now, as laid out in the Commission's suite of proposals, so that the radical creation of high seas regeneration zones will not be necessary.

Key Achievements: Proposal 8

The conceptual basis for a high seas regeneration zone, as proposed by the Commission in 2014, has been reinforced following greater scrutiny by ocean experts from many different disciplines, including marine science, economics and international law.

Following the Commission's High Seas Symposium in Oxford in 2015, a number of informal working groups have been established to help fill remaining knowledge gaps, for example in relation to the economics of the high seas and the risk of passing the global ocean's tipping points, and to encourage more effective data-sharing.

⁴ http://www.globaloceancommission.org/wp-content/uploads/High-Seas-and-Us_FINAL_FINAL_high_spreads.pdf



Fortifying the Ocean–
Climate Interface

Action since the report’s release

Key Achievements: Ocean–Climate interface

The formation of the *Because the Ocean* group of countries was an unprecedented alliance between the ocean and climate change agendas, demonstrating a mutual support that should be further consolidated by the implementation of the Declaration’s three pledges: an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change special report on the ocean–climate interface; the convening in June 2017 of the UN Conference on Oceans and Seas in support of SDG 14; and the elaboration in 2016 of an ocean action plan under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The global ocean is the single most important driver of Earth systems and one of our greatest allies in the fight against climate change. There can be no effective action on climate without parallel action on ocean recovery, and vice versa. The strength of the link between ocean health and climate health was a dominant message throughout the Commission’s report and is relevant to all eight proposals. Since the report’s release, we have been working to ensure that the ocean–climate interface is better understood and acknowledged by decision-makers.

To help break down the ‘silo’ approach to sustainable development, where ocean experts and policy-makers largely operate independently from those focused on climate change, the Commission worked with a group of governments and other partners to ensure that the ocean–climate interface was highlighted at the COP21 Climate Change Conference in Paris in November/December 2015.

On the eve of the official opening of COP21, the Commission partnered with the Chilean Foreign Affairs Ministry, the French Ministry of Ecology, the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI), the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation and Tara Expeditions, to launch the *Because the Ocean* Declaration (see Annex III), gathering the signatures of Heads of State and Government Ministers from 22 countries⁵.

By signing *Because the Ocean*, signatories pledged their support for the preparation of a special report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on the ocean–climate interface; reaffirmed their commitment to build ocean resilience by meeting the targets under SDG 14; expressed their support for the convening of the High-Level UN Conference on Oceans and Seas in Fiji in June 2017; and expressed the will to elaborate an ocean action plan under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) beginning in 2016.

⁵ Signatories of *Because the Ocean* in Paris were: Aruba, Australia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, France, Guinea Bissau, Kiribati, Madagascar, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Palau, Senegal, Seychelles, Spain, Sweden. Since COP21, more countries have expressed their desire to endorse the Declaration.

The ocean is the single most
important driver of Earth systems
and one of our greatest allies in
the fight against climate change

In support of the Global Ocean Commission

The work conducted by the Global Ocean Commission holds a special place in ocean protection. This special place is due first and foremost to the quality of the Commissioners, to their recruitment, skilfully combining profiles and backgrounds, all of which have an original approach to the oceans, related to complementary paths and commitments.

Based on this diversity, the Commission's strength, which made its 2014 report unique and its contribution essential to the debate, resides above all in the context of its analysis and recommendations. The primary and unsurpassable responsibility of humanity, its blameful involvement in the dangers which threaten the seas and, provided there is a will to do so, its power to change things, are at the heart of its message.

This steadfast approach to diverse and efficient action, supported by rigorous expertise focused on precisely identified goals provides the Global Ocean Commission's work with such valuable powers of conviction.

That is why I am proud and delighted to have been involved in its action, with my Foundation, particularly on the occasion of setting up the Monaco Group prior to and during the negotiations with BBNJ, for the Declaration that followed, and within the *Because the Ocean* Group during COP21.

These events have enabled me to measure the accuracy and usefulness of the Commission's conclusion. And above all they have enabled me to appreciate the work it carries out, in a remarkable spirit of openness and efficiency.

HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco

The Government of Chile is committed to concrete actions in order to reverse ocean decline and restore ocean health as announced in the first and second Our Ocean Conference, in Washington and Valparaíso. In this regard the independent Global Ocean Commission has provided the international community with a blueprint for ocean recovery that we can all follow. On the key issue of illegal fishing, the Friends of Port State Measures Agreement (FPSMA) initiative that we developed with the Commission is already encouraging states and the FAO to ensure that this crucial agreement can enter into force as soon as possible.

Heraldo Muñoz

Foreign Affairs Minister of Chile



Paths to a sustainable ocean

The European Union is leading the global fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. It has put in place a highly effective legal instrument on IUU fishing, introduced catch certification scheme for marine fisheries products traded from/to the EU and cooperated with more than 50 countries, helping them to fulfil their obligations as set under international law. The Global Ocean Commission and its Commissioners have been conducive to the EU's success by supporting its efforts, and promoting this policy in different fora around the world.

