



Preliminary analysis of voluntary commitments

This analysis relies on a preliminary “first look” at information collected from The Ocean Conference Voluntary Commitments (VCs). It addresses, in broad terms, the measures and actions identified in the VCs, types of resources committed, links with other SDGs, relation to the Call to Action, gaps, and information about specific issues, ecosystems and actions.

A more in-depth analysis will be provided at a future date.

1. Overview of voluntary commitments

At the time of writing this document, 1393 VCs have been registered by different entities (governments, UN agencies, IGOs, NGOs, civil societies, academic institutions, scientific community, private sector and other relevant actors). These commitments related to multiple ocean basins and SDG 14 targets. The graphic below (which was prepared at the time when 1372 VCs were registered) provides a breakdown of the VCs, illustrating that on an ocean basin level, most commitments (31%) related to the North Atlantic, which also incorporates the Caribbean and Mediterranean Seas, followed by the South Pacific (21%), Indian Ocean (16%), North Pacific (15%), South Atlantic (10%), and the Arctic and Southern Oceans (3% each).



Figure 1: Voluntary commitments by ocean basin



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Of the total VCs, a majority (613 or 45%) were submitted by governments, followed by NGOs (277 or 20%), United Nations entities (112 or 8%), civil society (84 or 6%), private sector (79 or 6%), IGOs (58 or 4%), partnerships (49 or 4%), academia (45 or 3%), scientific community (21 or 2%), philanthropic organizations (18 or 1%) and others (16 or 1%).

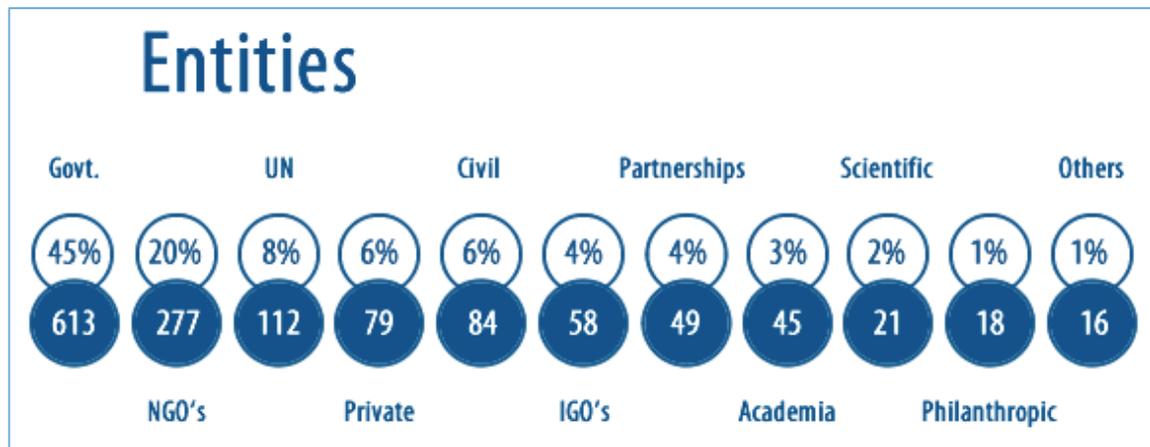


Figure 2: Voluntary commitments by entities.

While all SDG 14 targets were covered in the VCs, some targets received more attention than others. The most frequently addressed target was target 14.2 (sustainable management and protection of marine and coastal ecosystems) at 706 (51% of total) registered commitments. This target is also arguably the broadest target in scope. The next most popular was target 14.1 (preventing and reducing marine pollution by 2025) at 540 commitments (39%), followed by target 14.a (increasing scientific knowledge, research capacity and technology transfer) at 529 commitments (39%), and target 14.4 (effectively regulating harvesting and ending overfishing and IUU fishing by 2020) at 414 commitments (30%). Target 14.5 (conservation of at least 10% of coastal and marine areas by 2020) received 386 (28%) commitments, target 14.7 (increasing economic benefits to SIDS and least developed countries by 2030) received 327 (24%) commitments, and target 14.c (implementing international law as reflected in UNCLOS) received 272 commitments (20%). Targets 14.b (providing access to small-scale and artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets) and 14.3 (minimizing and addressing impacts of ocean acidification) both received 232 (17%) commitments. Target 14.6 (prohibiting certain forms of fisheries subsidies) was last with 92 (7%) commitments. It should be noted here that most commitments referred to multiple targets.

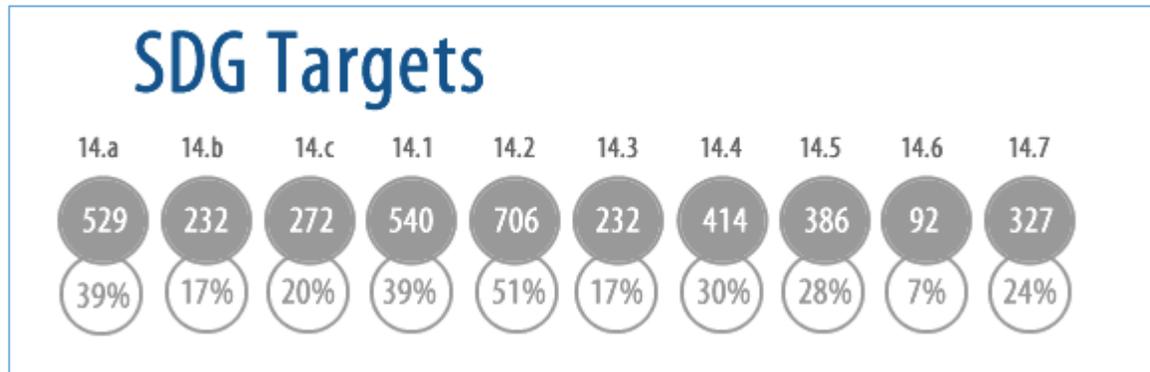


Figure 3: Voluntary commitments by SDG 14 target.

