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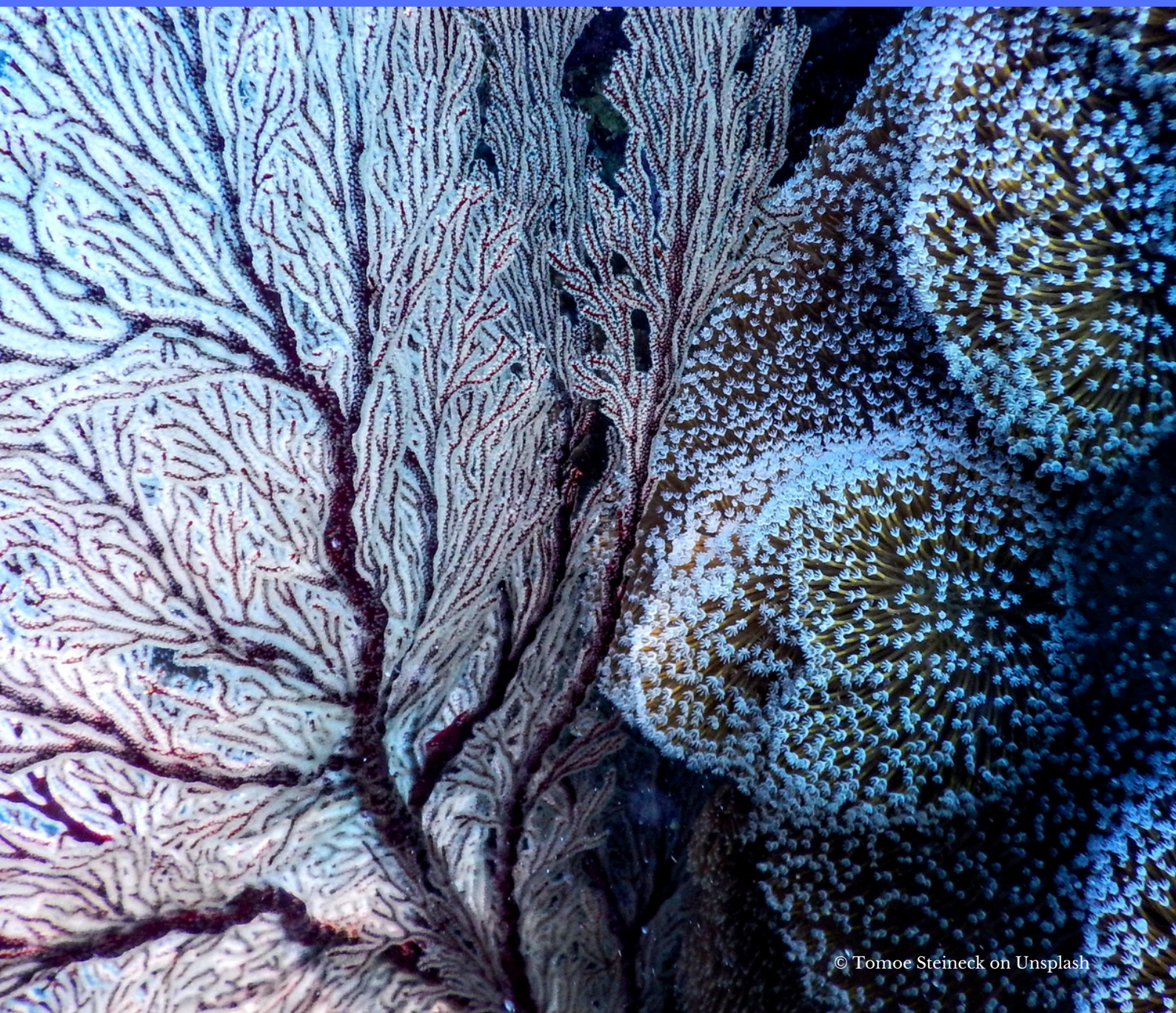
OCEAN ACTION NEWSLETTER:

ROAD TO LISBON



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INTRODUCTION

As we strive to recover from COVID-19, let's end our war on nature. This will be critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, keeping within reach the 1.5-degree target of the Paris Agreement, and ensuring the health of our oceans for today's and future generations.