Karmenu Vella

European Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

Through scientific studies, our own evidence and the findings of the Global Ocean Commission, we have been alerted to the Ocean's decline and the need for urgent international action. In order to implement SDG 14, we have proposed a series of High-Level International Conferences in line with the 2030 UN Agenda. The first of these UN Conferences will be held in Fiji, 5-9 June 2017. It will be open to all and transparently assess the state of SDG 14's implementation, identify gaps, create partnerships and benchmark commitments for ensuing conferences. We welcome you all at the UN Conference in Fiji in June 2017.

Peter Thomson

Permanent Representative of Fiji to the United Nations, New York

Ocean health and sustainability are crucial to life on this planet. The Global Ocean Commission has played a vital role in highlighting the urgency for action and the steps needed to ensure ocean recovery. As the Commission completes its work, I am pleased to be actively engaged in ongoing work to further mobilise public and political voices to drive real and positive change for the global ocean.

Sir Richard Branson

Virgin Group Founder

The Global Ocean Commission has not only brought a sense of urgency to Ocean issues within the international community, but it has also facilitated new alliances and partnerships that are helping to advance Ocean governance efforts. The Global Ocean Commission has been of great added-value to the Ocean governance landscape, and IDDRI has been delighted to collaborate with its staff and Commissioners on the *Because the Ocean* initiative.

Teresa Ribera

Director, The Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI)

The Future of Our Ocean

Next steps and priorities

It is clear that since releasing the report in June 2014 some of the Commission's proposals have met with varying degrees of action: some have been successful and in certain areas there has been no progress at all to date. We are encouraged by the increased public concern for ocean health and strengthened political will to turn good intentions into action. The Commission stands by its long-term proposals and is optimistic that, with the necessary commitment and action, there will be opportunities to further capitalise on the progress already made over the next 12–18 months, up to June 2017.

The Commission sees that advances could be made in connection with both the UN Conference on Oceans and Seas in Fiji in June 2017 and the forthcoming meetings of the Preparatory Committee for a new legally binding agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of high seas marine biological diversity. We also believe that there will be clear opportunities

to take other proposals forward, including the appointment by the Secretary-General of the United Nations of a Special Representative for the Ocean; bringing the PSMA into force and implementing its provisions; securing further action on marine plastics; finally achieving an agreement to phase out harmful fisheries subsidies; and bringing in mandatory requirements for IMO numbers and tamper-proof transponders for all fishing vessels⁶.

In addition, the Commission believes that greater exposure of and focus on ocean decline and recovery could be achieved by the creation of a Global Ocean Accountability Board, or similar body, in line with Proposal 7 of the report. This would provide greater transparency for the understanding of ocean decline, its causes and the measures needed to aid recovery.

Key next steps and priorities are outlined in the following pages.

⁶ As we go to press [February 2016] the EU has announced that all EU fishing vessels and foreign vessels fishing in EU waters need to have unique vessel numbers.



1 A UN SDG for the Ocean – Putting a living ocean at the heart of development

Next Steps and Priorities

- Monitor implementation of SDG 14 through the UN High-Level Conference on Ocean and Seas (Fiji, 2017).
- Agree further UN High-Level Conferences on Oceans and Seas up to 2030 to measure progress.
- Set up an independent entity that measures and tracks key SDG 14 metrics.

While an Ocean SDG alone does not guarantee a secure future for the global ocean, it sends a number of important messages and can garner valuable momentum and resources. SDG 14 reminds governments and civil society that the global ocean is an Earth system, which needs to be addressed and managed as a single entity.

Agreement on SDG 14 was an important step forward, but the SDG will only be successful if its targets are delivered on time. Close monitoring is needed to ensure that SDG 14 does not languish on the sidelines as an 'orphan' SDG with no single UN entity responsible for its implementation. Robust policy-relevant indicators must be agreed. Meeting the SDG 14 targets requires governments, the private sector and civil society to come together and build a focused global ocean movement that places ocean recovery at the heart of sustainable development.

The Commission welcomes the decision to convene a High-Level UN Conference on Oceans and Seas in Fiji in June 2017. Nevertheless, we continue to believe that the original proposal to make this Conference a triennial event should be maintained in order to provide a mechanism to continuously measure progress towards 2030. In addition, we believe that a series of conferences should be combined with the creation of an independent body along the lines of the Global Ocean Accountability Board outlined under Proposal 7. Such a body could undertake consistent and transparent monitoring and reporting, and could provide accountability by reviewing what is happening to the ocean and what can be done to address it.



Fiji has been confirmed as the venue for the UN Conference on Oceans and Seas in June 2017.



2 Governing the High Seas – Promoting care and recovery

Next Steps and Priorities

- **Universal ratification and implementation of UNCLOS and UN Fish Stocks Agreement.**
- **Appointment of a UN Special Representative for the Ocean in 2017.**
- **A strong new UNCLOS Implementing Agreement by 2022.**
- **Regular independent assessments of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs).**
- **A progressive transition to integrated Regional Ocean Management Organisations (ROMOs).**

The possibility of commencing negotiations on a new legally binding agreement under UNCLOS to protect and conserve biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction represents a unique opportunity to close some of the governance gaps that currently leave the high seas so vulnerable to abuse. This makes it all the more important to pay close attention to detail and substance as the terms of the agreement are developed through the preparatory process which will commence at the UN in March 2016.