2. Measures and actions identified in the voluntary commitments

This section will discuss the types of measures and actions identified in the VCs, and will provide examples of both measures and specific commitments related to each of the SDG 14 targets. In reading this section, it should be kept in mind that 97% of the VCs included actions that addressed multiple targets, and in some cases multiple SDGs. This is not surprising given the close interrelationships between the targets, and indicates that projects and even individual activities can often be used to progress multiple SDG 14 targets at the same time.

Addressing marine pollution (SDG 14.1)

The majority of VCs relating to marine pollution proposed to address **plastics or litter in the marine environment**. This is clearly a reflection of recent international attention on the problem of plastics in the ocean and their impact on the health of ecosystems, species and human communities. Addressing plastics is also a relatively new area of work in the broader context of marine pollution, and one where concrete progress can be made by raising awareness and changing consumer and producer practices. The proposed measures included bans on plastic bags and bottles, coastal clean-ups, recovery and recycling of plastics and other measures. Many measures also include broader prevention and removal of marine litter, including lost fishing gear (ghost nets). One example is a commitment by Sustainable Coastlines Charitable Trust supported by the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) to work with community leaders in New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Hawaii to address marine litter of all kinds through coastal cleanups, awareness raising, prevention and building human capacity (\$200,000 funding commitment).

Other measures and actions identified in this target include **nutrient management** through treatment of wastewater and addressing agricultural inputs such as fertilizers



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and manure through improved management actions. One example of this type of VC is a commitment by the Government of Cyprus to eliminate all treated and untreated wastewater discharges in the sea by 2020 (\$35,000,000 funding commitment).

Pollution from shipping was also addressed in addition to land-based sources of marine pollution. An important aspect of this is preventing the spread of alien species from ballast water and biofouling, both of which are problems tackled by the VCs. Examples are an Estonian project to develop national infrastructure to implement the Ballast Water Convention (\$300,000), and an IMO-facilitated effort to build partnerships to minimize impacts of biofouling (\$10,000,000).

For a summary of measures and actions relating to this target, please see figure 4 below.

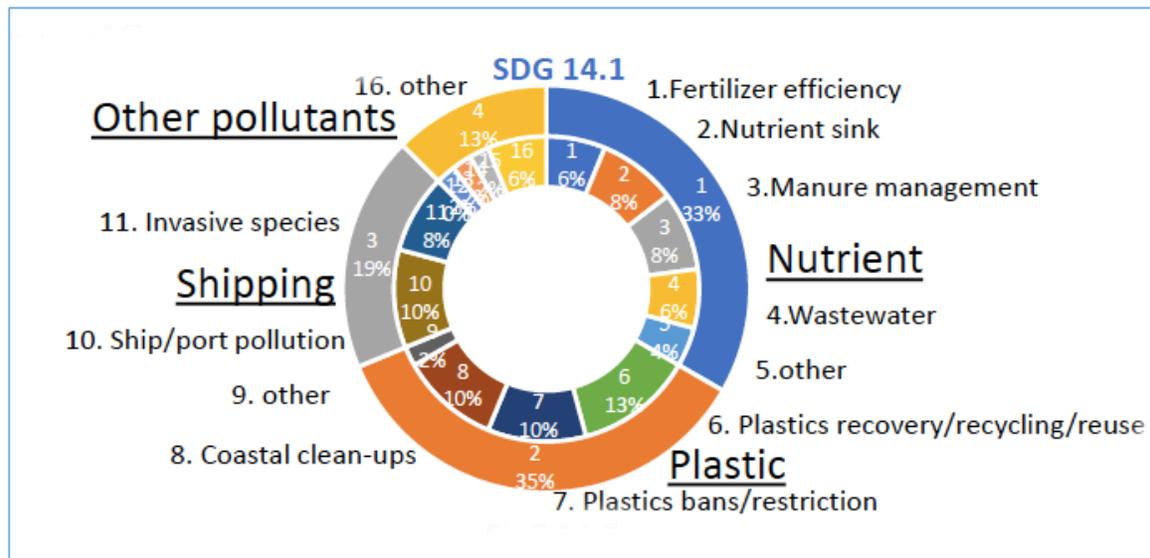


Figure 4: Measures and actions under SDG 14.1

Sustainable management and protection of marine and coastal ecosystems (SDG 14.2)

The measures relating to this VC generally involved some aspect of **ecosystem-based management, including integrated coastal management and marine spatial planning**. The **Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) approach** was an important measure in these commitments, as were **community-based marine managed areas** and **climate adaptation measures such as ecosystem-based adaptation and blue carbon**.



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There is a large degree of overlap between measures addressing this target and SDG 14.5, given that area-based measures can provide for both sustainable management and conservation of specific areas, and have also been proposed as a tool to enhance resilience to climate change. Target 14.4 is closely related to the present target because many of the measures to implement it (particularly the LME approach and marine managed areas) also address fisheries management.

The increasing importance of **marine spatial planning** is reflected by its inclusion in 33 VCs. Some actions relate to supporting marine spatial planning and improving the informational basis for it through research, while others relate to enhancing intersectoral cooperation and commitments to develop national marine spatial plans, for example in the Seychelles, South Africa, Mozambique, Madagascar, Argentina, Montserrat, Mexico, Brazil and Barbuda

The issues of **climate change, ecosystem-based adaptation** and **ecosystem restoration** were also reflected in VCs under this target. While climate change is not formally part of the SDG 14 targets, the emphasis on strengthening ecosystem resilience in the present target provides for adaptation measure to the impacts of climate change. One example of this is a commitment by Grenada to combat the negative effects of climate change through coastal ecosystem-based adaptation, which includes mangrove and coral reef restoration activities.

Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) featured in 20 commitments, many of which involved further development of, and support to, UNDP LME projects around the world.