António Guterres, UN Secretary-General

2021 was a challenging year for delivering our commitments to conserving and using in a sustainable manner the ocean and marine resources due to the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the challenges in 2021, ocean communities across the world got more connected than ever -albeit over virtual platforms-to maintain the momentum on ocean action ahead of the upcoming second UN Ocean Conference, to be held in Lisbon from 27 June to 1 July 2022.

DESA, in collaboration with the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean Ambassador Peter Thomson, organized the webinar Implementing SDG 14 with the Communities of Ocean Action on 30 March 2021, to review the status of implementation of the voluntary commitments made by governments and other stakeholders in support of SDG 14, share best practices and examine the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Later in July 2021, another webinar was organized by DESA on Sustainable Blue Economy which focused on how sustainable ocean-based economy can provide a viable global response to build back better from the pandemic through blue-green recovery.

On 1 June 2021, the President of the General Assembly convened a high-level thematic debate on the ocean and SDG14 at United Nations Headquarters that harnessed ambition and rekindled commitments of member states and stakeholders on the implementation of SDG14.

The UN Food Systems Summit, which took place on 23 September 2021, brought together hundreds of stakeholders to support the transformation of food systems. The initiatives, alliances and coalitions that emerged from the Summit will help nations and regions advance the Summit's vision of more inclusive, resilient, equitable and sustainable food systems by 2030.

The months of October and November 2021 were marked by the Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Kunming (CBD COP15) and the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 26) in Glasgow that brought parties together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the post 2020 biodiversity framework. The ocean and its interconnectedness with biodiversity and climate change were featured prominently along with the wide range of other issues being discussed during the two Conferences. A series of ocean related side events were held in the margins of COP26. Find out more info about the events here.

Looking ahead, the year 2022 will be a Super Year for the Ocean with a full calendar of ocean related events, including the One Ocean Summit in France (11-12 February 2022), UNEA 5 in Nairobi (28 February-2 March 2022), the 7th Our Ocean Conference in Palau (13-14 April 2022), Stockholm +50 (2-3 June 2022) and the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon (27 June-1 July 2022).

The 2022 UN Ocean Conference, co-hosted by the Governments of Portugal and Kenya, will come at a critical time as the world is strengthening its efforts to mobilize, create and drive solutions to realize the 17 SDGs by 2030 in the context of an ongoing global pandemic. Governments, UN system, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions the scientific community, the private sector, philanthropic organizations and other actors will gather in Lisbon to find science-based innovative solutions and build and strengthen partnerships with stakeholders that inspire, create and drive the necessary change to reverse the damage and allow the ocean to heal.

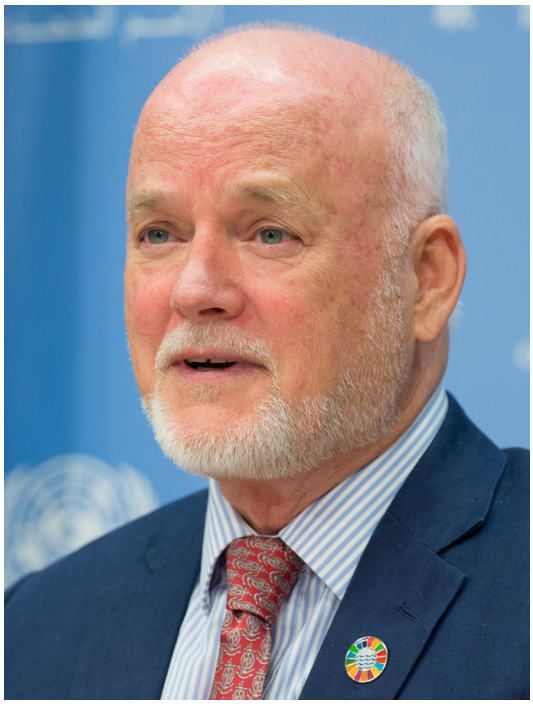
Under the theme “Scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation for the implementation of Goal 14: Stocktaking, partnerships and solutions”, the Conference will be another milestone that provides an opportunity to place ocean action at the front and center of the global efforts to build back better and achieve sustainable development.

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

By now you would all have heard the mantra, there can be no healthy planet without a healthy Ocean, and the Ocean’s health has been measurably in decline for some time now. We need to take to heart that all of us have been party to driving the decline in the Ocean’s health. Thus, we all have a role to play in developing and implementing the solutions.

