

# Interim Assessment of Voluntary Commitments (VCs) Assigned to Community of Ocean Action #9- Sustainable Fisheries

The high-level United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development was convened at United Nations Headquarters from 5 to 9 June 2017. The Conference devoted special attention to the health of our oceans and seas and advance implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 14) 14. As part of the outcomes of the Conference, stakeholders registered voluntary commitments for implementation of SDG 14. Each of the Ocean Conference voluntary commitments addresses one or several of the SDG 14 targets.

To follow-up on the implementation of these voluntary commitments, to catalyze and generate new voluntary commitments, and to facilitate collaboration and networking amongst different actors in support of SDG 14, the United Nations have launched nine thematic multi-stakeholder Communities of Ocean Action.

Each Community of Ocean Action (COA) was subsequently assigned a number of VCs. This document provides an analysis of the voluntary commitments assigned to COA #9 to date. Its targeted purpose is to assess progress in implementing registered voluntary commitments, identify gaps to target efforts to achieve new voluntary commitments, and to increase multi-stakeholder interest and engagement in the Community of Ocean Action on Sustainable Fisheries.

Prepared By:

Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture  
United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization

Bureau of Policy and Programme Support  
United Nations Development Programme

Co-authors: Joe Zelasney and Kim Friedman (FAO); Andrew Hudson and Bethany Donithorn (UNDP)

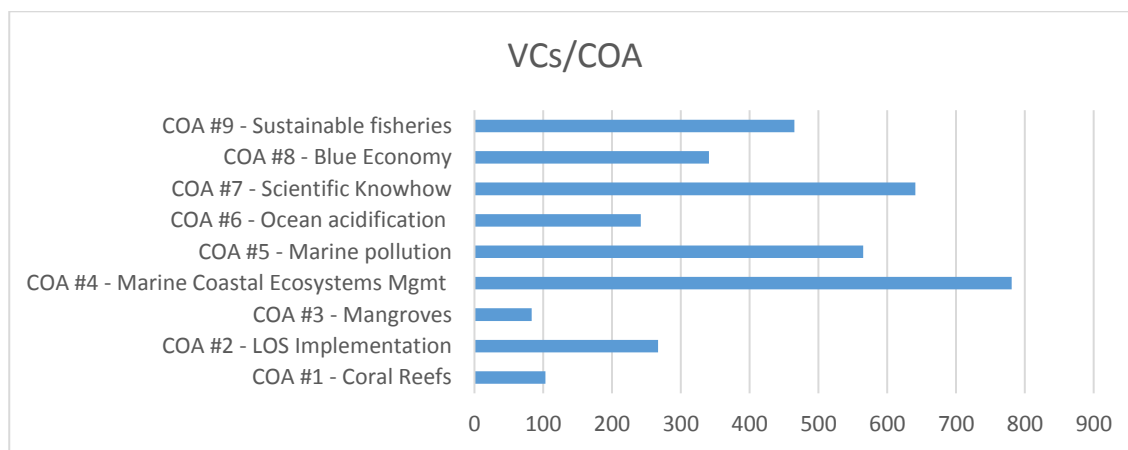
## Overview

As of 18 December, 2018 there were 1 500 Voluntary Commitments (VCs) registered to the UN Ocean Conference.