An implementing agreement must:

- Allow the designation of MPAs on the high seas;
- Establish common principles, targets and objectives;
- Provide an overarching mandate for the conservation and management of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- Require the application of an ecosystem approach to the management of activities on the high seas, including conducting prior environmental impact assessments before the exploitation of high seas resources can take place; and
- Secure accord that the benefits resulting from the exploration and exploitation of high seas genetic resources are accessible and shared equitably among nations.

The Commission strongly urges governments and all ocean stakeholders to engage with this process, to ensure that the outcome fulfils the promise of being for the benefit of all humankind for generations to come.

In general, the Commission has been disappointed with the slow uptake of other key recommendations under Proposal 2, all of which are seen as essential to strengthening the global system of high seas governance. However, we see some key opportunities for action.

A new Secretary-General of the United Nations will take office in January 2017. We believe this presents an ideal opportunity for her or him to demonstrate ocean leadership by appointing an Ocean Special Representative at Under-Secretary-General-level. In addition to guiding the UN systems to deliver on SDG 14 commitments, the Ocean Special Representative could be tasked with ensuring effective delivery of the 2017 UN Conference on Oceans and Seas, as well as ensuring that any new agreement on high seas biodiversity enters into force by the target date of 2022 – the 40th anniversary of the adoption of UNCLOS⁷.

The Commission believes that such action by the new Secretary-General would provide an incentive for more States to appoint ocean envoys or ambassadors, and we

are encouraged that since our report was issued several governments, such as Fiji and France, have already taken up our recommendation in this respect.

It is discouraging, however, that 2014 was the first year since 1982 in which there were no new ratifications or accessions to UNCLOS, and only one accession to UN Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA)⁸. We continue to urge all those States that are not yet party to these agreements to become parties as soon as possible. We also continue to promote the idea of a regular annual meeting of States Parties to the UNFSA at the UN. The fact that the UNFSA contains no provision mandating such an annual meeting is a significant flaw, as such a meeting would provide a valuable opportunity to promote the agreement and ensure its consistent implementation by States. Moreover, such an annual meeting would provide an appropriate forum for the review by States Parties of the performance of RFMOs, the regional bodies tasked with implementing the UNFSA.

In the long term, the Commission continues to propose a move from RFMOs to ROMOs, where more integrated management would take place. A transition from RFMOs to ROMOs would be consistent with the increasing trend in a number of countries to merge their administrations dealing with fisheries and environmental matters, with a view to transforming ‘fisheries’ departments into ‘ocean’ departments with a broader marine ecosystem-based vision and mandate. Adapting fisheries management in the age of climate change requires a fundamental change in the culture surrounding fisheries management to include consideration of multiple, cumulative stressors. ROMOs could move towards requiring prior ‘integrated ecosystem assessments’ as part of their remit.

⁷ 2022 not only marks the 40th anniversary of the adoption of UNCLOS, but also the decimal anniversary of the landmark UN Conferences on Environment and Sustainable Development, which started in 1972 with the Stockholm Conference, followed by Rio de Janeiro (1992), Johannesburg and Rio de Janeiro (2012).

⁸ Philippines, in September 2014 (2002).



3 No More Overfishing – Ending harmful high seas subsidies

Next Steps and Priorities

- **Maintain momentum at WTO, within regional trade agreements and in key States.**
- **Build on SDG Target 14.6 to achieve harmful fisheries elimination by 2020.**
- **Redirect money freed by the prohibition of harmful subsidies to ocean conservation and create a ‘Blue Fund’.**

Despite the failure of the tenth Ministerial Conference of the WTO to address fisheries subsidies in December 2015, the Commission continues to believe that Proposal 3 is politically feasible, and that the deadlock that has long stopped the WTO from making progress on fisheries subsidies can be broken. While our three-step proposal directly addresses the industrial fishing fleets of developed countries currently benefiting from fuel subsidies, it would not constrain but reinforce developing countries’ interests within their EEZs. Indeed, our proposal has the added advantage of contributing to the recovery of high seas fisheries resources, which will have direct benefits for productivity within EEZs, not to mention synergies with the climate and pollution agendas. With progress having been made at the 2015 Ministerial Conference on agriculture export subsidies, there is no further excuse for such horse-trading, and WTO Members should stop vacillating to the detriment of fisheries sustainable management or conservation. We welcome the commitment by Trade Ministers from 28 countries in 2015 to foster the issue both domestically and globally. We also note some good elements in the final text of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP).

It is important, therefore, that momentum is sustained at the WTO, in regional agreements, and in key States, emphasising that the money saved by the governments currently awarding these harmful subsidies would be far better used to help, for example, implementing SDG 14 ocean targets around the world. The commitment under the recently agreed Trans-Pacific Partnership to address harmful fisheries subsidies is encouraging but it remains to be seen if it is put into practice.

The Commission proposes the creation of a dedicated ‘Blue Fund’ for this very purpose. If the subsidies currently exacerbating excessive and illegal fishing were redirected to protecting rather than plundering the ocean, this could amount to US\$ 18 billion per year. With harmful subsidies targeted for elimination by no later than 2020 under SDG 14.6, the WTO should be increasingly under pressure in the months and years to come.