For the future security of our species on this planet, it is vital, in the true sense of the word, that we stop the decline and work to restore a healthy Ocean.

The months of October and November 2021 were marked by the biggest event of the year – UN Climate Change Conference (COP 26) that brought parties together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Various events were organized as part of the summit.



On 3 November 2021, the Ocean Decade: A Global Science Movement to Unlock Climate Action, led by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, looked at the role of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development to generate the ocean knowledge we need to achieve climate action.

Before describing the big events over the next six months that will all be working on that turn-around, I urge you to consider what your contribution will be. I urge you to discuss this with family and friends, in your communities and workplaces.

As an overarching starting point, your consideration might take up the need for all of our societies to govern our activities with a logical and ethical dedication to sustainability.

I believe the time has come to accept that linear exploitation of finite planetary resources is a dead-end street, and that we have reached a point on humanity's path whereupon global transformation to circular recycling systems of production and consumption has become a straight-forward matter of survival. I see this as the great transformational challenge facing us in the 21st Century, a tectonic transformation akin to when human societies moved from the Stone Age to the Bronze Age.

Turning to the international events of the next six months. There is a wave that is building, one that that will sweep around the world over the six months, carrying with it the science-based solutions that will make the next UN Ocean Conference the seminal moment we need in order to stop the decline of the Ocean's health. Co-hosted by the governments of Kenya and Portugal, the conference will be held in Lisbon from 27 June to 1 July 2022. It is mandated by all 193 UN Member States to scale up Ocean Action for the implementation of SDG14, based on those science-based solutions, and on partnerships and the power of innovation. I have no doubt that, like the first UN Ocean

Conference in 2017, the Lisbon conference will prove to be a game-changer for Ocean Action around the world, guided by that wise trio of science, innovation and partnerships.

The building wave rises in Brest on the north-west coast of France, where President Macron will host the One Ocean Summit from 9 to 11 February.

Then, in Nairobi, at the UN Environment Assembly in the first week of March, attention will turn to the mandating of an internationally binding treaty to combat plastic pollution. Around that time, it's also expected that the postponed WTO Ministerial Meeting will be held in Geneva, where it is expected that Member States will finally agree to ban the scourge of harmful fisheries subsidies.

In March in New York, the fourth negotiating session of a UN agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) gets underway. And then, in Kunming, China, at the UN Convention on Biological Biodiversity's COP15, we hope to see the adoption of a target to conserve 30% of the planet's surface by 2030.

Later in April, the governments of Palau and the US will co-host the Our Ocean Conference in Palau. Every effort is being made to synchronize the content and outcomes of these conferences so that they are carried forward on the wave of solutions as it continues to build.

In June in Geneva, as a direct result of the excellent progress that was made on the Ocean-Climate nexus issues at the UNFCCC COP 26 in Glasgow, the UNFCCC SBSTA will be considering these critical issues a few weeks before we meet at the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon. Meanwhile over the next six months a plethora of business, civil society and scientific conferences are being held at global, regional and national levels, all concerned to see progress in our universal aim of safeguarding the Ocean's well-being.

The build-up of this wave of multilateral activity on Ocean action is unprecedented, and so it should be. For in describing Ocean-Climate nexus issues as critical, I mean to emphasize that they are inextricably linked to the future of human security. The massive scale at which we burn fossil fuels, creating the greenhouse gases that blanket our atmosphere, are commensurately changing the composition of the Ocean. The Ocean has absorbed 90 per cent of the heat from global temperature rises, so it should not be a surprise that immense changes are underway within it and that we now witness such phenomena as the death of coral reefs. It is tragic to contemplate that if present global warming trends continue, the 21st Century will witness widespread saltwater engulfment of low-lying land, of atolls, and river deltas, that have for thousands of years been home to biodiversity, food production and unique manifestations of human culture.

There are many causes for the decline in the Ocean's health, including overfishing, habitat destruction and the pollution we inflict, ranging from noise to chemicals to plastic and everything in between. But lest there remains doubt in anyone's mind, the central fact is that the great nemesis driving the decline in the Ocean's health is humankind's continuing burning of fossil fuels. In the name of intergenerational justice, is time to stop that folly.

