

DECEMBER 2020 | VOL. 16

# OCEAN ACTION NEWSLETTER: THE OCEAN, OUR ALLY FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

---



[un.org/oceanconference](https://un.org/oceanconference)



**OCEAN ACTION**



**United  
Nations**

Department of  
Economic and  
Social Affairs



2015 Jennifer O'Neil 2nd Place "Underwater Life"

## 2020 IN RETROSPECT

We have reached the end of a year where the impacts of the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The global rate of species extinction is currently tens to hundred times higher than it has averaged over the past 10 million years. Coral reefs and mangroves are at high risk of mass die-off if the global temperatures continue to rise as a result of climate change. Consumption and production including overfishing, poaching, logging, mining and pollution have severely degraded our land and the ocean, which is likely to have untold consequences on our health and livelihoods. The emergence of 75 per cent of infectious diseases, such as COVID-19, is driven in part by the degradation of ecosystems and further exacerbated by climate change. The COVID-19 pandemic has also laid bare the persisting systemic vulnerabilities and inequalities, particularly for those already left behind. Collectively, these trends have exposed the close interconnectedness of the global commons with global wellbeing.

The 2020 United Nations Ocean Conference was meant to be one of the first milestones of the Decade of Action for the Sustainable Development Goals and catalyze much needed science based innovative solutions aimed at accelerating global ocean action. But COVID-19 had other plans. With the onset of the pandemic, the implementation of SDG 14 by the 2030 deadline seems even more daunting. Given the widespread health and economic impacts of the pandemic, and the urgent need for relief measures, some difficult tradeoffs will be made and governments' priorities will be re-evaluated; however, it is crucial that any interim measures implemented are done in a way that will not exacerbate the existing challenges—both socioeconomic and environmental—facing the ocean and coastal communities. The current crisis provides an opportunity to tap into science and innovation, to scale up solutions that leave no one behind, and to invest in a sustainable future.

The year 2020 was meant to be a “super year” for nature. Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, the global community collectively kept up the momentum on ocean action for the benefit of the health of our planet.





2017 Dan Charity 1st Place "Underwater Life"

In March World Wildlife Day (3 March) was celebrated under the theme "Sustaining all life on Earth" and World Water Day (22 March) under the theme "Water and Climate Change". World Tuna Day (2 May) was observed to raise awareness about the dangers of overfishing on biodiversity and sustainable development. Biodiversity Day (22 May) was celebrated by the global community under the theme "Our solutions are in nature". In June, on World Environment Day (5 June) the focus was on "Sustaining all life on Earth", leading to the World Ocean Day (8 June) that focused on innovation, "Innovation for a Sustainable Ocean". World Maritime Day (24 September 2020) celebrated under the theme "Sustainable shipping for a sustainable planet" provided opportunities for leaders from the shipping sector and a variety of others to reflect on the work done and look ahead to the urgent steps needed to build a sustainable future. And at the High-level week of the General Assembly, the President of General Assembly convened a UN Summit on Biodiversity (30 September 2020) at the level of Heads of State and Government under the theme of "Urgent action on biodiversity for sustainable development" which reminded us that biodiversity loss and the degradation of its contributions to people jeopardize progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and human wellbeing.

The forthcoming Ocean Conference, co-hosted by the Governments of Kenya and Portugal, comes at a critical time as the world is strengthening its efforts to mobilize, create and drive practical solutions to realize the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. With the new year we will enter the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030, where the Decade will embrace a participative and transformative process allowing scientists, policy makers, managers, and service users to work together to ensure that ocean science delivers greater benefits for both the ocean ecosystem and for society.

In the words of the Secretary-General "Now is the time to transform humankind's relationship with the natural world – and with each other".

The Division for Sustainable Development Goals of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs thanks all our colleagues, partners, actors and friends for their continued collaboration over the past year and wishes everyone a peaceful, prosperous and healthy 2021.

## MESSAGE FROM AMBASSADOR PETER THOMSON, THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S SPECIAL ENVOY FOR THE OCEAN

In his State of the Planet address at Colombia University on 2 December, Secretary-General Guterres said that humanity is waging war on Nature, and that it's time for us to instead advance peace with Nature as our top priority. From pollution to habitat destruction, from unsustainable exploitation to lack of adequate protection, nowhere is this truer than in our relationship with the Ocean.