At least five commitments aim to address this target via **community-based marine management**. One example of this includes the Food Security Project of Phang-nga Coastal Communities in Thailand, which seeks to enhance community management and protection of mangroves, provide for climate mitigation and waste management and empower participation of women and youth in local management activities (\$3,680 financing).



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For a summary of measures and actions relating to this target, please see figure 5 below.

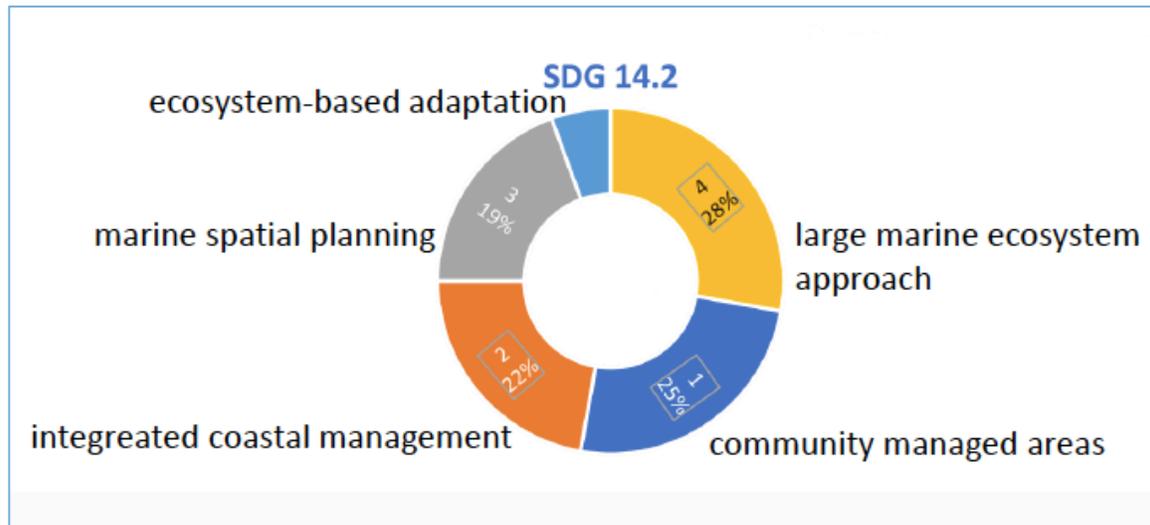


Figure 5: Measures and actions under SDG 14.2

Addressing ocean acidification (SDG 14.3)

A total of 69 VCs address ocean acidification, either as their main component, or as part of a broader range of management and conservation actions. Specific activities include **scientific research and research collaborations, building resilience against impacts of ocean acidification, and activities related to mitigation and carbon sequestration.**

Because many scientific uncertainties still exist relating to the rate and impacts of ocean acidification, as well as the potential for species to adapt, **scientific research** is one of the key components of this target. An example of scientific research collaboration is provided by the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON), which is a collaborative international network of 367 members representing 66 nations. GOA-ON undertakes monitoring of ocean acidity and undertakes capacity building in regions that currently have limited observation records and scientific capacity (\$600,000 of financing). The Swedish government has pledged funds to support research, monitoring and capacity building related to ocean acidification (via IUCN and Ocean Foundation). The support contributes to training researchers in monitoring and measuring, and, if possible, contribute to create a monitoring function for ocean acidification to contribute data to GOA-ON.



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While scientific research is important for the achievement of this target, several VCs also attempt to **build resilience towards the impacts of ocean acidification**. Some examples of this are provided by the New Zealand Pacific Partnership on Ocean Acidification, which aims to build resilience through practical adaptation actions, capacity building and awareness raising in the Pacific region (\$NZ 2.1 million of financing). Another example is a commitment to address acidification in Washington State, USA, by the Marine Resources Advisory Council and the State of Washington's council on ocean acidification. Proposed actions include reducing carbon emissions, monitoring and forecasting changing ocean chemistry, conducting research on the biological responses of ecologically and economically important species, identifying land-based nutrient contributions, raising awareness of ocean acidification among key stakeholders and affected communities, and advancing innovative approaches to adapt or remediate systems, such as buffering shellfish hatchery water and vegetation-based systems to modify local water chemistry (\$3,325,000 of financing).

Other common actions include **emissions reductions, other mitigation activities, and enhancing the ability of coastal and marine ecosystems to store carbon**.

For a summary of measures and actions relating to this target, please see figure 6 below.

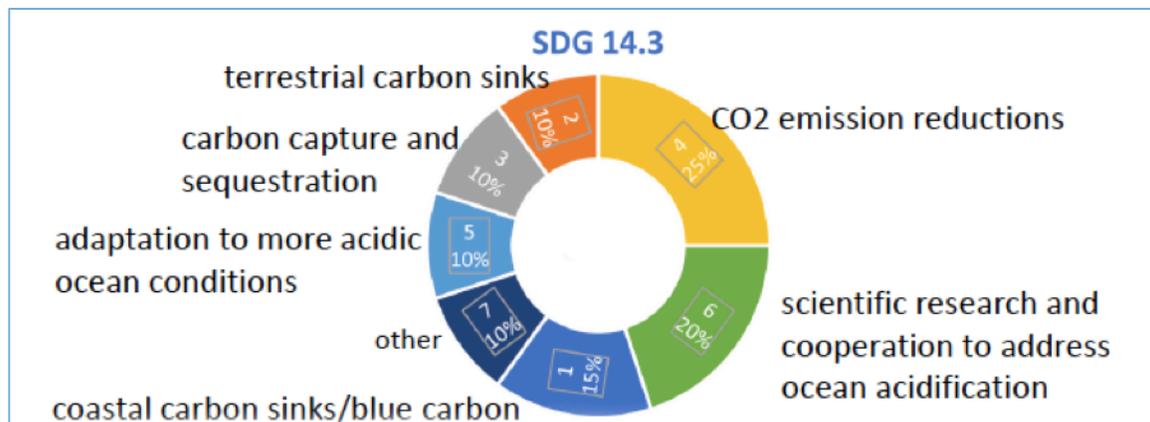


Figure 6: Measures and actions under SDG 14.3



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Effectively regulating harvesting and ending overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices (SDG 14.4)

SDG 14.4 and fisheries management in general received a large number of voluntary commitments. While 414 VCs were specifically registered against this target, fisheries and the management fisheries in a broader sense received a total of 434 commitments. These commitments range from the global to the local. Specific actions relate to **improved fisheries management, implementing the ecosystem approach to fisheries, re-building fisheries, compliance, monitoring and enforcement, combatting IUU fishing, strengthening capacity, certification and market-based instruments, and improving cooperation and available scientific information. Expanding marine protected areas and specific technical solutions relating to fishing gear** also feature.

