



# COMMUNITIES OF OCEAN ACTION

IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 14



## Interim Assessment Report

Community of Ocean Action on Marine and  
Coastal Ecosystems Management

Towards the Implementation of SDG 14

The Nature  
Conservancy



Convention on  
Biological Diversity



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## TABLE OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

COA	Community of Ocean Action
EAF	Ecosystems Approach to Fisheries
EBM	Ecosystem-based management
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IGO	Intergovernmental Organization
LDCs	Least Development Country
LME	Large Marine Ecosystem
MCEM	Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Management
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSP	Marine Spatial Planning
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
VC	Voluntary Commitment

## INTRODUCTION

The Communities of Ocean Action are a major part of the follow-up to the historic 2017 UN Ocean Conference, serving a key role in maintaining momentum and focus on the many ambitious and wide-ranging Voluntary Commitments (VCs) announced in the context of the Conference.

The Community of Ocean Action on Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Management, in particular, is a major part of this effort. It is the largest of the nine Communities of Ocean Action and addresses nearly all aspects of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 and its targets. The VCs organized under this Community are extremely broad-ranging, focusing on efforts aimed at many different scales (global, regional, national and local) and timeframes, and address an enormous range of challenges, pressures, research needs, and conservation and management efforts. The VCs cut across all of the SDG 14 targets and all over the other SDGs as well. Likewise, the key actors driving these VCs represent all elements of society, including UN agencies and other intergovernmental organizations, global and regional initiatives, governments, academia, scientists and research agencies, indigenous peoples and local communities, the private sector and civil society groups.

Thus, this Community and its VCs strongly embody the cross-cutting nature of sustainable development, with a focus on the essential and inter-connected roles of a healthy environment, a productive economy and societal well-being in achieving global goals for sustainable development.

The focal points of this Community, Cristiana Paşca Palmer (Executive Secretary of the CBD) and Maria Damanaki (Global Managing Director for Oceans of The Nature Conservancy), and their “sherpas” have endeavored to provide a platform for dialogue and discussion among the Community members, provide opportunities to share lessons and showcase the progress of the Community’s VCs and continue to push for the registration of new VCs, implementation and regular updates on existing VCs.

These include a broad range of activities, such as regular webinars with the members of the Community and newsletters to update the Community on progress under VCs and opportunities for further engagement and collaboration. There will also be an in-person meeting of the Community to be held at the CBD Secretariat in Montreal, Canada (tentatively scheduled for Fall/Winter 2019) in conjunction with a thematic consultation on oceans for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework being deliberated under the CBD. This meeting will also be co-organized together with other Communities of Ocean Action (including mangroves and coral reefs) allowing for a cross-fertilization of experiences, lessons and identification of opportunities for partnership and collaboration.

Activities of the Community have been highlighted by the focal points and sherpas at various events, including during the 2018 World Conference on Marine Biodiversity (keynote address by the CBD Executive Secretary), and side events on the margins of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, Ramsar Convention, UNFCCC, the Economist Summit, among others.

As well, various members of the Community were closely engaged in the organization and convening of the Sustainable Ocean Day: Ocean Voices event held on the margins of the 2018 UN Biodiversity Conference in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. This event launched the Ocean Voices platform, which will provide a key mechanism to engage various ocean stakeholders in the development of the post-2020 biodiversity framework, and thus provides a valuable avenue for engagement of the Community in this process.

In support of this interim assessment, The Nature Conservancy, with input from the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) have conducted an analysis of the VCs registered under this Community. This analysis, which is provided as part of the interim report together with the below information, examines the VCs with regards to distribution of the VCs by ocean basin, lead entity, SDG 14 target and other SDGs addressed, and also examines the degree of overlap with the other Communities of Ocean Action.

# PROGRESS OF COA ON MARINE AND COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS MANAGEMENT

In Response to: *What is the overall progress made with the implementation of the Voluntary Commitments in your Community of Ocean Action since the conclusion of the Ocean Conference?*

## DIALOGUE AND INFORMATION-SHARING

The COA on marine and coastal ecosystem management has had two successful webinars to date and disseminates a newsletter to its members. We intend to continue these fruitful opportunities for dialogue and information-sharing, with more frequency, in the lead up to the next UN Ocean Conference into the 2020.

In particular, an in-person meeting of the Community will be held at the CBD Secretariat in Montreal, Canada (tentatively scheduled for Fall/Winter 2019) in conjunction with a thematic consultation on oceans for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework being deliberated under the CBD. This meeting will also be co-organized together with other Communities of Ocean Action (including mangroves and coral reefs) allowing for a cross-fertilization of experiences, lessons and identification of opportunities for partnership and collaboration.

## NEW VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS

Since the UN Ocean Conference in June 2017, 74 new VCs have been registered under the Community of Ocean Action on Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Management, representing a roughly 10% increase in the number of VCs.

## UPDATED VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS

A total of 124 VCs to date have provided updates since their initial registration. For those VCs that have provided updates, they have indicated the following status in their respective updates:

- 14 were indicated as “completed”
- 104 were indicated as “on-track”
- 3 were indicated as having “financial issues”
- 1 was indicated as “cancelled”
- 2 indicated “not applicable” with regards to status



## VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS REPORTED AS COMPLETED

The updates below provide valuable insights into status of implementation of those VCs, as well as challenges and gaps that they are facing. However, the percentage of VCs that have provided updates is rather low (roughly 15%), giving a limited picture of the overall status of implementation of all the VCs registered under this Community.

