

*Statement delivered by Prof. Martin Visbeck, GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research, Kiel University, Germany on 3 February 2014*

Science reminds us that the ocean covers 2/3 of our planet's surface, hosts the largest connected ecosystem, regulates our climate, allows for global trade and provides numerous essential life supporting services and provisions such as oxygen, food, materials and a sense of place.

A focused SDG for the Ocean and Coasts provides the opportunity to:

- 1) Encourage sustainable use of ocean resources in development.
- 2) Secure the ocean's life supporting functions.
- 3) Provide an effective governing framework.

Equitable access to ocean resources and benefit sharing can help to alleviate poverty.

Sustainable fisheries, mariculture and aquaculture will increase food security and enable long term and rewarding employment.

Sharing the wealth from ocean ecosystem, hydrocarbon and material resources and their environmental friendly extraction will support inclusive development for all.

Specific targets for an SDG on Ocean and Coasts should include:

- provide equitable access to ocean resources
- implement adequate observing and information systems
- harmonize ocean and coastal governance
- establish marine protected areas covering 20% of the oceans
- improve ocean literacy and scientific technical capacity

A comprehensive SDG on Ocean and Coasts will ensure a balance between development and protection of our largest global common for the benefit of mankind: THE OCEAN.