The entering into force of the **Port State Measures Agreement** in 2016 provides an important tool for combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, though its implementation may prove difficult for some developing countries with limited resources. The importance of the measure is reflected in the 14 VCs, which relate directly to the implementation of this Agreement. For example, commitments were made by the FAO for technical assistance to developing countries, and by countries such as Myanmar, Tonga and the Maldives to implement the Agreement. New Zealand pledged to support implementation of the Agreement (\$1,840,000) in Pacific Island Countries; Sweden in coastal and small island developing States (\$5,700,000); and Norway in developing countries (up to ten million Norwegian kroner). Monaco supports measures to end IUU fishing in the Mediterranean and Black Sea (\$90,000). Australia has developed a system for identifying suspicious activity at sea, which will help implement the Agreement (\$2,800,000). Taken together, at least \$11,626,686 was committed to implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement. In addition, in kind resources and staff time were committed.

A total of 22 VCs either directly address or include components relating to **bycatch prevention and mitigation**. These actions include a range of solutions relating to addressing bycatch in specific fisheries, for example by the South African Offshore Trawl Bycatch Fishery Conservation Project and the Nature Seekers Leatherback Sea Turtle Bycatch Project in Trinidad and Tobago. The VCs also include broader global initiatives by, for example by the International Whaling Commission (Global Whale Entanglement Response Network and other initiatives) and by UNEP/CMS on conservation of marine turtles.

Implementing the ecosystem approach to fisheries was another focus of action, with projects including this approach being put in practice in Kenya, Philippines, Mauritius, Australia and Brazil.



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Also of note are efforts to **support Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs)** for strengthened governance, science, capacity building and increased compliance through an EU commitment involving 18 RFMOs (\$6,710,000 financing commitment).

On the national and local level, **efforts by seafood suppliers to commit to socially-responsible fisheries management** in Indonesia and commitments aiming to **stop fish bombing** in Malaysia, Tanzania and the Coral Triangle have the potential to provide effective solutions to make fishing more sustainable.

For a summary of measures and actions relating to this target, please see figure 7 below.

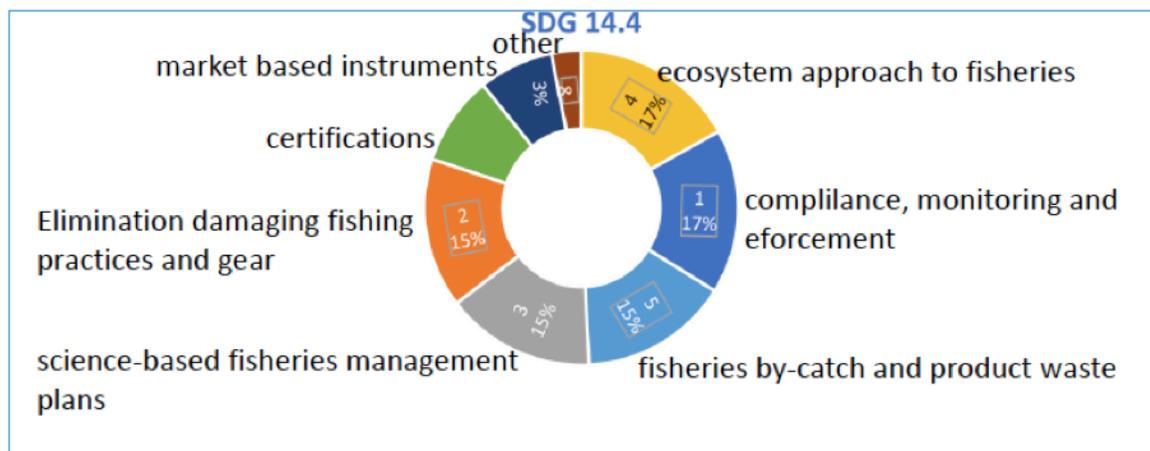


Figure 7: Measures and actions under SDG 14.4.

Conserving at least 10% of coastal and marine areas (SDG 14.5)

The measures in the VCs registered under this target relate mainly to area-based management, particularly different types of **marine protected areas, marine managed areas**, but also other measures such as **marine spatial planning and integrated coastal management**.

A total of 131 commitments include actions related to **marine protected areas (MPAs)**. These commitments encompass a wide variety of activities including creation of MPAs and networks, support for capacity, funding, and improvement of management effectiveness, participation, as well as research to improve the knowledge base. Some examples of measures include the Wildlife Conservation Society Marine Protected Area Fund (WCS MPA Fund), which is designed to assist countries meet the 10% target. The



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WCS MPA Fund aims to invest a minimum of \$15 million by 2020 to support legal declaration of new MPAs in 20 countries covering 3.7 million square kilometers of previously unsecured and unprotected ocean. Another example is the Pew Bertarelli Ocean Legacy project, which commits \$30 million over five years in technical support and public education to promote the creation of 15 large-scale marine reserves by 2022. As part of this commitment, the project will continue to collaborate and build capacity with local and indigenous communities to protect their marine environment, support sustainable livelihoods, and increase climate resiliency.