2020 was to have been a super year for a rebalancing of our relationship with Nature, through the great conferences on Biodiversity, the Ocean and Climate Change. But the Covid-19 pandemic forced worldwide postponements, and for the good of all, we were forced into virtual formats of meeting and conferring.



With all these changes, it would have been understandable if momentum was lost in 2020; but as we adapted to our new virtual formats, we found it possible to keep the wheel of progress turning, and in some cases, to make it turn more efficiently. Throughout 2020, DESA has organised a highly valuable series, still ongoing, of “Keeping the Momentum” webinars on a range of subjects relevant to SDG14’s implementation. During 2020, UN Global Compact has convened a number of big Ocean events to motivate the private sector’s commitment to the sustainability of the Blue Economy. Meanwhile in June, the Friends of Ocean Action and the World Economic Forum hosted the Virtual Ocean Dialogues, with truly amazing numbers of virtual participants, to connect communities across the world seeking innovation and action for a healthy and thriving Ocean.

At the beginning of December, in a seminal moment in international efforts to conserve and sustainably use the Ocean’s resources, the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy released the results of two years of intense research and analysis by over two hundred experts from fifty countries. Its findings lay down a cornerstone for governments and organizations to cement the Ocean’s place at the center of global policymaking, whether that be in relation to food security and Biodiversity loss, or renewable energy and Climate Change.

The lesson that philosophers have imparted since ancient times, was proved true in 2020: that everything is connected, human to human, human to Nature, Nature to Climate, all in a “One Health” world. If we have learnt anything from this dreadful pandemic, we have taken that lesson of connectivity to heart. And from the lesson comes the reality, as we emerge from the pandemic, that it is the Blue-Green recovery road we must now take.

*You are invited to follow the Special Envoy's [Twitter](#) account and [Instagram](#) account, where he shares messages of solutions and strategies for achieving a healthy Ocean through implementation of SDG 14 and fidelity to the Paris Climate Agreement. More information about his work can be found on his website, [oceanconference.un.org/SpecialEnvoy](https://oceanconference.un.org/SpecialEnvoy).*



## KEEPING THE MOMENTUM FOR OCEAN ACTION WEBINARS

In preparation for the UN Ocean Conference, UN DESA has organized the “Keeping the Momentum for Ocean Action” [webinar series](#) to share perspectives from stakeholders from different sectors and all regions of the world in support of SDG 14 implementation. This series of sectorial webinars connected and mobilized new ideas from stakeholders towards the preparation and outreach of the UN Ocean Conference, including catalyzing new Commitments of Ocean Action and taking stock of progress on previous commitments.

The webinar series aimed to provide a space for different stakeholders to engage, network and inspire new partnerships related to SDG14. Stakeholders from Asia-Pacific, private sectors, local and regional governments, as well as youth groups were brought together thorough the webinars to discuss ideas and future engagement in the SDG14 and UN Ocean Conference process.

During 2020, five webinars were organized in the “Keeping the Momentum for Ocean Action” series and a high-level side event was organized by UN DESA in collaboration with the Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for the Ocean on the margins of the UN Biodiversity on “Biodiversity: the Ocean’s Role”. Each webinar attracted over 650 registered participants and over 1.200 live participants attended, and more than 90% of the attendees in post-webinar surveys reported being satisfied with the event and likely to participate in future events organized by UN DESA and UN Special Envoy for the Ocean.

For more info on the events, please find [here](#).



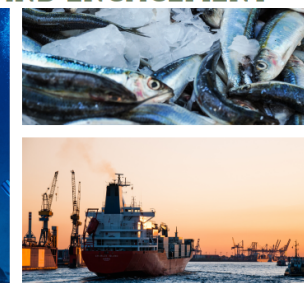
KEEPING THE MOMENTUM  
FOR OCEAN ACTION SERIES

### YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT



KEEPING THE MOMENTUM  
FOR OCEAN ACTION SERIES

### LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT



KEEPING THE MOMENTUM  
FOR OCEAN ACTION SERIES

### PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION



KEEPING THE MOMENTUM  
FOR OCEAN ACTION SERIES

### ASIA-PACIFIC STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT



## UPDATES FROM THE COMMUNITIES OF OCEAN ACTION (COAS)

### COMMUNITIES OF OCEAN ACTION

# IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AS REFLECTED IN UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA

In December 2020, the ocean was high on the agenda at the United Nations. On 8 December, the plenary of the General Assembly considered the agenda item on oceans and the law of the sea, and adopted a resolution on sustainable fisheries (resolution 75/89, currently available as [A/75/L.40](#)), which, inter alia, took note of the decision to postpone the resumption of the Review Conference on the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement until 2022 and decided to postpone the General Assembly's review of actions addressing the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks until 2022. It also postponed the fifteenth round of Informal Consultations of States Parties to the Agreement, which was to have taken place in 2020, until the second half of 2021. Expected to be adopted later this month, the [draft resolution](#) on oceans and the law of the sea would, inter alia, provide for the dates of the postponed fourth session of the BBNJ Intergovernmental Conference (16 – 27 August 2021), the welcoming of the second World Ocean Assessment and approval of its summary.

On 9 December, the in-person meeting of the thirtieth Meeting of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea was resumed to formally acknowledge and endorse the work that had been conducted through virtual meetings and exchanges of documents and statements and also to offer an opportunity to the representatives of States Parties to make statements under the agenda item of the Meeting entitled “Reports of the Secretary-General under article 319 for the information of States parties on issues of a general nature, relevant to States parties, which have arisen with respect to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea” which had been reserved for in-person deliberations.

On 10 December, UN-Oceans – the United Nations system inter-agency collaboration mechanism on ocean and coastal issues – held a virtual high-level meeting, bringing together nearly 20 senior executives of UN-Oceans member entities, as well as the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean.



This was the second high-level meeting of UN-Oceans, the first of which took place in the margins of the 2017 UN Ocean Conference. The second high-level meeting took stock of ongoing ocean-related initiatives, including in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and looked ahead toward opportunities for enhanced inter-agency coordination and cooperation on ocean and coastal issues beyond 2020.

## **THE SECOND WORLD OCEAN ASSESSMENT (WOA II) AND THE THIRD CYCLE OF THE REGULAR PROCESS**

The United Nations is due to release the second World Ocean Assessment (WOA II) in early 2021. The WOA II evaluates trends from and identifies gaps in the baseline established by the first world ocean assessment (WOA I), published in 2015. Like the first assessment, WOA II assesses the state of the marine environment at the global level, using an integrated approach that considers environmental and socioeconomic aspects.

The assessment was drafted by interdisciplinary writing teams made up of over 300 experts and is being released on schedule despite the additional challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The overall [summary of WOA II](#) is already available. The English version of the assessment will be published in February 2021 and will be followed later in the year by versions in all official languages of the United Nations.

The third cycle of the [Regular Process](#), which produces the World Ocean Assessments, is due to begin on 1 January 2021. Preparations are currently underway, and the first major step will be to constitute a new Group of Experts to lead the production of the third World Ocean Assessment. Also of note, the third cycle of the Regular Process will include a capacity-building programme to strengthen the science-policy interface, which will be developed and implemented in collaboration with interested UN agencies, regional organizations and others competent in ocean science and in marine and coastal management.

## **INTERSESSIONAL WORK FOR BBNJ INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE**

On 3 December, the virtual intersessional work, launched in September by the President of the Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction ([BBNJ Intergovernmental Conference](#)), ended for 2020 with the consideration of issues related to measures such as area-based management tools, including marine protected areas.

The intersessional work begun with the consideration of issues relating to environmental impact assessments and marine genetic resources, including questions on the sharing of benefits. The consideration of issues relating to capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology and those relating to cross-cutting issues is planned to be held in early 2021 (programme of work is available [here](#)).

## DOALOS capacity-building in the context of COVID-19

Capacity-building activities of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) were refocused in 2020 to meet the changing needs of member States in view of the far-reaching impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on people, societies, and efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and especially Sustainable Development Goal 14. For example through its technical cooperation projects, the Division assisted three States (Barbados, Belize and Costa Rica) in the development of their blue economies, including with respect to the effects of the pandemic, and continues to work in partnership with UNCTAD in developing assistance for other States based on the these lessons learned. The Division also provided technical training for Somalia through a seven-day training programme on “Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea for Maritime Law Enforcement Authorities”, highlighting the importance of securing the oceans for sustainable development. DOALOS has also recently launched a new 4-year global capacity-building programme in oceans and the law of the sea, with funding from Norway’s Norad.

