

Press release



1,500 concrete actions now registered on UN platform to save our ocean

Momentum for Sustainable Development Goal 14 continues among global stakeholders

New York, 18 December 2018 – A recent surge in pledges to protect and sustainably manage our ocean pushed the number of concrete actions registered on the United Nations’ global platform for voluntary ocean commitments to 1,500, signaling that health of our ocean remains a priority for many governments, businesses and civil society organizations around the world.

The commitments build on the nearly 1,400 made during a global call for action at the UN Ocean Conference in 2017. That 100 valid commitments have been made in the year since the conference shows that progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 14, Life Below Water, is moving ahead. The new commitments, like the others, will join the nine Communities of Ocean Action (COAs), the thematic multi-stakeholder groups facilitated by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, to follow up on implementation.

“I’m very pleased to see that 1,500 voluntary commitments have now been registered in our global effort to support SDG14, to conserve and sustainably use the resources of the ocean,” said Ambassador Peter Thomson, the UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for the Ocean.

“The international community has a universal plan to reverse the cycle of decline in which the Ocean has been caught – I refer of course to SDG 14, the ocean goal. The nine COAs set up at the United Nations to steward the voluntary commitments will work with the organizations that made these new commitments to assist in their implementation and thereby help us along the road to achievement of all ten of SDG 14’s targets.”

Recent commitments include:

- The **Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators** will contribute to the UN Environment Clean Seas initiative by drastically cutting back on single-use plastics on Arctic cruise vessels and include shoreline clean-ups in its programmes.
- The **Government of Mauritius** has committed to restore its mangroves and hold mangrove education events, as well as map its mangrove ecosystems by June 2020 to overcome knowledge gaps and offer an early warning system to identify threats.

- The **Associazione Mediterraneo Ricerca e Sviluppo** in Italy is working to protect the habitat of bottlenose dolphins in the Sicilian Channel and increase scientific knowledge about them.
- The **Mundus Maris** organization launched a small-scale fisheries academy in Senegal to serve as a space for reflection, training and knowledge-sharing for local fishermen.

All of the ocean commitments are required to submit progress reports once a year until the completion of the initiative to maintain active status. A “traffic light” transparency system on the platform shows the status of each commitment.

About the Communities of Ocean Action:

To follow-up on the implementation of the voluntary commitments, to catalyze and generate new voluntary commitments, and to facilitate collaboration among different actors in support of SDG 14, the UN has launched nine thematic multi-stakeholder Communities of Ocean Action (COAs).

Each community is coordinated by designated co-focal points who work together with UN Special Envoy for the Ocean Peter Thomson and UN DESA in carrying out the activities. The nine COAs are:

- Coral reefs
- Implementation of international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
- Mangroves
- Marine and coastal ecosystems management
- Marine pollution
- Ocean acidification
- Scientific knowledge, research capacity development and transfer of marine technology
- Sustainable blue economy
- Sustainable fisheries

Further information:

- Browse the registry of voluntary ocean commitments here: <https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/>
- Information on SDG 14: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg14>
- More on the Communities of Ocean Action (COAs): <https://oceanconference.un.org/coa>

Media contact:

UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Ariel Alexovich, T: +1 212 963-5897 | E: alexovich@un.org