On a national level, the government of the Seychelles committed to protecting 30% of its marine and coastal waters and is also developing a marine spatial plan. The Cook Islands is committing to dedicate its entire Exclusive Economic Zone, Marae Moana, an area of 1.9 million square kilometres to protection, conservation and integrated management. Pakistan is planning on designating its first ever MPA by 2020. And in a departure from traditional MPAs, Ecoswell, an NGO in the town of Lobitos in northern Peru is working declaring the ocean off Lobitos a World Surfing Reserve.

Several commitments relate to **community-managed marine areas**. For example, Fiji and Tuvalu commit to establishing and strengthening their network of Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs). The ICCA Consortium (ICCA are territories conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities) commits to promoting the appropriate recognition of rights and support to marine and coastal ICCAs along with their associated small-scale fisheries in the regional, national and global arena. The Fiji LMMA Network commits to empowering communities to scale up their current efforts to an effectively managed and governed network of LMMAs in all Fijian communities covering 100% of Fiji's customary marine areas by 2025 (\$700,000 financial commitment).



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For a summary of measures and actions relating to this target, please see figure 8 below.

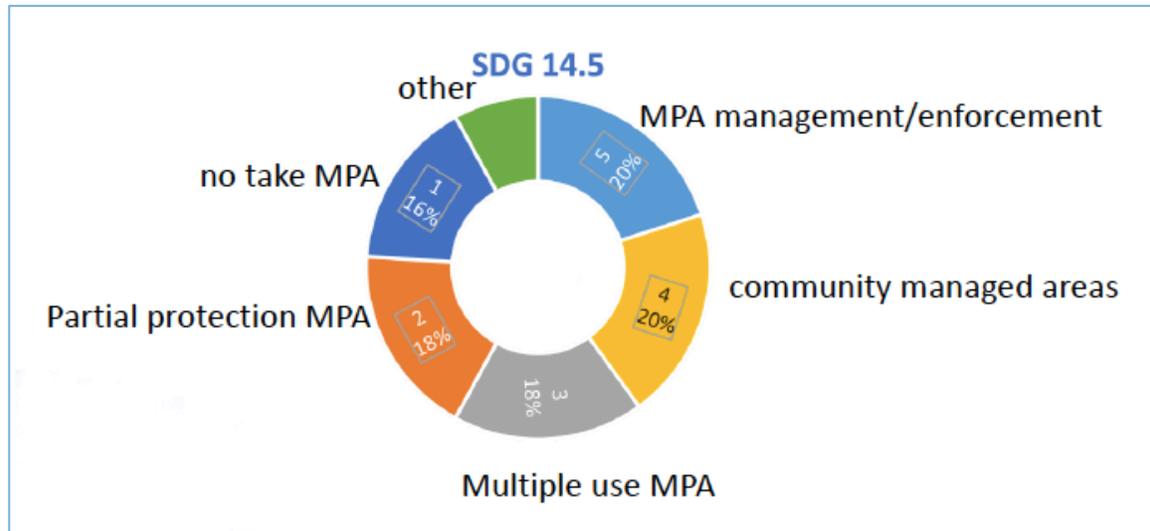


Figure 8: Measures and actions under SDG 14.5

Prohibiting certain forms of fisheries subsidies (SDG 14.6)

This target saw the fewest VCs, possibly because the process leading to the prohibition of harmful capacity enhancing subsidies will need to be undertaken through WTO negotiations, and is likely to be politically sensitive. It also seems that some commitments registered against this target do not directly address subsidies, though are likely to be relevant in the broader context. The specific activities in the VCs are most commonly associated with **research and information sharing**, although some also **relate to removal of harmful subsidies**.

Direct action relating to reduction of subsidies included both policies and commitments, including a commitment by Myanmar to remove or reduce harmful subsidies, the Tonga Fisheries Sector Plan, India's National Policy on Marine Fisheries 2017, Uruguay's efforts to enhance fishery management, control and surveillance, and the integrated Papua New Guinea Oceans Policy. Working internationally, Argentina and New Zealand registered commitments towards eliminating harmful subsidies, while UNCTAD, FAO and UNEP commit to assisting governments on trade-related aspects of SDG 14

In regards to **research**, VCs related to collection and analysis of fisheries subsidies data, analysis about impacts and effects of subsidies, and country studies in the West African



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region on the impacts of subsidies in the sustainable management of fisheries resources.

For a summary of measures and actions relating to this target, please see figure 9 below.

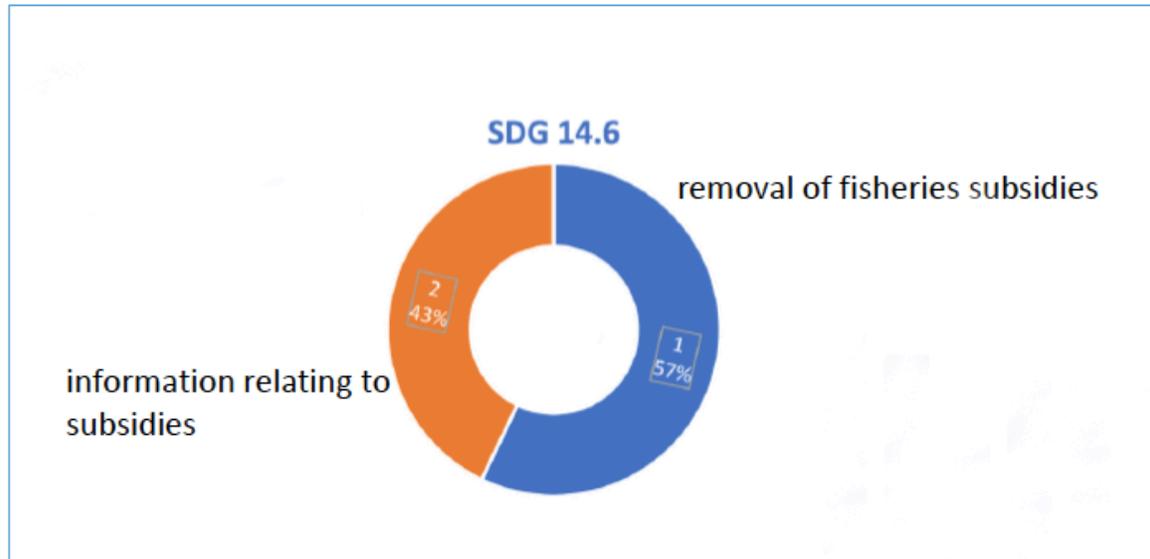


Figure 9: Measures and actions under SDG 14.6

Increasing the economic benefits to Small Island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources (SDG 14.7)

Commitments made in reference to this target addressed various aspects and sectors of a **blue economy**. These sectors included **sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, transport, renewable energy and marine biotechnology**.