You are invited to follow the Special Envoy's Twitter and Instagram, where he shares messages of solutions and strategies for achieving a healthy Ocean through implementation of the SDG 14 and fidelity to the Paris Climate Agreement. More information about his work can be found on his website.

UPDATES FROM THE COMMUNITIES OF OCEAN ACTION (COAS)

Summaries GCRMN and ICRI

On 5 October 2021, the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) released the Sixth Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2020 report, which looks at the status of coral reefs worldwide.

The GCRMN is an operational network of the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) that aims to provide the best available scientific information on the status and trends of coral reef ecosystems for their conservation and management.

The sixth edition of the GCRMN Status of Coral Reefs of the World report is the first since 2008, and the first based on the quantitative analysis of a global dataset compiled from raw monitoring data contributed by more than 300 members of the network. The global dataset spanned more than 40 years from 1978 to 2019 and consisted of almost 2 million observations from more than 12,000 sites in 73 reef-bearing countries around the world.

Read the report here.

Mapping the global funding landscape for coral reef restoration

In November 2021, the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) published a report on the Global Funding Landscape for Coral Reef Restoration and found that US$258 million has been invested in coral reef restoration efforts across 56 countries in the last decade; a small fraction of the US$1.9 billion reported for coral reef and associated ecosystems between 2010 and 2016 in The Coral Reef Economy (2018). Key recommendations to guide future investments in coral reef restoration include increasing 1) the amount and availability of dedicated funding for coral reef restoration, 2) research into sustainable funding for coral reef, and 3) communication on the realities of coral reef restoration regarding goals and timelines. These recommendations are drawn to guide investments as we begin the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

Read the report here.

Coral Reef Monitoring Network

The 'Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2020' report, released on 5 October 2021, documents the loss of approximately 14% of the world's coral since 2009. The report, the sixth edition produced by the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN), provides the most detailed scientific picture to date of the toll elevated temperatures have taken on the world's reefs. The largest analysis of global coral reef health ever undertaken draws on data spanning 40 years in 73 countries across 12,000 sites, collected by more than 300 scientists through 2 million individual observations.

Corals reefs across the world are under relentless stress from warming caused by climate change and other local pressures such as overfishing, unsustainable coastal development and declining water quality. An irrevocable loss of coral reefs would be catastrophic.

Although reefs cover only 0.2% of the ocean floor, they are home to at least a quarter of all marine species, providing critical habitat and a fundamental source of protein, as well as life-saving medicines. It is estimated that hundreds of millions of people around the world depend on them for food, jobs and protection from storms and erosion.

However, the report also describes that many of the world's coral reefs remain resilient and can recover if conditions allow, providing hope for the long-term health of coral reefs if immediate steps are taken to stabilise greenhouse gas emissions to curb future warming.

The analysis, which examined 10 coral reef-bearing regions around the world, showed that coral bleaching events caused by elevated sea surface temperatures were the main driver of coral loss, including an acute event in 1998 that is estimated to have killed 8% of the world's corals – which, to put this in context, is more than all the coral that is currently living on reefs in the Caribbean or Red Sea and Gulf of Aden regions. The longer-term decline seen during the last decade coincided with persistent elevated sea surface temperatures.

The analysis investigates changes in the cover of both live hard coral and algae. Live hard coral cover is a standard indicator of coral reef health, while increases in algal cover are a signal of stress to reefs. Since 1978, when the first data used in the report were collected, there has been a 9% decline in the amount of hard coral worldwide. Between 2010 and 2019, the amount of algal cover has increased by 20%, corresponding with declines in hard coral cover. This progressive transition from coral to algae-dominated reef communities reduces the complexity of habitat that is essential to support high levels of biodiversity.

The report also highlights that, although during the last decade the interval between mass coral bleaching events has been insufficient to allow coral reefs to fully recover, some recovery has been observed, with coral reefs in 2019 regaining 2% of the coral cover. This indicates that coral reefs are still resilient and that if pressures on these critical ecosystems ease, they have the capacity to recover— potentially within a decade— to the healthy, flourishing reefs that were prevalent pre-1998.

The report can be downloaded here.