The Division also provided technical training for Somalia through a seven-day training programme on “Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea for Maritime Law Enforcement Authorities”, highlighting the importance of securing the oceans for sustainable development. DOALOS has also recently launched a new 4-year global capacity-building programme in oceans and the law of the sea, with funding from Norway’s Norad. This programme will reinforce the ability of developing States to implement ocean governance frameworks which will also serve as the foundations for the achievement of ocean-related SDGs.



Importantly, and under the auspices of the United Nations - Nippon Foundation Fellowship Programme Alumni Network, DOALOS also reacted quickly to swiftly changing circumstances to deliver a substantial series of training sessions and smaller-group seminars in an adapted virtual format. After a pilot session in May to identify major challenges to ocean governance stemming from the impacts of COVID-19, as well as potential solutions (summary report [here](#)), nearly twenty sessions were held throughout 2020 on current and specialized ocean-related themes, including knowledge and innovation, marine pollution, sustainable blue economies, IUU fishing, and climate change; the law of the sea, including maritime zones and jurisdiction, fisheries, the human dimension, maritime delimitation, the sustainable development goals, and marine biological diversity beyond national jurisdiction; and professional skills.



In collaboration with academic and organizational partners, sessions were delivered on further topics, including marine science and policy, gender mainstreaming, and domestic customary law. Eligible participants were offered the opportunity to deepen their knowledge through the completion of assignment-based programmes leading to the award of a training certificate.

Open to variously to Fellows and Alumni of the UNNF programmes, the HSA Fellowship, and a broader audience of ocean professionals from United Nations Permanent Missions and national capitals, this extensive programme of sessions provided opportunities for continued learning, discussions, and engagement in key ocean-related spheres, including to identify and address the new and additional challenges stemming from the impacts of COVID-19 for the sustainable development of the world's oceans and the implementation of the SDGs and Goal 14 in particular. A total of 297 individuals registered for one or more sessions. Many of the presentations and recordings are available to a broader public audience of interested ocean professionals [here](#).

## **SEAFARERS FACE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

The often-challenging working conditions of seafarers have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. An estimated 400,000 seafarers have been stranded at sea, in some cases for over 18 months. The inability of vessel operators to change crews has led to some seafarers facing unilateral or unlawful extensions of tours of duty, prolonged confinement on board ships ordered to anchorage or remote berths and unilateral termination of contracts. Seafarers have also endured insufficient personal protective equipment and medical care on board vessels, a lack of access to shoreside medical care and welfare services and increased stress, isolation and social pressures. The United Nations Secretary-General as well as the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) have expressed deep concern regarding the plight of seafarers and appealed for Governments to designate seafarers as key workers and to facilitate safe crew changeovers.

In a [letter](#) addressed to the President of the thirtieth Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the United Nations Secretary-General wrote that that the international community has a responsibility to undertake concerted efforts to address this impending humanitarian crisis, noting that since shipping accounts for around 80 per cent of global trade, this situation could have significant impacts on international supply chains that are critical for pandemic response and recovery. The Secretary-General of the IMO, speaking at a UN-Oceans meeting on 10 December 2020, stressed the significant impacts this crisis was having on the mental health of seafarers, and noted that among its efforts to alleviate the situation, the IMO is seeking to secure priority access for seafarers to the COVID-19 vaccine.

On 1 December 2020, the General Assembly in resolution 75/17 urged Member States to designate the world's two million seafarers and other maritime personnel as key workers in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and called upon Governments to promptly take steps to facilitate maritime crew changes, including by expediting travel and repatriation efforts and ensuring access to medical care. At the International Labour Organization, the Governing Body also adopted a complementary resolution expressing deep concern regarding the challenges faced by the shipping industry, their adverse impacts on seafarers' rights, and urging action to identify obstacles and establish measures to alleviate the situation.



### *Coral Reefs Restoration Guidelines*

Restoration activities are becoming more and more popular across the world, in an attempt to restore/sustain the function and services associated with coral reef ecosystems. It should be noted that these efforts are unlikely to be effective as a stand-alone action, they should always be done as part of a larger integrated management strategy.

The International Coral Reef Initiative has compiled a list of resources available, including database, initiatives or guidelines: <https://www.icriforum.org/coralrestoration/>.





## *Global Fund for Coral Reefs Launch*

The Global Fund for Coral Reefs was launched on 16th September at a High Level Event in the margins of the 75th UN General Assembly. It will serve as a blended finance vehicle leveraging grants, debt and other financial instruments to facilitate private return-based investments for coral reef conservation and resilience.