A total of 47 VCs refer to development of a **blue economy**. The related concept of **blue growth** is mentioned in 22 commitments. It is clear that transition to a blue economy is an important undertaking for many countries. For example, in defining the blue economy, Kenya has identified the following key sectors: fisheries and aquaculture, maritime transport and logistics services, culture and tourism; and extractives (oil and gas, minerals and energy) as key to delivering quick and sustainable results for food security and employment creation (\$140,000,000 financial commitment by Kenya and World Bank). A project mainly funded by the MAVA foundation aims to identify indicators, select tools and recommend policies to promote the blue economy for the Mediterranean (\$425,000 financial commitment). To support its blue economy strategy, the Government of Seychelles is preparing the Third South West Indian Ocean Fisheries



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Governance and Shared Growth Project (SWIOFish3) with financial support from the World Bank, the GEF and from the issuance of a sovereign blue bond. Seychelles has sought to diversify its sources of funding and has turned to innovative financial instruments, such as blue bonds, which aim is to raise capital from private investors interested in supporting a sustainable development agenda.

Of the sectors, **aquaculture development** featured in 13 commitments under this target (although aquaculture in general across all targets received many more commitments). **Sustainable shipping** was part of 79 commitments relating to this target, **tourism** featured in 87 commitments and **fisheries** in 149.

Relatively new sectors were also the subject of some VCs. **Renewable energy** was part of 39 commitments. For example, the SIDS-SIDS Partnership on Sustainable Energy for Blue Island Economies, which covers SIDS in Caribbean, Pacific, Indian Ocean and Africa, aims to accelerate the market introduction and commercialization of ocean energy technologies such as wave, tidal or ocean thermal energy conversion (\$1,000,000 financing). **Marine biotechnology** did not receive any dedicated commitments, but was mentioned in two more general commitments. The Netherlands has established a Blue Innovation Institute for SIDS to help meet the twin challenges of climate change and ocean degradation by promoting policy and technology innovations (\$1,000,000 financing).

For a summary of measures and actions relating to this target, please see figure 10 below.

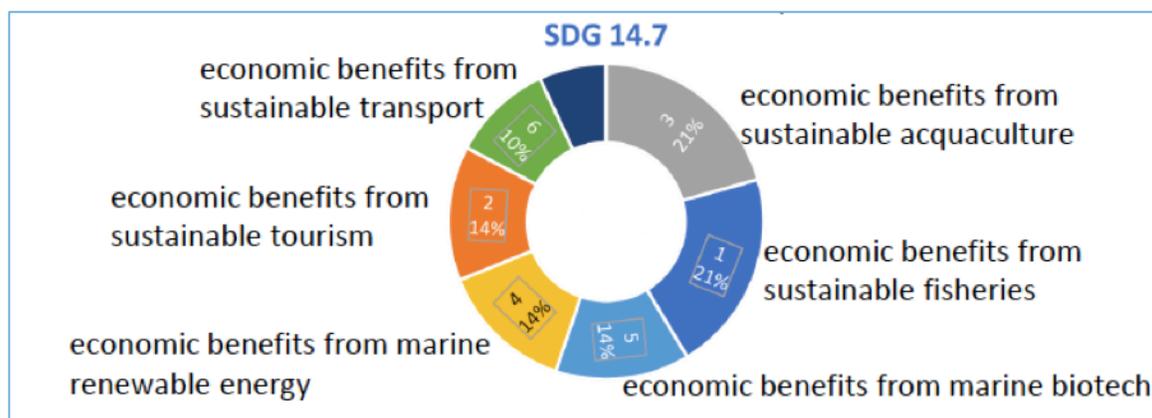


Figure 10: Measures and actions under SDG 14.7



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Increasing scientific knowledge, capacity and technology transfer (SDG 14.a)

541 VCs were registered under this target. The commitments covered a range of activities related to **scientific research** and **developing capacity for research, training and professional development, data access and sharing, and the transfer of marine technologies**.

Several VCs aimed to **increase scientific knowledge and capacity**. For example the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC) and its partners are planning to launch for 2021-2030 an International Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, which will promote science-based solutions and their systematic transformation into informed policies and decisions in support of SDG 14. Scientific institutions also entered VCs, for example the Nippon Foundation Nereus Project, a collaboration of several scientific research centres, strives to explore a broad range of perspectives and scientific opinions on ocean sustainability, and to create an inclusive community of researchers.

A range of ocean-related issues and topics were covered under the **capacity building** component this target, and included marine protected area management, ocean acidification research, marine biodiversity and sustainable use. Some referred to developing individual capacity and others addressed institutional capacity. While **technology transfer** was mentioned in a number of commitments, practical examples of were less numerous, and included **waste management technologies, shipping related technology, power generation and desalination**.



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For a summary of measures and actions relating to this target, please see figure 11 below.