Of course, the lack of update reporting does not imply that other VCs are not making progress in implementation. It is necessary, however, to continue to encourage lead entities to provide updates to their VCs. It is hopeful that future events and opportunities to highlight progress (such as the In-Person Meeting of the Community in 2019 and the 2020 UN Ocean Conference) will catalyze an increase in the percentage of updates. The focal points and sherpas are also currently considering means and approaches to further incentivize the provision of updates, including through means to showcase progress of VCs that have provided updates and are tangibly demonstrating progress in implementation.

The following VCs were indicated as “completed”:

- Mangrove Restoration Potential Map (#OceanAction27592)  
Submitted by: IUCN

<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=27592>

*A joint effort by IUCN and The Nature Conservancy (TNC), in collaboration with University of Cambridge and supported by the German Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) focused on producing a global map of mangrove restoration potential. So far there has not been any global assessment of mangrove restoration potential as it relates to both climate adaptation and mitigation.*

<https://www.iucn.org/theme/forests/our-work/forest-landscape-restoration/mangrove-restoration/mangrove-restoration-potential-mapping-tool>

- Blue IES: Worldwide training course offer around integrating ecosystem services into marine & coastal development planning (#OceanAction26037)  
Submitted by: Blue Solutions

<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=26037>

*Context: Development planners are often confronted with a set of multi-faceted challenges. Projects and policies intended to meet development goals often go forward unwittingly at the expense of nature; e.g. a national plan to expand aquaculture to increase food production may lead to mangrove degradation causing erosion and loss of fish habitat. Effects are felt by people who depend on nature for their livelihood and well-being. Recognizing the links between ecosystem services and development goals can be the key to a broader successful strategy.*

*The approach: The guide for development planners and policy-makers on integrating marine and coastal ecosystem services into development planning advocates a stepwise approach to recognize, demonstrate and capture the value of ecosystem services. The training combines theoretical and practical elements and guides participants through the application of six steps to recognize, demonstrate and capture the value of ecosystem services.*

- Carbon Dioxide in the atmosphere & oceans acidification (#OceanAction22257)  
Submitted by: Social Good Summit <https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=22257>  
*The main aim of this study is to investigate into the current state of ocean acidification in Mauritius and to take into account the effect of climate change. Specifically, it aims to:*
  - (i) assess ocean acidification through two parameters: pH and alkalinity at the two sites-Flic en Flac and Albion lagoons using iSAMI pH sensor and spectrophotometric methods; and (ii) determine the magnitude of spatial and temporal variability of dissolved limiting nutrients within the Redfield ratio in the selected coastal zone chosen for the purpose of this study within the DPSIR Framework.*
- Swedish strategy for global action on the environment, climate, oceans and natural resources 2018-2022 (#OceanAction21416)  
Submitted by: Government of Sweden  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=21416>  
*On the 1st of June 2017 the Swedish Government decided to start developing a new strategy for global action on the environment, climate, oceans and natural resources. This is the first time oceans are explicitly highlighted as a focus area. The strategy enables the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to support global action for Sustainable Oceans, including support to normative processes and institutional capacity building, during the period 2018-2022. The funds, preliminary totaling up to 750 million USD in grants over the 5-year period, amount to significantly raised ambitions for this strategy as a whole but in particular regarding oceans. Possibilities to use innovative finance, such as guarantees, to leverage additional finance will also be explored.*
- 10% de reas Marinas Protegidas (#OceanAction20269)  
Submitted by: Colombia  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=20269>  
*En Colombia, el Sistema Nacional de reas Protegidas - SINAP cubre actualmente 23805.244,49 de hectreas que representan el 11,49% del territorio nacional, lo cual significa una gran responsabilidad frente a resguardar la biodiversidad y los servicios ecosistmicos que estos proveen al pas. Lo anterior, teniendo en cuenta que solo las reas protegidas del Sistema de Parques Nacionales Naturales-SPNN, aportan anualmente un 0,9% aproximadamente al Producto Interno Bruto (PIB) del pas, con un valor al menos de US\$ 2,770 millones por su provisin y regulacin hdrica. Asimismo, se calcula que el 50% de la energia hidroelctrica que se produce en el pas utiliza agua que proviene del SPNN, estimando que los Parques Nacionales aportan al menos US\$ 502 millones por adicionalidad hdrica en el sector energtico y el 30% en escenarios de cambio climtico.*
- Enhance the Conservation of Coastline Seascape of the Jaltepeque estuary through community-based approach (#OceanAction20199)  
Submitted by: GEF SGP implemented by UNDP  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=20199>  
*The GEF SGP El Salvador support 10 local community-based projects in this area by using community seascape conservation approach through promotion of sustainable fishing, development of mangrove and other alternative livelihood, restoration and conservation of mangroves, seagrass bed, coral reefs and coastal wetland, strengthening of monitoring and evaluation on sewage draining sources and control of land-based pollution. This initiative will contribute to the implementation of the El Salvador Program Strategic.*



- Connecting and Protecting Our Seas: Initiatives in the Baltic and the Mediterranean (#OceanAction20104)  
Submitted by: Sweden and Monaco

<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=20104>

*By organizing a follow-up event to The Ocean Conference in New York in June 2017, Sweden and Monaco wish to join forces in moving from words to deeds in facilitating the exchange of experiences and know-how in dealing with the preservation of our oceans.*

- Restore the Mesoamerican Coral Reef (#OceanAction18998)  
Submitted by: Restore Coral

<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=18998>

*Implementing a collaboration program between civic society, academic, private and public sectors to favor protection and restoration of the Mesoamerican Coral Reef. In particular, this initiative focused on the following: (i) Implementing a collaboration program between civic society, academic, private and public sectors to favor protection and restoration of the Mesoamerican Coral Reef; (ii) Producing environmental education content using Virtual Reality; (iii) Introducing environmental education programs in schools and universities; (iv) Influencing the federal agenda of the Mexican government to favor the environment; (v) Developing smart reefs, eco technologies and eco techniques; (vi) Surveillance and monitoring of the Mesoamerican reef trough the creation of the Mexican Coral Observatory; (vii) Practicing ethical tourism activities; (viii) Marketing and assessing blue carbon bonuses and environmental finances; and (ix) Commemorating a day for the Mesoamerican Reef System (MRS).*