Boxes of fish at a commercial fish market. © Corey Arnold/OCEAN2012



4 IUU fishing: Closing seas, ports and markets

Next Steps and Priorities

- Entry into force of FAO Port State Measures Agreement by July 2016.
- Mandatory IMO identification numbers and transponders for all fishing vessels.
- Seafood retailers and processors commit to fully traceable sustainable seafood.
- Global ban on transshipment at sea.
- Build a global information-sharing platform to deny illegal vessels market access.

The key target under Proposal 4 is to bring about the entry into force and effective implementation of the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing (PSMA). The Commission is tremendously encouraged that 19 States have become party to the PSMA (as of January 2016) and remains optimistic that we can meet the target of ratifying the Agreement by July 2016. The Commission will continue to strongly support efforts already underway to implement the PSMA and to provide support to developing countries to enable them to participate.

Despite this, action to end IUU fishing continues to move at a frustratingly slow pace. As we stressed in our report, a multi-pronged approach is needed, which focuses on closing seas, ports and markets to IUU activities.

The Commission will continue to encourage the IMO to accelerate its efforts to ensure that it is mandatory for all fishing vessels to carry a unique vessel identification number (UVI) as well as tamper-proof transponders.

The Commission urges RFMOs to improve efforts to share information on potential illegal activities with law enforcement and security agencies and with other RFMOs, and to maintain coordinated lists of all suspected IUU fishing vessels. We also urge RFMOs to take measures to prohibit transshipment at sea.

We are encouraged by efforts on the part of the EU and the USA – which together make up more than 40% of the global seafood market – to make markets increasingly impenetrable to illegally caught fish by improving requirements on catch data and traceability, and we urge retailers to refuse to accept fish and seafood products that cannot be traced to their point of origin and to work to set up traceability mechanisms for this purpose. For example, global seafood retailers should insist that all supplier vessels have IMO numbers and tamper-proof transponders.



Polestar c/s 3EWP7 and Carmen c/s 4LSK transshipping. © Icelandic Coastguard



5 Plastics - Keeping them out of the ocean

Next Steps and Priorities

- Enhance coordination to address both land and sea-based sources of plastic pollution.
- Regional Development Banks to approve loans for environmentally safe plastic waste management and recycling schemes.
- Strengthen the after-use (circular) plastics economy and provide direct economic incentives to avoid leakage into natural systems.
- Launch local 'proof of concept' demonstration projects for integrated waste management, and build a 'best practice' sharing mechanism to transfer global expertise.

The Commission believes that action to address this issue must focus on keeping plastic waste out of the ocean, with specific focus on rapidly developing economies where waste management is not keeping up with rising consumption. The G20 Summit in Hangzhou, China in September 2016 and upcoming African Union Summits will be key opportunities to advocate action on this pressing problem. Regional Development Banks should be encouraged to take a lead role by approving development loans aimed at improved, integrated waste management and extracting value from waste through recycling. Communities of actors (including business) focused on addressing plastic waste entering the marine environment must come together with those examining the more systemic issues of waste from a circular economy perspective.

In line with the recent work of Ocean Conservancy and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, the Commission also advocates that the global ocean community seriously considers working towards the following:

- Create an effective after-use plastics economy in order to capture more material value, increase resource productivity, and provide a direct economic incentive to avoid leakage into natural systems;
- Dramatically reduce leakage of plastics into natural systems, in particular the ocean, through real and meaningful commitments from national and municipal governments, improving after-use collection infrastructure in high-leakage countries, and reducing the impacts of plastic packaging;
- Provide local demonstration projects that are 'proofs of concept' for integrated waste management approaches in a number of cities; and
- Use lessons learned from these demonstration projects to enable stakeholders to build a 'best practice' transfer mechanism able to accelerate the transfer of global expertise.

While there has been encouraging initial thinking on how to finance actions to stem the tide of plastics and transition to a circular economy, the Commission now recommends that the full range of finance institutions and entities actively considers what investment conditions need to be put in place in the private, public and multilateral sectors. Working with industry on an innovative mechanism to strategically reduce capital costs and investment risks will be essential.



HRH The Prince of Wales' International Sustainability Unit (ISU) and the Global Ocean Commission co-hosted an event in Washington DC in March 2015 to discuss the growing problems of and concern over marine plastic waste.
© The Prince of Wales's International Sustainability Unit



6 Offshore Oil and Gas – Establishing binding international safety standards and liability

Next Steps and Priorities

- **Binding safety and environmental standards.**
- **Universal liability provisions.**
- **Response-preparedness and capacity-building.**

The Commission reiterates the need for an international convention to regulate liability and compensation in relation to offshore drilling on the continental shelf. Such a convention should, among other elements: (i) cover both economic losses and ecological damages; (ii) provide for strict liability of operators; (iii) include provisions for shared liability between all licence holders and their subcontractors; (iv) bind States to ensure that operators have adequate financial capacity to pay for possible compensation; and (v) set a liability cap at a level that can ensure the recovery of costs associated with environmental remediation and compensation and losses born by public and private entities, as well as a compensation fund to address major disasters that are likely to exceed the liability cap.