Global Fund for Coral Reefs

The Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR) was launched in September 2020 as the first and only blended finance initiative focused on coral reefs globally. To address the coral reef funding gap, the GFCR is mobilising an initial catalytic $625 million through two core

financial vehicles to de-risk and unlock billions more across a 'Reef Positive Investment Ecosystem'. During the first full year of operation, the Fund focused on building a pipeline of programmes supporting reef-positive business models across more than 25 countries with climate resilient ecosystems. The Fund also launched more than $20 million USD for programming in Fiji, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Kenya, Tanzania and The Bahamas; covering more than 300,000 hectares of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and aiming to provide direct benefits to over 200,000 local community members. Additionally, the Fund supported reef-positive investable business models include revenue generating MPAs, sustainable fisheries, mariculture, ecotourism, blue carbon, plastic and waste management.

The GFCR public-private partnership is driven by a powerful and growing coalition of philanthropies, Member States, UN agencies and private sector impact investors, including the governments of Germany, Canada, France and the UK; the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation; the Green Climate Fund; the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation; BNP Paribas; Pegasus Capital Advisors; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF).

Key findings:

➢Large scale coral bleaching events are the greatest disturbance to the world's coral reefs. The 1998 event alone killed eight per cent of the world's coral, which is the equivalent of about 6,500 square kilometres of coral. The greatest impacts of this mass bleaching event were seen in the Indian Ocean, Japan, and the Caribbean, with smaller impacts observed in the Red Sea, The Gulf, the northern Pacific in Hawaii and the Caroline Islands, and the southern Pacific in Samoa and New Caledonia.

➢Between 2009 and 2018, the world lost about 14 per cent of the coral on its coral reefs, which equates to around 11,700 square kilometres of coral, more than all the living coral in Australia.

➢Reef algae, which grows during periods of stress, has increased by 20 per cent over the past decade.

➢Prior to this, on average there was twice as much coral on the world's reefs as algae.

➢Coral reefs in East Asia's Coral Triangle, which is the centre of coral reef biodiversity and accounts for more than 30 per cent of the world's reefs, have been less impacted by rising sea surface temperatures. Despite some declines in hard coral during the last decade, on average, these reefs have more coral today than in 1983 when the first data from this region were collected.

➢Almost invariably, sharp declines in coral cover corresponded with rapid increases in sea surface temperatures, indicating their vulnerability to spikes, which is a phenomenon that is likely to happen more frequently as the planet continues to warm.

A newly released independent report highlights the contributions of the International Seabed Authority to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda

On 30 November 2021, the Secretariat of the International Seabed Authority (ISA) launched a new report entitled The Contribution of the International Seabed Authority to the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Commissioned pursuant to the ISA Strategic Plan and High-Level Action Plan for 2019-2023, which explicitly recognizes the importance for ISA to align its programmes and activities to realize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the report provides remarkable insight into the breadth and scope of ISA's activities. More importantly, it provides hard evidence that ISA and the legal regime established by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the 17 SDGs in a meaningful way. In line with SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), the importance given by ISA to establish strategic alliances

and partnerships in implementing the legal regime for the international seabed area (the Area) is underscored as being one of the most effective means through which the Organization delivers its mandate.

Each of the seven Voluntary Commitments registered by ISA at the UN Ocean Conference in 2017 is of particular relevance, as each is built on strong partnerships. ISA has partnered with UN DESA, Norway, and the Pacific Community (SPC), for instance, to build the capacity of Pacific small island developing States through the Abyssal Initiative for Blue Growth (#OceanAction16538). It has partnered with the African Union and Norway under the Africa's Deep-Sea Resources project to foster international and regional cooperation in support of the sustainable development of Africa's blue economy (#OceanAction16374).

Contractors of ISA themselves are partners of ISA, especially with respect to Voluntary Commitments relating to enhancing the role of women in marine scientific resource (#OceanAction15467).

Finally, the Secretary-General's Award for Excellence in Deep-Sea Research (#OceanAction15796) recognizes the excellence of young researchers from developing States and is a joint initiative between ISA, Monaco and some contractors such as Nauru Ocean Resources Inc. and Tonga Offshore Mining Limited.

Combatting IUU Fishing

Combatting Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing remains a key priority

lobally, 2021 saw continued efforts to implement the Port State Measures Agreement, the launch of a new Global Information Exchange System, and progress toward development of Voluntary Guidelines for the regulation, monitoring and control of transshipment.