- The ICRI plan of Action 2016-2018 (#OceanAction16778)  
Submitted by: France, Monaco, Sweden and UN Environment (UNEP)

<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=16778>

*ICRI is a partnership among governments, international organizations, and non-government organizations. Governance arrangements are set out in organization and management procedures, which identify roles of the General Meeting as a governing body and the Secretariat, which is hosted by countries on a rotating basis; criteria for membership; and implementation of activities through operational networks and ad hoc committees. An ambitious plan of action 2016-2018 proposed by France was adopted by the ICRI membership in November 2016.*

- Protect the network of marine and coastal protected areas in Vlora region (#OceanAction16350)  
Submitted by: Regional Administration of Protected Areas Vlora Albania

<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=16350>

*The objective of the Regional Agency of Protected Areas is conservation of nature and biodiversity, promoting tourism values /recreational, cultural, gastronomic, esthetic, health, spiritual, with positive impact in local livelihoods. Under Vlora Regional Administration of Protected Areas (RAPA) is situated the first Marine Park in Albania and the work is focused on strengthening and increasing monitoring and law enforcement capacities of the administration and local actors. In line with Oceans Conference and SDG 14 RAPA Vlora prepares implementation action plans for habitats and species of conservation interest in coastal and marine protected areas and also promote and support the collection and dissemination of information on SDG 14.*

- The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity - TEEB Aruba (#OceanAction16198)  
Submitted by: YABI

<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=16198>

*The research project 'TEEB Aruba' (The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity) aims to derive insight in the strong link between Economy and Nature on Aruba. Aruba has set a goal to move towards sustainable economic development, which in its essence means balancing out three interconnected spheres; social welfare, economic responsibility and ecological resilience. In order to make sound decisions about the management of ecosystems - which includes coastal marine ecosystems such as mangroves, coral reefs and seagrass beds - it is necessary to estimate the socio-economic value that these ecosystems provide to Aruba. The objective is to quantify and integrate the value of our Natural Capital in long term planning contributing to a sustainable economic development of the island. The coastal marine environment is especially important for the tourism sector on Aruba, which is the main economic pillar of the island.*

- Reef Life Restoration Smart Substrates for Super Corals (#OceanAction15440)  
Submitted by: Reef Life Restoration & Foundation

<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=15440>

*Smart Substrates for Super Corals: Reef Life Restoration (RLR) nano-engineered reef habitats, wave break and living shoreline modules use environmentally sustainable materials as specific coral species growth substrates, mimicking the complex composition of natural coral reefs. The vision of this project is to deploy these smart substrates on reefs worldwide and use these technologies to protect, restore or migrate coral populations around the world, as many of the worlds scientists feel that entire reef populations will have to be moved to cooler waters, such as the Great Barrier Reef, where there are no structures to receive them.*

- Support action, innovation and learning to address source-to-sea priorities (#OceanAction15031)  
Submitted by: Action Platform on Source-to-Sea Management

<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=15031>

*The Action Platform for Source-to-Sea Management (S2S Platform) is a multi-stakeholder initiative that works to support coordinated and innovative approaches to governance and management from source to sea. It helps freshwater, coastal and marine experts to share experiences and contribute to global knowledge generation on source-to-sea interconnections, connect and engage in collaborative projects, promote successful practices, and take collaborative action to improve the management of land, water, coastal and marine linkages.*

- Ocean Protection Educational Initiatives and Advocacy (#OceanAction14264)  
Submitted by: MY World Mexico

<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=14264>

*MY World Mexico is a national network of citizens and organizations working at local, national and international levels for the Implementation, monitoring, financing and socialization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Mexico. Since 2016, MY World Mexico has operated throughout Mexico, collecting over 30,000 MY World 2030 surveys and impacting in Mexico's National Voluntary Review during the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the ECOSOC Youth Forum and the Commission for Social Development.*

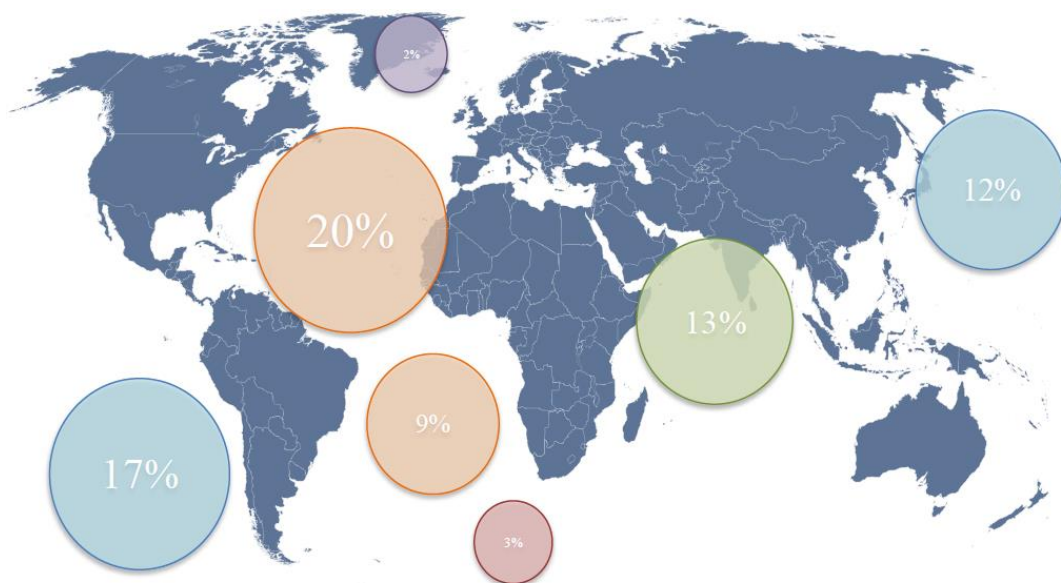
## GAPS AND CHALLENGES

In response to: *What are the current gaps and challenges in your Community of Ocean Action that need to be addressed, including through new voluntary commitments and/or by engaging additional actors?*

### GEOGRAPHICAL GAPS

There are various ways in which gaps and challenges can be identified, the most evident of which is to examine trends across the VCs, in particular by geography, lead entity and thematic focus.