Silhouette of the Statfjord Bravo production platform in the Norwegian section of the North Sea. © Philip Stephen/naturepl.com



7 Global Ocean Accountability Board – Monitoring progress toward a healthy ocean

Next Steps and Priorities

- **An independent accountability entity or mechanism measures and tracks progress towards achieving the Commission's ocean rescue package and SDG 14.**
- **Coordinate benchmarking with UN High-Level Conference on Oceans and Seas to ensure regular, highly visible 'accountability moments'.**
- **Capitalise on the credibility and experience of prominent leaders and experts to further accelerate action.**
- **Publicly report on ocean recovery progress – and lack of progress – to the global public.**

The Commission firmly believes that the world needs an independent accountability entity or mechanism. We would like to encourage a coalition involving business and NGOs to promote and create an independent Global Ocean Accountability Board in order to monitor and catalyse progress towards a healthy global ocean. The work that has been done since our report was published serves to reinforce the rationale for this body as identified by the Commission. Such an entity would capitalise on the credibility and experience of prominent leaders and high-level members in order to further accelerate action to achieve the rescue package that we laid out in the report, as well as related international commitments such as SDG 14. This independent entity would provide accountability for the ocean by consistent and transparent monitoring and tracking of key metrics and then publicly reporting these results to a global audience.



Soft coral seascape with Fairy Basslets (anthias), Pixie Pinnacle, Ribbon Reefs, Great Barrier Reef, Australia © Doud Perrine/naturepl.com



8 Creating a High Seas Regeneration Zone

Next Steps and Priorities

- **Consider turning the high seas into a regeneration zone if – by 2020 – insufficient action has been taken and ocean decline continues.**
- **Prevent all industrial fishing in this High Seas Regeneration Zone, with the exception of areas where RFMOs are effective.**
- **Allow for the fishing ban to be lifted in areas where ecosystem management and ocean recovery action are successfully implemented.**
- **Protect vital ocean resources and ecosystem services for the future.**

The Commission recognises that continued scientific research is necessary to evaluate the cumulative impacts of human activities on the high seas so that informed decisions can be made about reversing the degradation of the global ocean. Furthermore, what we do on the high seas could impact EEZs and vice versa. At the same time, in accordance with the precautionary principle, lack of full scientific information cannot be a reason for inaction if we are to ensure the health of the ocean.

The Commission reiterates that, if the health of the global ocean does not improve, and the measures identified in our eight proposals are not implemented satisfactorily, then consequences must follow in order to salvage vital ocean

resources and marine ecosystem services. In this situation, the world community of States should consider turning the high seas – with the exception of those areas where RFMO action is effective – into a regeneration zone where industrial fishing is prevented. Such action would need to take account of RFMO functions within EEZs, and include provisions for the ban to be lifted if effective proposals for resource management are put in place for the conservation and sustainable management of living resources in the respective areas. The objective of this trigger mechanism, and the associated regeneration zone concept, is to make fish stocks sustainable for present and future generations and to replenish ocean life equitably to secure the wellbeing of this global commons for the health of the planet, its people and its biodiversity.



Fortifying the Ocean–Climate Interface

Next Steps and Priorities

- **A special IPCC report on the Ocean–Climate nexus.**
- **Elaborate and execute an Ocean Action Plan under UNFCCC.**
- **Address the ocean-climate connection and ocean acidification at the UN High-Level Conference on Oceans and Seas (Fiji, 2017).**
- **Overcome the divide between climate and ocean experts and policy-makers.**

We welcome increased recognition during 2015 of the evidence that both the physical and biological components of the global ocean are key to maintaining the conditions necessary for life in a world vulnerable to human-induced climate change. We are encouraged that the efforts of the Commission and its partners at the COP21 Climate Change Conference in Paris in 2015 ensured that the ocean–climate interface is beginning to be recognised.

The *Because the Ocean* group of governments formed in Paris must be encouraged to grow and to pursue its mandate as laid out in the three pledges contained in its Declaration at the upcoming IPCC and UNFCCC meetings in 2016 and at the UN Conference on Oceans and Seas in Fiji 2017.



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon addresses the opening of the High-Level Segment of the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris (COP21). © UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

Global Ocean Commissioners



The Global Ocean Commission in Oxford, November 2013: (left to right) Robert Hill, Paul Martin, Foua Toloa, Yoriko Kawaguchi, Simon Reddy (Executive Secretary), Victor Chu, Andrés Velasco, Obiageli Ezekwesili, Trevor Manuel (Co-chair), Cristina Narbona, David Miliband (Co-chair), John Podesta, Pascal Lamy, José María Figueres (Co-chair), Vladimir Golitsyn, Ratan Tata. © GOC

Annex I – UN Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources

Target 14.1

By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.

Target 14.2

By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans.

Target 14.3

Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels.

Target 14.4

By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics.

Target 14.5

By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information.

Target 14.6

By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation.

Target 14.7

By 2030, increase the economic benefits to Small Island Developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.

Target 14.a

Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technology, taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology, in order to improve ocean health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular Small Island Developing States and least developed countries.

Target 14.b

Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets.

Target 14.c

Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in UNCLOS, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of *The Future We Want*.

Annex II – Proposed Elements of Indicators for SDG 14 – Oceans, Seas And Marine Resources

In a contribution submitted in February 2015, the Global Ocean Commission invited the Post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiation to consider the following elements of indicators to ensure the accurate monitoring of progress of SDG 14 “Conserve and Sustainably Use the Oceans, Seas and Marine Resources for Sustainable Development”.