The session discussed the call of action of the Public Private Partnership, challenges and opportunities in the contexts of COVID-19 and the Super Year for Nature, and developing an investment vision for the Blue Economy. UNEP will serve on the Executive Board of the Fund.

©Katerina Katopis / Coral Reef Image Bank



The webinar featured statements from a number of international leaders representing governments, UN agencies, NGOs and the private sector that are interested in saving coral reefs and to strengthen the resilience of dependent communities. Some keynote speakers include among others, H.S.H Prince Albert II of Monaco, UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen, UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner and Vulcan Inc. CEO Bill Hilf. The UK, Germany and Costa Rica were represented at the high level meeting by their respective government representatives. The fund represents a new paradigm for protection of an ecosystem on the brink of extinction. It will therefore go a long way in enhancing the resilience of impacted countries and communities, and it will contribute to greater global security by delivering crucial and coordinated public and private sector finance for coral reef conservation.

**COMMUNITIES OF OCEAN ACTION**

**OCEAN ACIDIFICATION**

## *Supporting global ocean acidification science and observation during the COVID-19 pandemic*

Last year's IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate clearly documents the consequence of pronounced climate change impacts to our ocean, including widespread ocean warming, deoxygenation, sea-level rise and acidification.

Effects of this Ocean Change are already causing harm to humans in that most vulnerable coastal communities are forced to relocate to higher ground, and seafood security is under new threats by global, regional and local acidification and pollution of marine waters.

Within the Sustainable Development Goal 14, Target 14.3 addresses ocean acidification (OA) and through this COA we keep track of and measure progress made by the associated Voluntary Commitments. Indeed, more than 265 Voluntary Commitments (VC) on ocean acidification have been submitted to date, and by hosting a series of webinars with our VC participants over the past two years, we have been able to engage the OA community on this COA process, and discuss challenges, opportunities, and lessons learned.

The community organized a series of successful OA events that helped to advance global OA efforts, starting in 2019 with in person meetings such as the 4th Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON) International Workshop held in Hangzhou, China, to the once-in-a-decade OceanObs'19 conference where cutting edge advances in autonomous ocean acidification instrumentation and associated datasets were discussed, and the annual UNFCCC COP events. Unfortunately, in 2020 all OA events had to categorically postponed after March, and the Lisbon UN Ocean Conference, the 5th International Symposium on the Ocean in a High CO<sub>2</sub> World, the Our Ocean Conference, and the UNFCCC COP26 are just a few high-profile events that became COVID-19 casualties. Nonetheless, this year the OA community was able to rally around several important virtual events, including the Ocean Dialogues, Climate Week in NYC, and the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. GOA-ON and its partners also hosted a week of OA activities that featuring 10 sessions with 50 speakers that came together to share their latest research and discuss ways to strengthen international collaborations. OA events like the communications workshop for OA scientists organized by the Ocean Foundation (TOF) and the OA Alliance have continued to build capacity and awareness in OA research. The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO invited GOA-ON members to contribute to the second global ocean acidification data collection effort for the SDG 14.3.1 Indicator: coordinated marine acidity (pH) measurements at a suite of sampling sites. This Indicator is another milestone to highlight that ocean acidification is an important stressor on marine ecosystems which requires careful and systematic assessment for the sustainable management of our ocean resources.

To facilitate data submission, storage and sharing, IOC and its partners also developed an online tool, the SDG 14.3.1 Data Portal (<http://oa.iode.org>).

These meaningful, albeit virtual events, give us hope that even in a year as challenging as 2020, the strong will and dedication of the global OA community can make significant contributions towards SDG 14.3 and the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development process.



COMMUNITIES OF OCEAN ACTION

# MARINE POLLUTION

The report from the Global Ghost Gear Initiative, Ocean Conservancy and WWF titled Effective Ghost Gear Solutions – Learning From What Works outlines effective ghost gear solutions that are as varied as the world's fisheries and can inspire action that protects fish and other marine life that rely on the ocean. These solutions showcase progress at each point along the supply chain, highlighting how everyone involved in the global fishing industry as well as NGOs and governments can contribute meaningfully to ghost gear solutions.