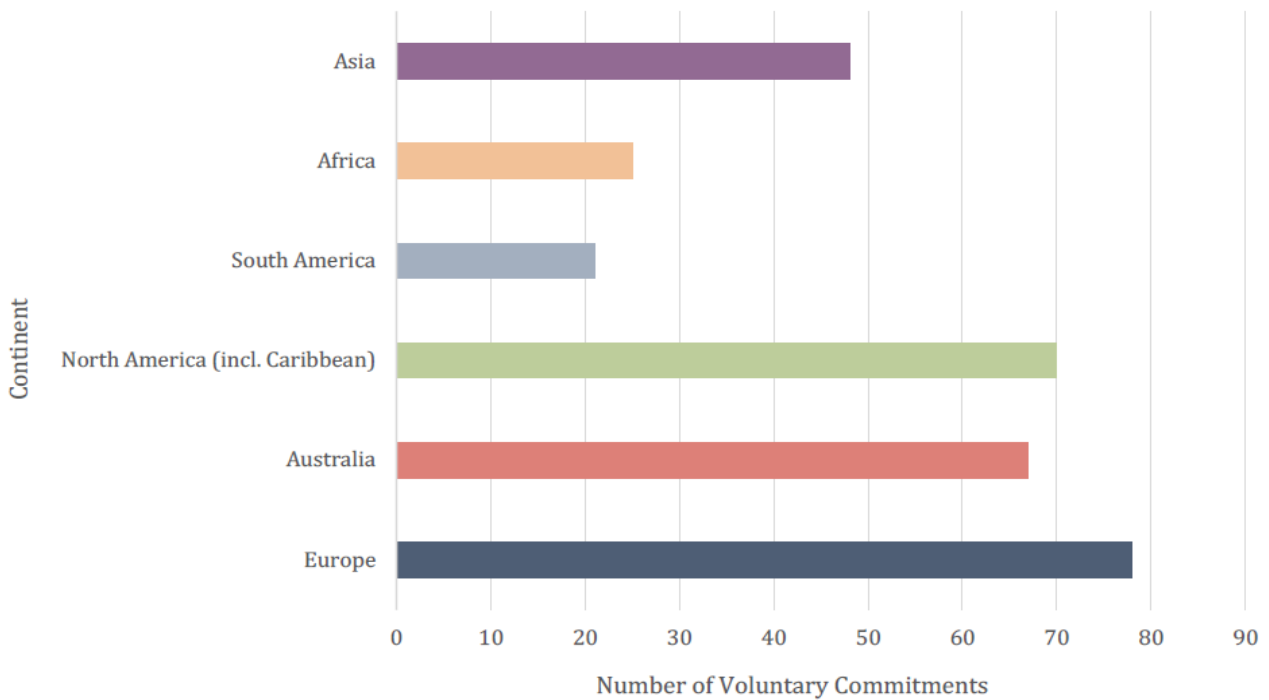
The below map illustrates the ocean basin on which the VCs focus, not including those that address the entire global ocean (23% of VCs have a global ocean focus). This illustrates potential gaps in geographic focus for the South Atlantic Ocean (9%), Southern Ocean (3%) and Arctic Ocean (2%). Please note that, in the below map the percentage indicated in the Atlantic Ocean region also includes Caribbean and Mediterranean Seas.



*Figure 1 – The relative distribution of VCs for the MCEM COA by ocean basin.*



The below graph illustrates the distribution of VCs submitted by governments with regards to continent in which that government is located. This illustrates a comparatively higher number of VCs in North America, Australia and Europe, but fewer in Asia, Africa and South America.



*Figure 2 – Distribution of VCs for the MCEM COA by continent, for government submitted VCs only.*

## GAPS IN STAKEHOLDER REPRESENTATION

The below graph illustrates the distribution of VCs by the type of lead entity. This illustrates the percentage of VC's by lead entity. Data was kindly provided by UNDESA based on responses given by submitters of VC's. The selection of options was as listed here, and submitters were asked to choose only one. Hence it does not account for overlaps of some organizations that may exist in more than one category. Based on this graph, it is clear that there are some stakeholder groups that are comparatively under-represented in the Community, with regards to the number of VCs registered. In particular, low levels are engagement with regards to the VCs of the scientific community, civil society organizations, and philanthropic organizations are noteworthy. As these stakeholder groups are often critical to underpinning implementation through sound science, financial resources, and local capacity, the lack of VCs from these groups could indicate difficulties in other VCs engaging the necessary support needed to realize their implementation.