The Commission emphasized that the implementation of ten targets contained in SDG 14 should be guided by clear and measurable indicators which reinforced and, where necessary clarified what is meant to be achieved.

Given that the Global Ocean Commission's mandate is the sustainable use and conservation of the high seas, most of the proposals below relate to multilateral and regional action. However the role of individual countries in developing national policies and leading the development of multilateral policy, has also been intentionally emphasized.

Target 14.1

Proposed indicators:

- Micro-plastics concentration in seawater.
- Accumulation of plastics, including micro-plastics, in marine life (fish, seabirds, marine mammals).
- Number of countries with taxes or restrictions on certain plastics uses, including single-use plastics bans, and programmes to improve waste management and increase circular use.

Explanation:

The proliferation of micro-plastics particles caused by the fragmentation of plastic debris is an issue that has emerged since the adoption of the MDGs, and which deserves considerable attention. It is a cause of deep concern within the scientific community due to potential impacts on the marine ecosystem and food chain. It is a consequence of the mismanagement of plastic waste and debris by regulators and the private sector. It is expected that public awareness of micro-plastics in the ocean will increase in the coming years, as the number of scientific expeditions and publications to measure the extent of micro-plastic marine pollution are increasing. An indicator on micro-plastics would encourage the further development of research on this source of pollution, while monitoring progress in the ocean environment of policies and measures designed to prevent plastics from entering the ocean.

Target 14.2

Proposed indicators:

- Number of relevant flag States having ratified relevant Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) (indicator also relevant to Target 14.c).
- Number of States having ratified the UN Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA) (indicator also relevant to Target 14.c).
- Number of RFMOs effectively allocating all catch limits in accordance with scientific advice (indicator relevant to Target 14.c).
- Number of RFMOs carrying out independent performance reviews to assess, in particular, whether the ecosystem-approach and the precautionary principle are upheld.
- Number of fish species and fish stocks commercially exploited with no catch limit assigned by any Regional Fisheries Management Organizations or Arrangements.

Explanation:

Given the slight overlap between Target 14.2 and Target 14.5 (ocean conservation) our comment and proposals regarding this target focus on regional management measures.

Currently, not all RFMOs implement sustainable management measures: scientific advice is not always followed when catch quotas are allocated, the ecosystem-approach and precautionary principle are not always put in practice, and a number of fish stocks and species exploited commercially remain unregulated. The Global Ocean Commission's proposed indicators for this target intend to address those issues.

Target 14.3

Proposed indicators:

- Research programmes on carbon sequestration trends.
- Monitor pH vulnerable species populations i.e. marine calcifiers such as for example coral reefs.

Explanation:

With the adoption of the SDGs taking place two months before the UNFCCC COP21 in Paris, it is extremely important that indicators for SDG 13 (on climate change) emphasize the need to accelerate the decarbonisation of the economy and the reduction of CO₂ emissions globally, and to reinforce the commitment of the international community to take collective action to curb CO₂ emissions down drastically. Efforts should aim at the reduction of CO₂ emissions at source.

The call for enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels contained in Target 14.3 in relation to ocean acidification impacts should emphasize the need to measure in the first instance, carbon sequestration trends. A report commissioned by the Global Ocean Commission, *The High Seas and Us*, estimates that life in the high seas is absorbing 500 million tonnes of carbon per year. More studies are needed to fully understand the role of the ocean in the carbon cycle. Scientific research should also monitor the ultimate consequences of carbon surplus in the ocean on marine ecosystems.

Target 14.4

Several different topics are contained in Target 14.4, so they are covered separately below in different sets of indicators. Just like Target 14.4 itself, the proposed indicators are policy-oriented.

Regulate harvesting, and end overfishing

Proposed indicators:

- Flag States' total industrial fishing fleet size and capacity.
- Increase in ratio between artisanal fisheries/industrial fisheries.

Explanation:

Poor management and overcapacity are both drivers of overfishing. Fish stocks management has been included in Target 14.2 above and subsidies enhancing fishing overcapacity is addressed below, in Target 14.6. We therefore recommend including here indicators aiming at monitoring global fishing fleet overcapacity.

Annex II – continued

Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing

Proposed indicators:

- **Number of ratifications to the UN Food and Agricultur Organization (FAO) Port States Measures Agreement (PSMA) and number of Port States developing supporting domestic legislation (indicator also relevant to target 14.c.).**
- **Number of Flag States and RFMOs requesting IMO numbers and transponders for all their vessels fishing in the high seas and in distant waters.**
- **Number of Flag States and RFMOs banning the transhipment of fish at sea.**
- **Number of countries and RFMOs having established satellite monitoring programmes and sharing information among each other.**
- **Number of fishing vessels suspected of IUU operations identified by law enforcement agencies and RFMOs.**

Explanation:

Countries’ actions should combine adherence to international and regional agreements, development of national policies, enhancement of monitoring, and tracking systems.

Destructive fishing practices

Proposed indicator:

- **Number of countries conducting Environment Impact Assessments as a pre-condition to allow their vessels to pursue bottom fishing in the high seas (indicator also relevant to Target 14.c).**

Explanation:

In 2006, the UN General Assembly adopted by consensus Resolution 61/105 whereby Flag States authorizing vessels to engage in bottom fisheries on the high seas should “conduct impact assessments to determine whether bottom fishing activities would have significant adverse impacts on vulnerable marine ecosystems” and “ensure that, if fishing activities have significant adverse impacts, they are managed to prevent such impacts, or else prohibited”.

To restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics

Proposed indicator:

- **Percentage of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels (i.e. fish stocks at or above the level that can produce their Maximum Sustainable Yield), which were previously overfished.**

Explanation:

Unlike the previous ones, this sub-section is the only one that is results-oriented. If future UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) flagship reports on the State of the World Fisheries and Aquaculture (the SOFIA report, issued every two years) reveal a positive trend in the recovery of overfished stocks, this would represent a positive outcome and a clear signal of global and regional policy results.

Target 14.5

Proposed indicators:

- **Countries’ MPA surfaces (by 2020).**
- **High seas’ MPA surface (especially beyond 2020).**

Explanation:

Consistent with Aichi Target 11 adopted by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2010, and with Rio+20 The

Future We Want, it is necessary that the indicators for Target 14.5 encourage the designation, establishment, maintenance and monitoring of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas –by 2020–, especially in areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services.

An additional percentage of MPA extension should also be agreed as indicator for the period 2020–2030, in order to maintain action throughout the period of action identified in the SDGs. For the latter, we would encourage focus on high seas MPAs, as by 2020 it is expected that the intergovernmental negotiation for an UNCLOS Implementing Agreement on marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) will have been concluded or will be well underway.

Target 14.6

Proposed indicators:

- **Number of countries publically disclosing detailed data on fisheries subsidies related to vessel measures such as vessels building, modernization or scrapping.**
- **Ratio between expenditure on fisheries data collection, science and monitoring and control, versus public expenditure supporting extraction.**
- **Reduction of direct-transfer subsidies and tax breaks for fuel to high seas and distant water fishing.**

Explanation:

In order to secure consistency with commitments made repeatedly within numerous multilateral fora, including the WTO, the G20 and Rio+20, indicators for Target 14.6 should address better transparency in fisheries subsidies, support the need for fisheries research and monitoring, and recall the need to reduce and control all fisheries subsidies contributing to overcapacity and overfishing. For the latter, we propose a focus on fuel subsidies for high seas and distant water fishing fleets.

Target 14.c

A number of indicators proposed above refer to the implementation of existing international agreements and law. We are listing them below for cross-reference purposes:

- **Number of relevant flag States having ratified relevant RFMOs (indicator proposed under Target 14.2).**
- **Number of States having ratified the UNFSA agreement (indicator proposed under Target 14.2).**
- **Number of RFMOs effectively assigning all catch quotas in accordance with scientific advice (indicator proposed under Target 14.2).**
- **Number of ratifications to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Port States Measures Agreement (PSMA) and number of port States developing supporting domestic legislation (indicator proposed under Target 14.4).**
- **Number of countries conducting Environment Impact Assessments as a pre-condition to allow their vessels to pursue bottom fishing in the high seas (indicator proposed under Target 14.4).**
- **In addition, the Global Ocean Commission believes that it would be important to include a reference to the number of Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury of 2014, the most recent Multilateral Environmental Agreement relevant to Target 14.1.**

Annex III – *Because the Ocean Declaration*

The *Because the Ocean* Declaration was signed in Paris during COP21 by Heads of State and Government and ministers from Aruba, Australia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, France, Guinea Bissau, Kiribati, Madagascar, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Palau, Senegal, Seychelles, Spain, Sweden.

Under UNFCCC Art. 4.1 (d) all Parties committed to: “promote sustainable management, and promote and cooperate in the conservation and enhancement, as appropriate, of sinks and reservoirs of all greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, including biomass, forests and oceans as well as other terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems.”

This is a collective legal obligation our countries share as Parties to the UNFCCC.

As COP21 is about to begin, and regardless of its final outcome, we urge the international community to take action in order to enhance global Ocean resilience to the impacts of CO₂ emissions and climate change.

Because the Ocean sustains life on Earth and our collective well-being. It produces half the oxygen every human being breathes. It also absorbs 25% of all the CO₂ emitted by human activities, it captures approximately 90% of the anthropogenic heat added to the global system, and it receives nearly all the water from melting ice.

Because the Ocean is central to economic wealth, with an estimated contribution of between US\$3-6 trillion per year to the global economy. 90% of globally traded goods are transported by sea; fisheries provide 4.3 billion people with more than 15% of the animal protein consumed, and coastal areas provide crucial services for local communities.

Because the Ocean is already experiencing significant stress, now aggravated by increased CO₂ concentrations liable to seriously affect marine life. Carbon dissolved in the Ocean alters its chemistry, already driving acidity up by 30% since the beginning of the industrial revolution.

Because the Ocean is warming, causing irreversible damage to coral reefs and other ecosystems and species, stronger storms, changes in sea currents, including accelerating the spread of invasive species.

Because the Ocean level is rising, and we must anticipate that millions of people are at risk of being displaced especially in low lying areas and Small Island States.

Because the Ocean will have a critical role in the implementation of the 2015 Paris Agreement and its accompanying decisions.