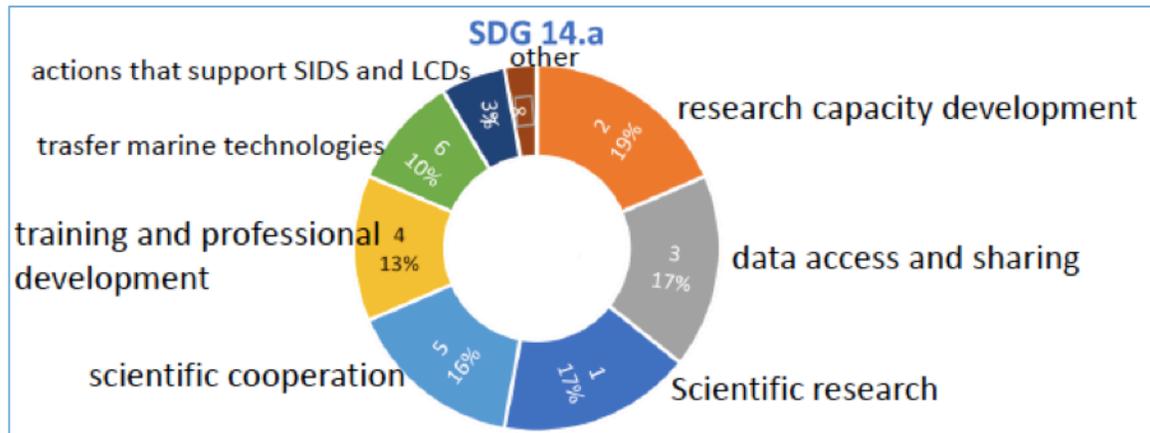


Figure 11: Measures and actions under SDG 14.a

Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets (SDG 14.b)

The VCs registered to this target included a variety of activities and measures designed to improve access of artisanal and small-scale fishers to both markets and fishing grounds. One of the most common types of commitment related to **community empowerment in management of marine resources**, including community-based management and co-management. **Improving access to coastal fishing grounds** was also included in some commitments as was **improving human and institutional capacity** and **transfer of fishing technologies**. **Access to markets** generally included actions such as **improving traceability** as well as **certification and ecolabelling**, and **capacity building** for fishing communities relating to these actions. One example is provided by the Somalia and Yemen Development Programme on Banking and Artisanal Fisheries, which aims to enhance the knowledge and capacities of participants in artisanal fisheries, as well as banking services in support of developing small-scale activities in this sector (\$60,000 financial commitment). Another example is a commitment by the Marine Stewardship Council to improve fisheries management through certification, with help to countries in how to achieve certification of their fisheries.



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For a summary of measures and actions relating to this target, please see figure 12 below.



Figure 12: Measures and actions under SDG 14.b

Implementing international law as reflected in UNCLOS (SDG 14.c)

Activities in the VCs registered to this target included a range of actions related to UNCLOS, including **implementation of specific provisions of UNCLOS** from ocean governance to sustainable use to seabed mining. On the issue of **seabed mining**, the International Seabed Authority is providing capacity building, disseminating research results and fostering cooperation relating to deep seabed resources. Oasis Earth is working on effective methods to achieve a rigorous Precautionary Approach to Deep Sea Mining. Activities also include **awareness raising**, for example by the International Cable Protection Committee, on the importance of submarine cables in sustainable socio-economic development.



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For a summary of measures and actions relating to this target, please see figure 13 below.

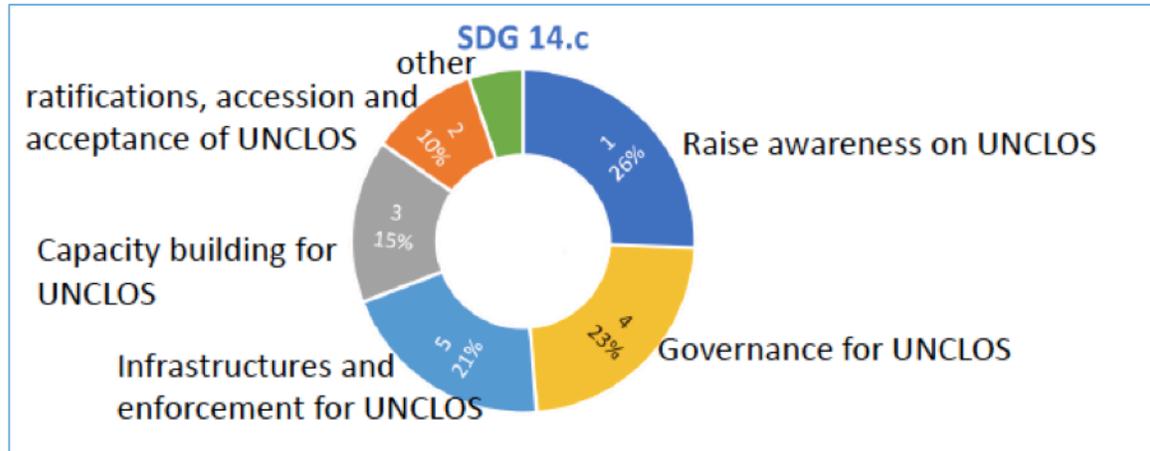


Figure 13: Measures and actions under SDG 14.c

3. Types of resources committed

A total of 573 commitments include the provision of monetary resources. The total amount of money committed is \$25,397,782,862 (e.g. approximately 25.4 billion). However, further research is needed to further elaborate on this figure, and it should be interpreted with some caution. In general, the funding is spread over several years duration of each commitment. Some commitments are not new to the Oceans Conference, but have clearly been under development for several years. There were also some errors encountered in how countries have entered financial commitments (for example, one commitment shows financing of \$60 for a meeting, another one \$417 for integrated marine and coastal area management, and a third one \$39 for restoration of oyster beds. Likely these projects should have a few more zeros included, and will need to be checked). Some figures were entered in currencies other than USD, and some financial commitments are actually loans rather than outright funding. A majority of funding has already been committed to a specific purpose and/or recipient, while in some cases the purpose for the funding has been set but the recipients are still left open.

Almost all of the commitment included in kind funding as well as staff and technical expertise.