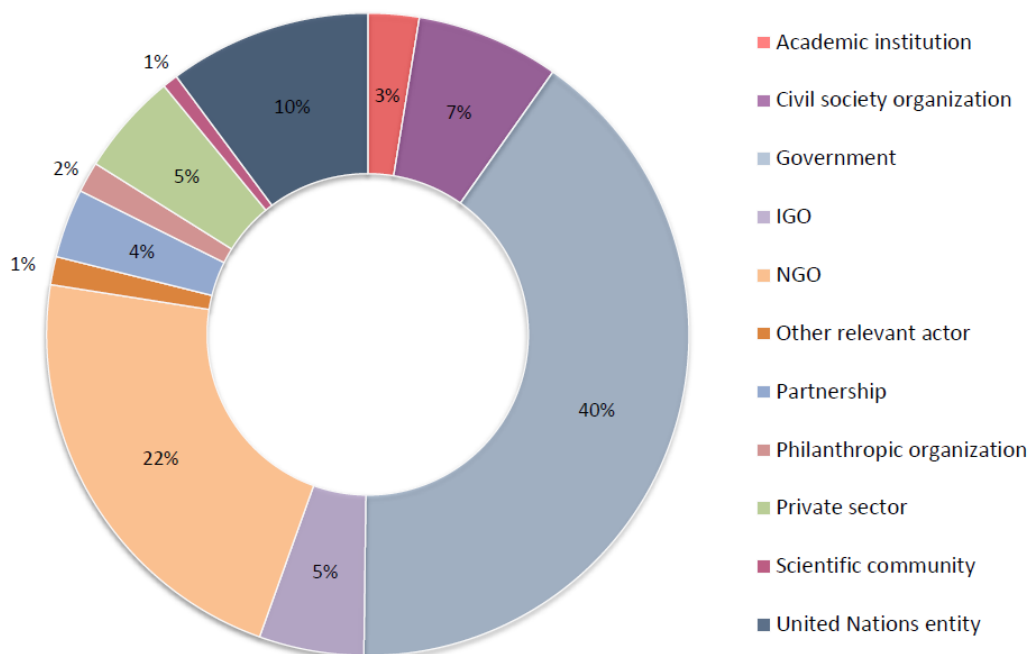
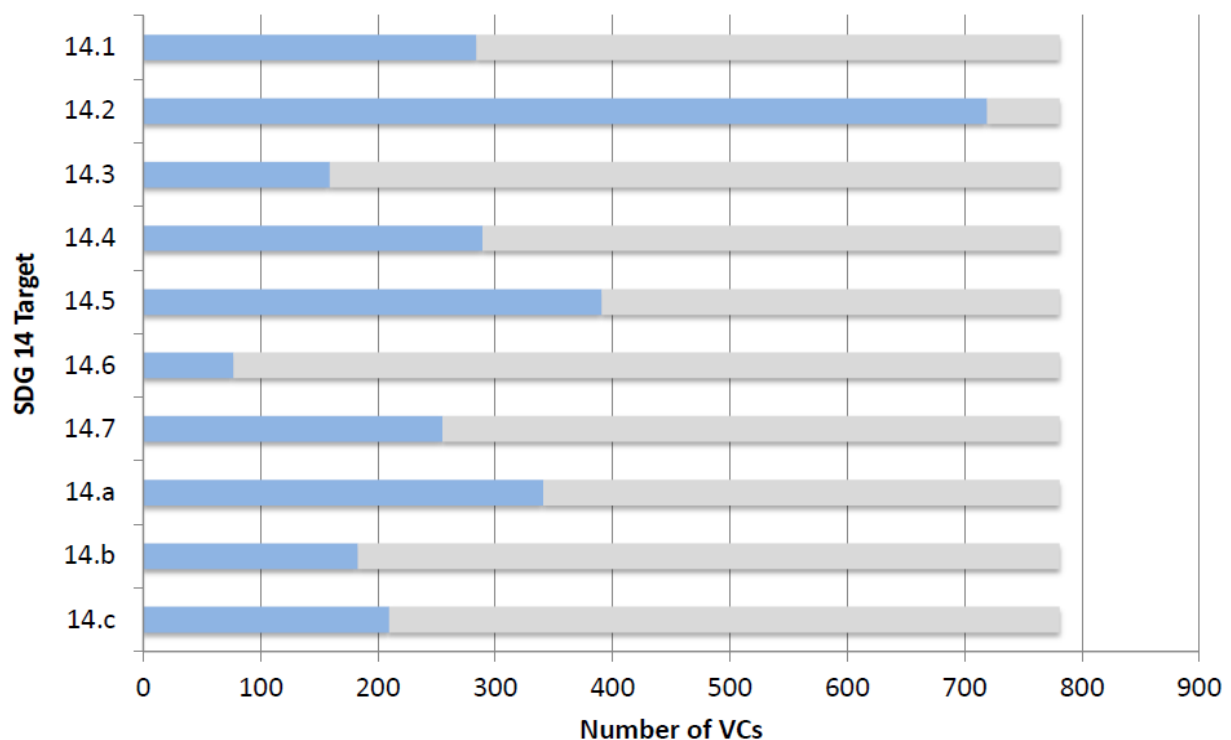


Figure 3 –Distribution of Voluntary Commitments (VCs) by lead entity for the MCEM COA

## FOCUS ACROSS SDG 14 TARGETS AND OTHER SDGs

In registering their VCs, submitters have also indicated the specific SDG 14 targets as well as other SDGs to which their VC contributes. An uneven focus across the various SDG 14 targets and SDGs is to be expected in light of the thematic focus of this COA. However, this could also indicate areas potentially in need of further attention in the context of marine and coastal ecosystems management.

The table below illustrates the SDG 14 targets addressed by the VCs for this COA. There appears to be a significant focus on 14.2, which is understandable, as this target is a main focus of this COA. The comparatively lower focus on 14.3 (ocean acidification) and 14.6 (fisheries subsidies) is also understandable given the types of interventions required for these issues, which differ from interventions in the context marine and coastal ecosystems management. However, there could be a need to scale up action in the VCs with regards to the sustainable fisheries (14.4) in the context of ecosystem-based, cross-sectoral approaches to conservation and sustainable use.