The Global Ghost Gear Initiative (GGGI) brings together more than 100 stakeholder groups from the private sector, public agencies, academia, intergovernmental organizations and others from across the fishing industry to tackle ghost gear at a global scale. In 2017, the GGGI developed the Best Practice Framework for the Management of Fishing Gear (BPF) which lays out the path to an ocean free of ghost gear by providing guidance to stakeholders at all levels of the fishing gear lif. This report highlights the groups working together on the ground and using the BPF to facilitate this critical work.

By understanding how organizations all over the world are working to prevent, remove and recycle lost gear, and what has made each project a success, we can replicate these solutions. Collective and collaborative action to solve this global problem has grown exponentially in recent years and is a good indicator that this is a problem we can solve. Multi-stakeholder efforts will remain essential to achieve success in confronting this problem globally, through direct project support, capacity building, research, outreach, and advocacy. In collaboration with myriad partners around the world, the GGGI, Ocean Conservancy, and WWF will continue their commitments to eliminate ghost gear from our global ocean. The report can be found [here](#).





World Ocean Day Competition 2017 Theme Winner Christian Vizl

## NEW VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

### Sharing experiences with other Regional Seas Organisations [36789](#)

Sharing knowledge and information on how regional sea organisations deal with, or have dealt with, challenges relating to the protection of the marine environment can be a valuable and resource-efficient contribution to the work of other others facing similar issues. This project commits to sharing experiences on environmentally friendly and sustainable maritime activities with other regional seas organisations, notably within the framework of the UN Regional Seas Programme and through cooperation with other regional seas organisations., and seeks to facilitate and accelerate the global response to the current challenges seas and oceans are facing.

### Clean-up of Halfmoon Beach [37144](#)

Halfmoon beach is a popular place of recreation in Saudi Arabia that has been enjoyed across many generations. The project aims to galvanise local university students and residents to participate in biannual beach clean ups. The core aim is to provide a cleaner beach environment as well as a less polluted shallow coastal water area, for not only the people visiting this area, but also for the surrounding marine habitats and the biodiversity they support.

### Supporting efforts to gather ocean stakeholders and communicate the Decade of Ocean - Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) [37224](#)

This project aims to gather ocean stakeholders within Germany, and more widely Europe, to support efforts to reverse the cycle of decline in ocean health. The project, seeks to do this by raising awareness through several events, such as a permanent exhibition on Sustainable Oceans in Hamburg Harbour, planned to take place across 2021.





World Ocean Day Competition 2018 1st Caine Delacy

These events will provide a platform through which different partners from society, research and industry can join forces to communicate the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

### **Whales: Spotting and Tagging Using Aerial Surveillance Technology (Drones), Entanglements and Krill Shortages [37287](#)**

Whales are a core component of biodiversity in the Oceans and provide the ecosystem with multiple benefits therefore ensuring their safety is of utmost importance. This project aims to minimise whale and ship interactions as this is a leading cause of whale fatalities. The research will pilot the use of drones on ships to provide real time viewing of the location of animals and the direction they are headed to avoid hull and propeller strikes. Drones can also help locate whale entanglements and satellite tag whales for relocation if necessary, to aid in the protection of this critical species.

### **OTHER NEW VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS**

- Strong support for global efforts to address the matter of marine litter, including plastic, on a global level - [36790](#) (Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM))
- Urban Ocean: Building Clean, Healthy Cities for Clean, Healthy Seas - [36852](#) (Ocean Conservancy)
- Keep Belle Isle Beautiful – [36595](#) (Belle Isle Conservancy)
- Legal ban of microplastics in cosmetics and cleaning products – [36584](#) (Ocean Now!)
- Coral Nurseries and Replanting – [36469](#) (Rainbow Reef Coral Farm)





2018 Hendro Hioe 2nd Place Above Water Seascapes

## EDITORIAL NOTES

### MORE INFORMATION

[UN Ocean Conference](#)  
[UN DESA Division for Sustainable Development Goals](#)

### FOLLOW US

**Facebook:** [UN Sustainable Development Platform](#)  
**Twitter:** [@SustDev](#)  
**YouTube:** [UN DESA Sustainable Development](#)

### ONLINE DATABASES

[Registry of Voluntary Commitments](#)  
[SDG Acceleration Actions](#)  
[SDG Good Practices](#)



**United  
Nations**

Department of  
Economic and  
Social Affairs

This newsletter is compiled by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs,  
Division for Sustainable Development Goals



UNITED NATIONS  
**OCEAN  
CONFERENCE**  
LISBON