The largest financial commitment was a commitment of \$8,000,000,000 (in loans) by the European Investment Bank for supporting in particular SIDS to reduce their vulnerability to climate change and building a more resilient ocean economy. The



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second largest commitment was \$3,700,000,000 to Mauritius by the Japan International Cooperation Agency to connect about 50% of the population to the sewerage network by 2030. Mauritius is also co-financing this project. And the third largest commitment was also by the European Investment Bank, and included \$3,000,000,000 for supporting projects relating to the strengthening the resilience of marine and coastal ecosystems through reduction of pollution. This included a large portfolio of projects such as the Mediterranean Hot Spots Investment Programme.

A rough regional breakdown of financial commitments can be provided, though it should be kept in mind that this is still very preliminary and should be taken as an indication of magnitude rather than exact figures.

SIDS: approximately \$13,486,296,200 exclusively for oceans projects in individual or multiple SIDS, and another \$172,370,000 shared with other regions.

Africa: approximately \$277,735,906 exclusively for oceans projects in single or multiple countries, and another 194,515,000 shared with other regions

Asia: approximately \$3,485,406,316 for oceans projects in individual and multiple countries in Asia, and another \$35,920,000 shared with other regions.

South and Central America: approximately \$86,297,851 for oceans projects in individual or multiple countries

Europe: approximately \$2,184,928,503 to individual countries or to groups of countries. It should be noted that this sum includes substantial amount of funding for programmes and projects in the Mediterranean, which will also cover regions beyond Europe.

North America: approximately \$216,544,144

Global: approximately \$494,093,5076

The time frames of the commitments varied from 2017 to 2030 and beyond. While some commitments have a distinct time period, others are clearly intended to carry on in the long term. A more thorough analysis will need to be prepared on commitments vs. individual targets.

4. Links with other SDGs

There were numerous links with other SDGs, and the following provides some samplings of them. A fuller analysis could be undertaken to cover the linkages in-depth.

Poverty: A total of 37 commitments mention poverty alleviation as part of their description. While none of these are a direct poverty measure (in that the commitment title does not explicitly mention poverty), many relate to the ability of the ocean to provide livelihoods, income, employment and economic growth. One commitment aims to assist small-scale fishers living below the poverty line. 10 of the commitments were



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made by governments, 4 by United Nations entities, 3 by IGOs, 9 by NGOs, 3 by civil society, 2 by academic institutions, 1 by scientific community, 3 by private sector and 2 by partnerships.

Food security: A total of 81 commitments refer to food security, and propose in some way to advance it. Most of these commitments relate to sustainable fisheries, including improving governance, promoting community-based fisheries management, improving market access for small scale fisheries, management, and combating IUU fishing. Some commitments also approached food security from the perspective of blue growth and blue economy, providing for habitat protection and supporting aquaculture. It should be noted that while only a portion of the commitments relating to fisheries explicitly mentioned food security, most of them would still address this issue. 33 of the commitments were made by governments, 9 by United Nations entities, 7 by IGOs, 14 by NGOs, 3 by civil society, 8 by academic institutions, 1 by private sector, 2 by other relevant actors and 4 by partnerships.

Gender: A total of 22 commitments either directly promote gender equality, or explicitly mention gender in description of the commitment. 3 of these are government commitments, 2 are commitments by United Nations entities, 4 by IGOs, 5 by NGOs, 5 by civil society organizations and 3 by partnerships. Some examples include an initiative by Diverse Voices and Action (DIVA) for Equality, which aims to make clearer the links between urgent action on ocean, air and land as the commons, and with feminists, women and girls of diversities and all ages in urban poor, rural and remote areas of Fiji and the Pacific. Another project is called Women Leading Ocean Action, and is organized by UN-Women to promote the participation of women in ocean management.

5. Any relations to the "Call for Action"

The "Call for Action" was mentioned specifically in two commitments. One of these was in context of fostering ocean-related education in Algeria, and the other one related to sustainable trade in fisheries.

6. Any gaps

A full analysis of gaps will need to be undertaken in the future. However, marine biotechnology did not receive many commitments, and may have the potential to become a promising sector for a blue economy in the future. Further involvement of philanthropic, scientific and industry organizations would also be helpful for full realization of SDG 14.



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7. Other information

Mangroves and related ecosystems: A total of 82 commitments relate to the management, protection and restoration of mangroves and related ecosystems. Some of these projects also relate to mapping, economic valuation, tourism, financing, sustainable livelihoods, climate resilience and the role of mangroves and related ecosystems such as seagrasses as carbon sinks (blue carbon). 25 are commitments by governments, 9 related to United Nations entities, 2 to IGOs, 27 to NGOs, 9 to civil society, 3 to academic institutions, 3 to other relevant actors, and 4 to partnerships (e.g. Global Mangrove Alliance, the Blue Carbon Initiative, Fiji Locally Managed Marine Areas Network, and Fishing Community).

Blue carbon was explicitly mentioned in 14 VCs, and blue carbon related activities covered the range from research and policy to pilot projects on the ground.

Human rights: 18 commitments explicitly mention or relate to human rights. These commitments cover a range of topics from the Oceania Human Rights Commission & Court Project, which will create regional human rights mechanisms, and a several projects combatting human rights abuses in the fishing industry.

Traditional knowledge: A total of 6 commitments will rely on traditional knowledge at least to some degree in their implementation. Out of these, 5 commitments refer to the Pacific, while 1 refers to Indonesia. They cover a diverse set of commitments from sustainable sea transportation to conservation of ecosystems and species, and climate change adaptation.¹

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¹ This note has been prepared for the Division for Sustainable Development, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs by Dr. Marjo Vierros, Director, Coastal Policy and Humanities Research and Senior Associate, Global Ocean Forum with input from Roberto Buonomo and Kenneth Kamau, DSD/UNDESA. Support to the design of The Ocean Conference Registry Voluntary Commitments was received by DOALOS and UNDP. Design by William Bly, DSD/UNDESA. Preparation of this note was made possible with generous contribution from the Government of Sweden.