*Figure 4 –Number of VCs for MCEM COA that contribute to each of the 10 SDG 14 targets.*



The below table illustrates other SDGs to which the VCs have indicated a contribution. This table indicates a relatively even focus across the various SDGs, signifying close linkages the various elements of sustainable development. There is a comparatively higher number of linkages to SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), 13 (Climate Action), 15 (Life on Land) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). There could, however, be opportunities to enhance linkages with SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities, in particular with regards to inclusive and sustainable urbanization (SDG 11.3) in the context of integrated marine and coastal area management, cultural and natural heritage (SDG 11.4) in the context for example of management of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, waste management (SDG 11.6).

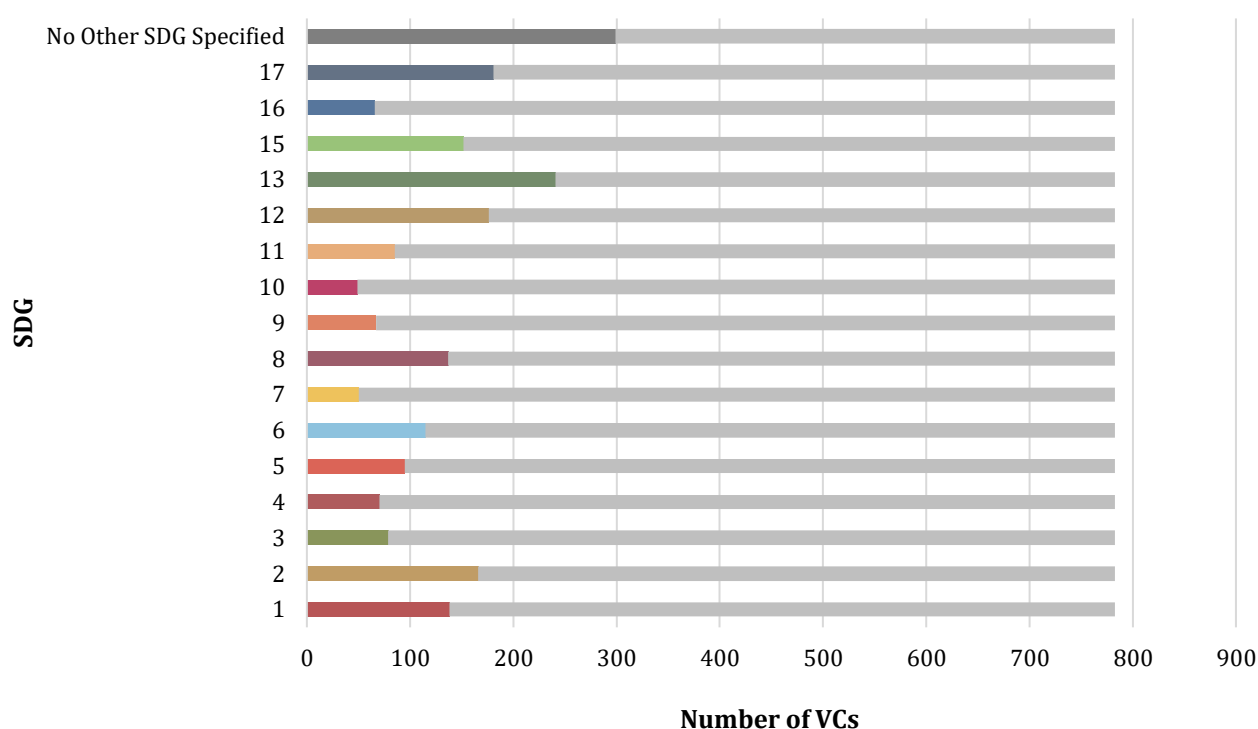


Figure 5 – The number of MCEM COA VCs contributing to other SDGs.