The Port State Measures Agreement

At the Third Meeting of the Parties of the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) in May 2021, FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu highlighted how global action is making a major difference in efforts to combat IUU fishing, and that more needs to be done as consumer demand and fish production continue to rise.

The PSMA is the first binding international agreement designed to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing by stopping foreign vessels engaged in it, from using ports, landing their catches, or denying them entry. So far 70 parties, representing 56 percent of port States globally, have ratified the Agreement and the PSMA is one of the critical tools to combat IUU fishing.

Global Information Exchange System

Efforts to deter IUU fishing must rely on early warning based on Big Data and information sharing. The PSMA Global Information Exchange System (GIES) will help to achieve this goal. The GIES, which was launched in December, is designed to support the implementation of the PSMA, which aims to block fish products derived from IUU fishing from entering the market. The GIES will share vital information, including port entry/use denials of foreign-flagged vessels into designated ports and inspection reports about these vessels under suspicion to have been engaged in IUU fishing.

“This digitalized system will turbocharge access to near real-time information exchange and increase transparency,” Qu said.

Transshipment

An in-depth global study on transshipment found that a lack of regulation, monitoring and control increases the risk of IUU caught fish entering the seafood supply chain, undermining sustainable and socially responsible fisheries. The study was presented in three regional webinars, and a summary of the findings was presented to the thirty-fourth Session of COFI in 2021, which called upon FAO to proceed with developing draft Voluntary Guidelines for the regulation, monitoring and control of transshipment through an Expert Consultation and a member-led Technical Consultation.

The Voluntary Guidelines will assist States, regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs), and other intergovernmental organizations, with respect to their development of new transshipment regulations or the review of existing regulations, with a view to integrating these within the broader regulatory framework for fisheries management. The Voluntary Guidelines will also constitute a valuable supplement to other international instruments to combat IUU fishing, in particular port State measures.

The FAO Secretariat prepared a preliminary draft of the Voluntary Guidelines that was reviewed by the Expert Consultation in October 2021. The reviewed draft will constitute the basis for the negotiations at the Technical Consultation scheduled for 7-11 March 2022, with plans to present the Voluntary Guidelines for their endorsement at the thirty-fifth Session of COFI, in September 2022.

Small-Scale Fisheries

Small-scale fisheries continued to punch above their weight in 2021, with the launch of IYAFA2022 and release of key findings from the Illuminating Hidden Harvests initiative.

The United Nations General Assembly declared 2022 the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA 2022), with FAO acting as the lead agency working closely with partners, organizations and relevant United Nations bodies.

Its objective is to focus world attention on the role that small-scale fishers, fish farmers, fish workers play, thereby increasing global understanding and action to support them, and highlighting that fisheries and aquaculture are about people as much as they are about fish.

IYAFA2022 was officially launched on World Fisheries Day with a virtual event hosted by FAO that celebrated the diversity of artisanal fisheries and aquaculture and highlighted their contributions to achieving the SDGs, and to build and strengthen partnerships at all levels. The event featured Mr. José Rogger Incio Sánchez, Minister of Production, Peru and Mr. Qu Dongyu Director-General, FAO. You can watch the recorded FAO webcast here.

Get involved in IYAFA 2022!

IYAFA2022 is an opportunity to highlight the potential of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture, and point to the benefits which can be gained from strengthening these sectors. To make the most of this opportunity, it is time to think creatively, join hands and

start making plans now for how to make IYAFA 2022 a memorable year. Let us give small-scale fishers, fish farmers and fish workers the attention they deserve! Here is how you can get involved:

Contribute a human-interest story

One concrete way to get involved is to prepare a human-interest story to be featured as part of IYAFA2022, to share with the world a special person, group or organisation that has made a meaningful contribution to small-scale fisheries and aquaculture. Human-interest stories linked to artisanal fisheries and aquaculture may be published on the IYAFA and FAO websites and digital channels and/or be used in events, exhibitions and for pitching to global media. To contribute, please use the template 'Call for Human Interest Stories' and send it to the IYAFA Secretariat by 31 January 2022.

List your events on the official IYAFA events page

Activities and events are being organised around the world to celebrate IYAFA2022. Feature your activity or event on the IYAFA2022 webpage by registering here.