1. We pledge to support the proposal for a Special Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to address comprehensively the ocean/climate nexus.
2. We reaffirm our commitment to reinforce Ocean resilience by meeting the targets agreed under the UN Sustainable Development Goal #14 (SDG 14): Conserve and Sustainably Use the Oceans, Seas and Marine Resources for Sustainable Development; with this in mind we express support for the convening of a High-Level UN Conference on Oceans and Seas in June 2017 in Fiji to promote implementation and to maintain political momentum to achieve SDG 14.
3. We believe, in keeping with the sense of urgency, that it is high time to promote an Ocean action plan under the UNFCCC, starting in 2016, and we shall continue to meet as a group to address the challenges identified in this declaration, inviting the participation and input of other relevant processes and initiatives, within and outside the UN.

Paris, 29 November 2015



The launch of the *Because the Ocean* declaration (L-R): Minister Oslin B. Sevinger (Aruba), Dra. Amparo Martínez Arroyo (Mexico), President Tommy Remengesau (Palau), Minister Isabella Lövin (Sweden), HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco, Minister Inia Seruiratu (Fiji), Minister Ségolène Royal (France), Secretary of State Jochen Flasbarth (Germany), Minister Heraldo Muñoz (Chile), President Anote Tong (Kiribati), Rebekah Riley (New Zealand), Minister Catherine McKenna (Canada). © Kashfi Halford

The Commissioners of the Global Ocean Commission



José María Figueres (Co-chair)
President of Costa Rica from 1994 to 1998; President of the Carbon War Room



Trevor Manuel (Co-chair)
Former Minister in the South African Presidency responsible for planning; former Finance Minister



David Miliband (Co-chair)
President and CEO of the International Rescue Committee; former UK foreign secretary



Carol Browner
Former head of the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)



Luiz Fernando Furlan
Former Minister of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade of Brazil; board member of BRF Foods



Vladimir Golitsyn
President of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea



Robert Hill
Former Environment and Defence Minister of Australia; Chancellor of the University of Adelaide



Sri Mulyani Indrawati
Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer, World Bank Group; former Finance Minister of Indonesia



Paul Martin
Former Prime Minister and Finance Minister of Canada; inaugural Chair of the Finance Ministers' G20



Cristina Narbona
Former Environment Minister of Spain; currently a member of the country's Nuclear Safety Council



John Podesta*
Chair of the Center for American Progress, former White House Chief of Staff
**Commissioner in 2013*



Ratan Tata
Former head of the India-based Tata business conglomerate, and a leading philanthropist

The Secretariat



Simon Reddy
Executive Secretary



Rémi Parmentier
Deputy Executive Secretary

Victor Chu
Chairman of First Eastern Investment Group; co-chair of the World Economics Forum International Business Council

Obiageli 'Oby' Ezekwesili
Former Nigerian Education Minister; co-founder of the anti-corruption organisation Transparency International



Yoriko Kawaguchi
Former Japanese Foreign Minister and Environment Minister; Visiting Professor at the Meiji Institute for Global Affairs



Pascal Lamy
Former Director-General of the World Trade Organisation



Foua Toloa
Former Member of the Council of the Ongoing Government of Tokelau and Minister of Energy; former Head of Government



Andrés Velasco
Former Finance Minister of Chile; Professor of Professional Practice in International Development at Columbia University

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Global Ocean Commission Partners



The mission of **The Pew Charitable Trusts**’ environment work is to strengthen policies and practices in ways that produce significant and measurable protection for terrestrial and marine ecosystems worldwide. In doing so, they work to advance scientific understanding of the causes and consequences of environmental problems, design policy solutions to these problems and mobilise public support for implementation. Current marine work includes projects to establish large, highly protected marine reserves, create shark sanctuaries and reduce demand for shark fin, ensure sustainable fisheries in US and European waters, secure international science-based rules to regulate some of the world’s largest tuna fisheries, prohibit destructive high seas bottom trawling and end illegal fishing.



Adessium Foundation aspires to a world in which people live in harmony with each other and with their environments. The Foundation is working to create a balanced society characterised by integrity, justice, and a balance between people and nature. The name Adessium is inspired by the Latin phrase ad esse, literally ‘into being’. It signifies help, support and participation that bring about positive change.



The **Swire Group Charitable Trust** was established in 1983 as the philanthropic arm of the Swire group in Hong Kong and is funded by Swire group companies. The Trust envisions a flourishing world of diversity, equal opportunity and sustainable growth. To achieve this vision, the Trust funds non-profit organizations in the environment, education and arts and culture in Hong Kong and Mainland China.



Somerville College is one of the constituent colleges of the University of Oxford. Founded in 1879 as one of the first women’s colleges, it is named after Mary Somerville (1780–1872), the best-known female scientist of her day. Somerville became a mixed college in 1994. Its undergraduates, postgraduates and fellows study and research a wide range of subjects spanning the arts, sciences, medicine, engineering and the humanities. Alumni include former Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher and Indira Gandhi, and Dorothy Hodgkin, the only British woman scientist to have won a Nobel Prize.



Oceans 5 brings together a number of philanthropists committed to ocean conservation. The group collectively targets its investments and support on projects and campaigns aimed at protecting biodiversity and constraining overfishing. It supports focused projects with limited timeframes that have the capacity to produce clear and measurable returns.

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