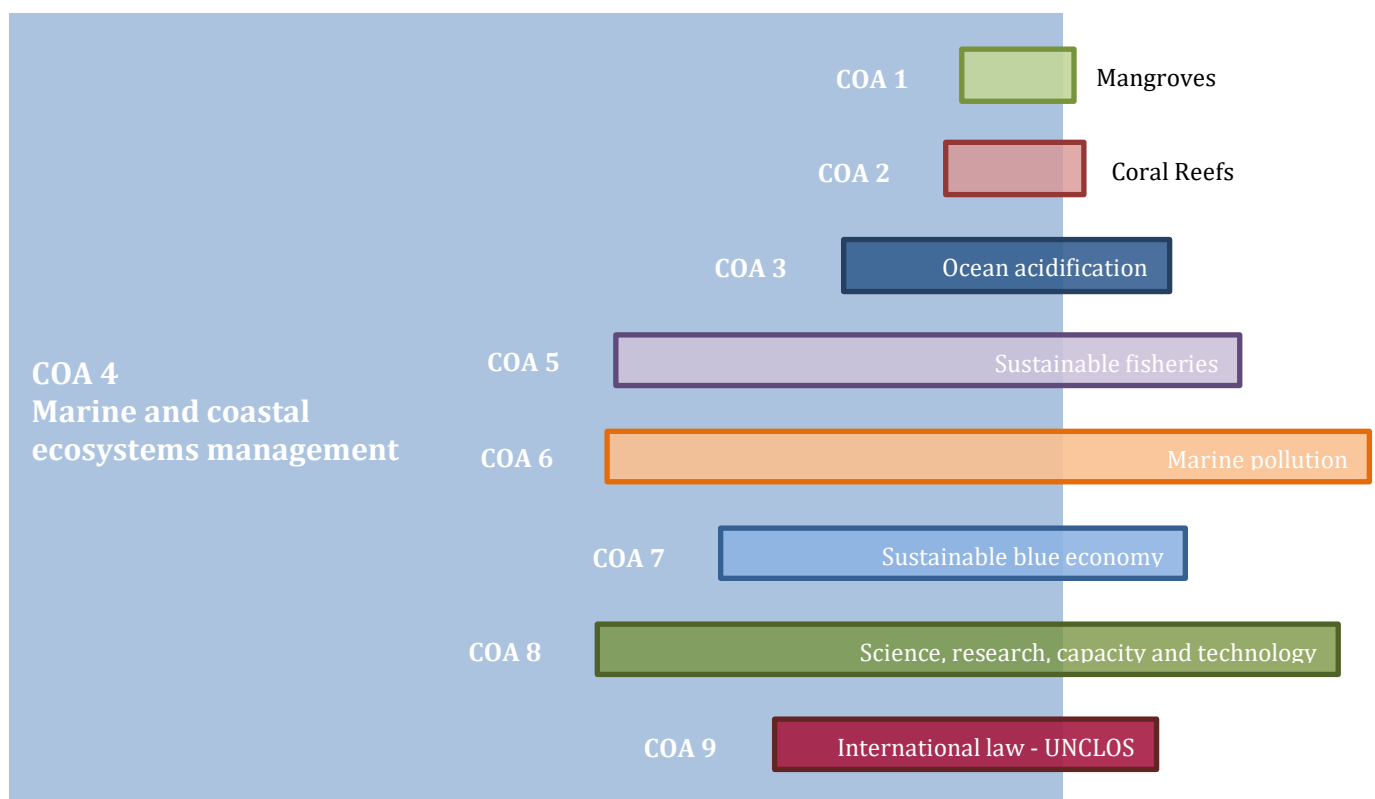
**KEY:** SDG 1- No Poverty, SDG 2 – Zero Hunger, SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-being, SDG 4 – Quality Education, SDG 5 – Gender Equality, SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation, SDG 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy, SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities, SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption, SDG 13 – Climate Action, SDG 15 – Life on Land, SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals

The above information provides some useful insights with regards to potential gaps and challenges facing the VCs. However, there are a number of key considerations to keep in mind with regard to the above. First, this analysis focuses only on number of VCs and not the scale, scope, timeframe, resources or projected impact of the VCs. As well, any insights drawn from the above emanate largely from a comparative analysis across VCs, rather than an indication of where VCs may be required by ocean basin, lead entity, geography or focal area. Further work is needed to elicit information regarding trends in challenges and gaps in the implementation of these VCs.

## INSPIRING AND IMPACTFUL VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS

In response to: *Please provide any illustrative examples of inspiring and impactful Voluntary Commitments in your Community of Ocean Action*

This Community is unique in its significant cross-cutting nature. In fact, the VCs within the Community overlap with all of the other Communities of Ocean Action, as illustrated by the below graph. The most overlap is with Community of Ocean Action for Mangroves (89%), followed by Coral Reefs (80%); Sustainable Blue Economy (76%); International Law (74%); Sustainable Fisheries (71%); Ocean Acidification (67%); Science, Research, Capacity and Technology (62%); and Marine Pollution (51%).



**Figure 6** –Voluntary Commitment (VC) overlaps between the Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Management (MCEM) Community of Ocean Action (COA) and the other COAs.

This Community has an enormous and impressive range of VCs, spanning a wide range of scales, actors, sectors, tool, species and systems. These VCs also speak to different aspects and elements of achieving global goals for ocean, including research, monitoring, conservation and assessment and engagement and awareness and education of the public, policymakers and the private sector. Some of these impactful and inspiring VCs in different focal areas are listed below.

## KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR ACTION

For example, the Community includes VCs focused on improving the knowledge base for action, such as

- Science to Support SDG-14 Goals  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=23266>
- Assessing the Carbon Potential of Mangrove Forests in Nigeria  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=26950>
- Ocean futures: solutions from science  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=14995>
- Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems (RIMES)  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=20604>

## MONITORING

Likewise, there are a number of VCs that focus on monitoring at different scales, such as:

- Marine Biodiversity Observation Network (MBON)  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=21759>
- Establish the Local Environmental Observer (LEO) Network in all oceans and along all of the world's coastlines within 5 years  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=21889>

## MAJOR PRESSURES AND DRIVERS OF CHANGE

There are VCs that focus on improving our understanding of the impacts and trends of major pressures and drivers of change, such as:

- Climate change caused bleaching and subsequent mortality in 2016 - post bleaching monitoring in Gulf of Mannar, Tamil Nadu, India  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=27506>
- Desktop Study on Marine Litter including Microplastics in the Arctic (Phase I)  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=18373>



- Improve our understanding of microfibers with actionable steps to prevent them from becoming aquatic debris

<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=18160>

## AREA-BASED MANAGEMENT

A major focus of many of the VCs are on developing and implementing area-based management, such as:

- Expansion of network of marine protected areas in Greece  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=18379>
- Marae Moana - Cook Islands Marine Park  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=15701>
- Phoenix Islands Protected Area: Bring PIPA Home  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=20784>
- Protect 30% of Seychelles marine and coastal waters more than 400,000 square kilometers of improved protection and ocean management  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=19023>
- Marine Protected Areas in the UK and our Overseas Territories  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=19624>
- Mobile GPS to locally manage Marine Protected Areas / Spatial Closure to avoid illegal, unregulated fishing  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=15728>

## MANAGEMENT APPROACHES ACROSS SEASCAPES & COASTAL LANDSCAPES

However, many of the VCs also address broad-scale management approaches across seascapes and coastal landscapes, including marine spatial planning, such as:

- Blue Planning in Practice: Worldwide MSP training offer to enable ecosystem-based marine and coastal planning and management  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=25529>
- Integrated National Oceans Policy and Marine Spatial Plan for Solomon Islands  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=19754>
- Implementation of an integrated approach to coastal and marine ecosystems for sustainable blue growth in the Southeast Pacific (SPINCAM Project Phase 3)  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=18743>

## RANGE OF HABITATS: SHALLOW COASTAL AREAS & DEEP-SEA OPEN OCEAN

The VCs focus on a broad range of biomes and habitats, including shallow coastal areas, such as for coral reefs:

- Restoring dying and degraded coral reefs  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=22450>
- Reef Life Restoration Smart Substrates for Super Corals  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=15440>

But also address deep-sea and open ocean areas, such as:

- Science for deep-ocean sustainability  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=15238>
- Enhancing deep sea marine biodiversity assessment through the creation of online taxonomic atlases linked to deep-sea mining activities in the Area  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=17776>

## REHABILITATION OF DEGRADED ECOSYSTEMS

And, in addition to protecting and conserving ecosystems, many VCs also address rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems and adaptation to future change, including through green approaches, such as:

- Restoration of the Mexican Pacific coral reefs using natural remediation techniques  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=26333>
- Tuvalu Coastal Adaptation Project  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=21264>
- Restore the Mesoamerican Coral Reef  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=18998>
- Ocean Protection Plan- Coastal Restoration Fund  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=19273>

## SECTORAL ENGAGEMENT

The VCs also address actions in a range of sectors, including:

- F3 - Future of Fish Feed: A collaborative effort toward fish-free aquaculture feeds  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=18933>
- Norway launching Global Action Network on Sustainable Food from the Ocean for Food Security and Nutrition  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=19383>

- Promoting standards for sustainable fisheries management and traceability of fish products on a global scale  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=16466>
- Promoting a structured dialogue on cruise tourism between cruise operators, ports and port cities  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=24196>
- LNG4Solution - The solution to minimize air emissions and to increase energy efficiency in maritime transport  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=14975>
- Global Maritime Energy Efficiency Partnerships (GloMEEP) Project  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=15605>
- Green coastal shipping private public partnership on eco-friendly transport  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=20944>

## ENABLING FACTORS

Many of the VCs also focus on different types of enabling factors for achieving SDG 14, including, for example education and stakeholder engagement; Financing and Platforms for partnerships and stakeholder dialogue.

### Education and stakeholder engagement

- Blueribbon Ocean Conversation Association  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=27880>
- Surfrider Ocean Friendly Program  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=27741>
- Green Indonesia Waste Education for primary schools in Indonesia  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=23648>
- Sport2Clean Education Environment  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=21902>
- Closed Loop Ocean Funding Mechanism  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=24196>
- Contribution to the Blue Action Fund  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=21424>
- Oak commits to improving the health and integrity of marine ecosystems for present and future generations  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=20432>



Platforms for partnerships and stakeholder dialogue

- Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI) Global Dialogues with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fisheries Bodies  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=14827>
- Partnership for Regional Ocean Governance: International Forum for Advancing Regional Ocean Governance  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=18439>
- Global Partnership on Nutrient Management  
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=15250>

## LESSONS LEARNED TO DATE

In response to: *Please provide any other comments, including lessons learned within your Community of Ocean Action*

Both webinars have unveiled the large desire to make use of this platform. There is significant interest at all various levels to engage substantially and meaningfully in this community. In this vein we are exploring potential committees and will discuss this in the upcoming meeting of this COA along with the COA on mangroves as well as the COA on coral reefs. Based on experiences thus far, the following lessons can be gleaned:

### Need to fill geographical, stakeholder and substantive gaps

As noted in this report, there are various gaps and areas in need of further engagement in terms of geographical representation of the VCs, the types of stakeholder groups who have submitted VCs and thematic/substantive focus of the VCs. Such gaps are likely reflective of the nature of the SDG process and those stakeholder entities that are typically more focused on such processes, but efforts can be made to better engage a broader range of stakeholder groups and issue areas to address these gaps.

### Low reporting of progress in VCs

Ensuring regular reporting of the VCs has proven difficult with a relatively small portion of VCs in this Community providing regular updates on the online VC platform. Although VCs that have not provided updates may still be progressing in implementing, the gap in regulating reporting/updating inhibits the ability to understand the progress across the range of VCs registered in the context of the UN Ocean Conference.

### Linkages to opportunities for visibility

A potential means to encourage more regular reporting/updating could be to provide more opportunities for visibility of the VCs, and especially those VCs that are progressing in implementation. Approaches could include dissemination through social media channels, highlighting VCs through side/special events at various conferences and events, publications or other multimedia. As well, the next UN Ocean Conference provides a valuable opportunity to highlight specific VCs, both in terms of progress made and experiences in need of scaling up.

### Linkages to opportunities for support

Various VCs have indicated, in different forms, the need for support to ensure effective implementation and long-term sustainability. Increased engagement of the private sector and philanthropic organizations (which are currently under-represented in the COA) could help to address this gap.

### Reporting and monitoring

Some have also reporting a lack of clarity as to how the VCs and COAs align with the formalized reporting and monitoring of the implementation of SDG 14. The many VCs are key windows into implementation across different scales, issues, sectors and stakeholder groups. Some of the valuable experiences of the VCs may be missed in formalized SDG 14 reporting mechanisms. Thus, further consideration (including, for example at the next UN Ocean Conference) could be given to how experiences under the VCs could support formalized reporting and assessment of progress on SDG 14.

# ANALYSIS OF THE MARINE AND COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS MANAGEMENT

Further information and analysis of the Voluntary Commitments under this Community is provided in the analysis report, submitted together with this document.