Utilise official IYAFA campaign materials

Communication materials are available in the six official languages of FAO to make it easy for all partners to join the IYAFA global campaign. This includes key messages, the visual identity, an IYAFA 2022 brochure and website, a promotional video, social media cards, hashtags, videos and templates for making beautiful posters, banners and outdoor promotions and much more. Communication products are all available in the IYAFA 2022 Asset Bank.

Illuminating Hidden Harvests Initiative

Led by FAO, Duke University, and WorldFish, the IHH initiative aims to generate and disseminate new evidence about the importance of small-scale fisheries to inform policy and practice. The IHH findings will contribute to the growing body of evidence on the role and values of small-scale fisheries. Critically, the initiative will help to put much needed data and information into the hands of countries, regions and small-scale fisheries advocates to emphasize the diverse and vital contributions of small-scale fisheries.

Illuminating Hidden Harvests (IHH): A snapshot of key findings webinar

A major output of the initiative is a comprehensive research report based on a novel methodology. This 90-minute webinar provides a snapshot of key findings from the IHH report, which is due out in 2022. The IHH report ties together the efforts of nearly 800

authors and experts to contribute to a more complete picture of small-scale fisheries. Drawing on a tapestry of methods, including 58 country and territory case studies, the report examines the current environmental, social, economic and governance contributions of marine and inland small-scale fisheries at global and local scales. In this webinar, the IHH chapter leads share key findings from the report and respond to audience members' questions during the Q&A session - Watch the full webinar here.

Blue and Aquatic Foods

In 2021 aquatic foods were a hot topic, two new global platforms for advancing the role of aquatic foods in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals emerged out of the UN Food Systems Summit and UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

The ocean, estuaries, lakes and rivers are a vital sources of nutritious food worldwide – these 'Blue Foods', also known as 'aquatic foods', include a diverse group of animals, plants and microorganisms, each with unique qualities and nutrients.

Aquatic foods are a cornerstone of the global food system, providing a vital source of nutrition for more than 3 billion people worldwide and livelihoods for hundreds of millions. They have even greater potential and can play a central role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by supporting healthier, more sustainable and equitable food systems globally, and in many of the most climate-challenged and food-insecure communities.

UN Food Systems Summit

The UNFSS brought together hundreds of individuals, organizations, government, and institutions to support the transformation of food systems in line with the ambitions of the summit. Inspired by the Summit, initiatives, alliances and coalitions have emerged that are striving to help nations and regions to advance the Summit's vision of more inclusive, resilient, equitable, and sustainable food systems by 2030. They will do this in ways that are aligned with each country's priorities and adapted to the local context.

The Blue/Aquatic Foods coalition[1] has two key missions:
1. To raise the profile of aquatic foods in the context of food systems overall, so that they

1 Current members - Iceland, Environmental Defense Council, Stanford University, World Resources Institute, CGIAR/Worldfish, Member States: Bangladesh; Belize; Canada; Chile; EU; Fiji; France; Ghana; Iceland; Japan; Kenya; Korea; Mexico; Netherlands; New Zealand; Norway; Palau; Peru; Portugal; Spain; United States of America Intergovernmental organizations: Pacific Community SPC-Communauté du Pacifique CPS; WorldFish/CGIAR Academic institutions: Stockholm Resilience Center; Stanford University Civil Society: EDF; WWF; WRI, Oceana, and Rare

will finally be placed where they belong on the agenda (and budget) of decision-makers not usually aware of their significance, such as health ministers, development ministers, finance ministers, and prime ministers.
2. To mobilize support and cooperation for specific projects and opportunities to drive implementation of sustainable blue food priority objectives of members, in order to complement and accelerate the work already underway via the FAO and other Rome-based agencies.

UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development

The Fisheries and Blue Food Community of Practice will convene a 'meet and greet' on 24 January 2022, from 4 to 6 p.m. (CET). This community of practice will encompass endorsed actions that are working on topics related to fisheries and blue food, including those focused on or at the intersection of ecology, social sciences, and policy associated with fisheries and ocean food systems. If you are interested in these topics, please register for the meet and greet here. You will receive a confirmation email containing the joining details afterwards.

Please note that you are welcome to register and attend this session even if you have not yet registered to join this Community of Practice. During the session information will be provided on how to sign up and communicate within this Community of Practice via the Global Stakeholder Forum.

