



For decades, the need for improved ocean health policymaking has been recognized, however, there are no more decades to go, this is our decade of action. Multiple global agreements stress the need to conserve and sustainably use world's' oceans. These culminated in the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the UN Decade of Ocean Sciences for Sustainable Development.

Despite great progress has been made; the COVID-19 pandemic severely disrupted these dynamics. It has led to an increased demand for single-use plastics, on an already out-of-control plastic waste dilemma. Furthermore, SIDS, as well as vulnerable populations were disproportionately affected. This poses a long-lasting doubt for the ocean environment and into its health-related potential impacts.

Human health is directly related to environmental and animal health, as stated by WHO's One Health Initiative. Health for all is our main priority and ocean Health holds the keys to an equitable and sustainable planet.

We urge member states to address the emergency, climate change mitigation and adaptation, combat health inequalities, through the strong interlinkage and interdependence of the SDG 3 and 14.

While Medical IMPACT vaccinates thousands a year, there will be no cure for the oceans. There is an urgent response from member states against the pandemic, while the consequences of ocean acidification and climate change may outnumber loss of life.

All relevant stakeholders must be involved, targeting meaningful engagement of civil society. The time is up, commitments need to be turned into action. We, as civil society, have one more chance to raise our voices for our oceans, highlighting the value of international cooperation, multilateralism, and solidarity.

**Juan Alberto Garcia Ortiz**  
**Chief Government Relations Officer**