Global Conference on Aquaculture Millennium+20

In September 2021, under the theme of "Aquaculture for Food and Sustainable Development", the Food and Agriculture Organization and the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific with the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs convened the Global Conference on Aquaculture (GCA +20).

The Shanghai Declaration, a key output adopted by the participants from the GCA +20, represents a road map to optimize the role that aquaculture can play in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

➢ Indigenous People, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, and Climate Change: The Iconic Underwater Cultural Heritage of Stone Tidal Weirs by Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology (Academic institution) 39870

This project, headed by Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology (Akifumi Iwabuchi) in Japan and endorsed by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO as an action project for the UN Decade of Ocean Science, focuses on the traditional ecological knowledge that has been accumulated by indigenous people when using traditional fish traps, primarily the stone tidal weirs, and how this knowledge could be used to assist in the sustainability and conservation of the marine ecology. The initiative engages with local coastal communities in several countries where stone tidal weirs and traditional ecological knowledge investigations have been implemented, combining the living heritage (intangible cultural heritage) and the tangible cultural heritage of stone tidal weirs on the earth. The direct output of this project is the acquisition of traditional cultural practices, traditional ecological knowledge, and partnerships and active engagement with coastal communities. By studying the underwater cultural heritage of stone tidal weirs and developing local community projects, this commitment strikes a balance between natural science and social science to better understand and maintain both ocean ecology and human wellbeing in the face of climate change.

➢ Plan Sea: Ocean-Based Solutions to Climate Change by Northwestern University, Environmental Policy & Culture Program (Academic institution) 39855

Plan Sea: Ocean-Based Solutions to Climate Change recognizes that while the world's oceans are being profoundly impacted by the accelerating climate crisis, there are opportunities to develop ocean-based climate solutions that can also provide substantial co-benefits for the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals. This program seeks to highlight some of these potential options, with a focus on carbon removal approaches, including blue carbon initiatives, enhanced ocean alkalinization, and ocean-based carbon

sequestration, as well as energy solutions. The initiative includes the development of a podcast series, webinars, public education materials, briefing of policy makers, and collaboration with like-minded organizations in the academic and non-governmental sectors.

➢ Sustainable Development Council – Ocean by Sustainable Development Council (Non-governmental organization) 39842

The Sustainable Development Council aims to clean up 90% of floating ocean plastic pollution by developing cleanup systems that can clean up the floating plastics caught swirling in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. This objective requires global initiative. With the help and support of individuals, corporations, and governments all over the world, this commitment aims to realize the mission and work towards a future where plastic no longer pollutes our oceans.

➢ SCUBA Engagement Applying Submersible Technology to Advance Reef Science by 2 Degrees C (Non-governmental organization) 39638

The SCUBA Engagement Applying Submersible Technology to Advance Reef Science project focuses on advancing citizen science. With accurate, low-cost automated sensor technology attached to their dive gear, recreational scuba divers can reduce environmental data gaps, such as in the temperature, salinity, and light regimes that coral reefs experience. Data they collect and share will enhance the resolution and accuracy of satellite remote sensing datasets and empirical models, strengthening coral reef research and conservation.

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MESSAGE FROM DSDG

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

The Division for Sustainable Development Goals of UN DESA would like to extend our warmest New Year greetings to all. Despite the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the year 2021 witnessed progress on the implementation of SDG14 and a deeper global recognition of the importance of the ocean for the planet. Governments, civil society, NGOs, academia, and individuals around the globe took action in raising awareness and finding solutions to the problems facing the ocean. As preparations for the 2022 Ocean Conference resume, we wish to express a profound appreciation for your strong commitment to the global ocean agenda and for all the support that we received from the international ocean community in 2021.

We believe that, with your active engagement, the 2022 UN Ocean Conference will be another milestone where leaders and practitioners come together to build partnerships, develop innovative science-based solutions, and make ambitious commitments to address threats to ocean health and safeguard this vital resource for people and planet. Our team looks forward to your strengthened engagement and participation as we continue on the road to Lisbon.

EDITORIAL NOTES

MORE INFORMATION

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YouTube: UN DESA Sustainable Development

ONLINE DATABASES

Registry of Voluntary Commitments
SDG Acceleration Actions
SDG Good Practices

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

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