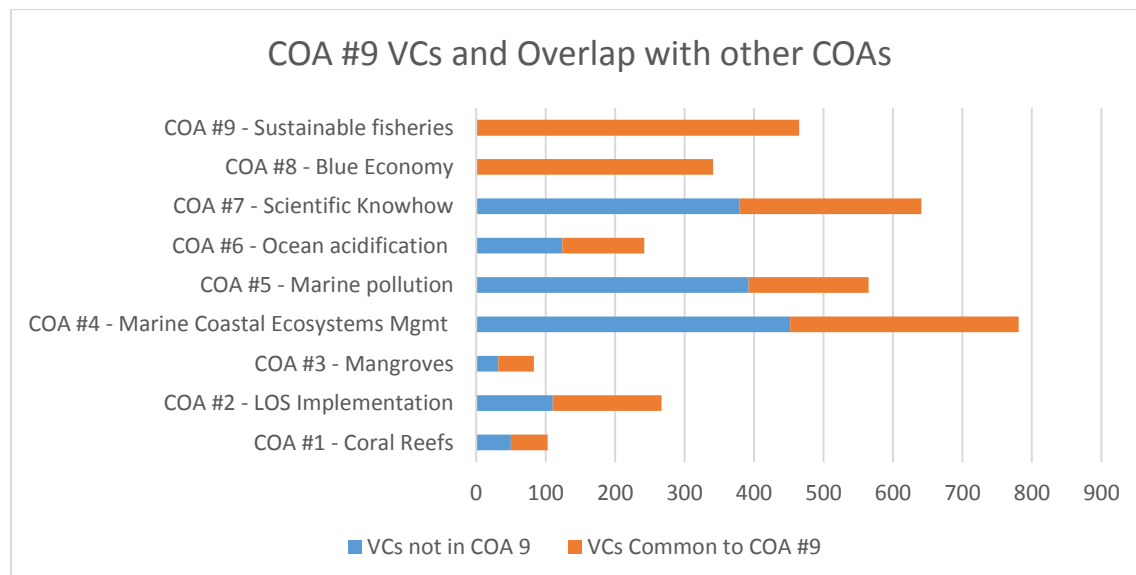
VCs were assigned to nine thematic COAs, which were created following the UN Ocean Conference. Some VCs were assigned to more than one COA. (VC assignment to COAs was undertaken by DESA, criteria for assigning VCs to COAs unknown).

COA #9 on Sustainable Fisheries has been assigned 496 VCs. 33 VCs are exclusive COA #9, the other 463 VCs have been assigned to at least one other COA.

*The following chart indicates total number of voluntary commitments (VCs) assigned per COA, as of 24 August 2018.*

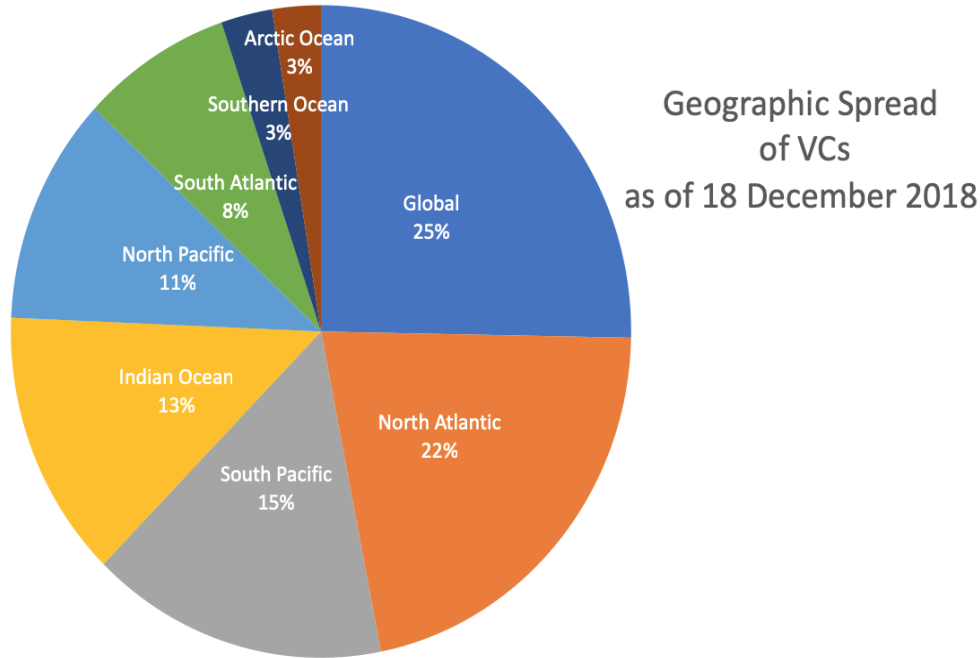


*The following chart indicates VCs assigned to COA #9, and overlap of those VCs across the other COAs, indicated in orange, as of 24 August 2018.*



### Geographic Spread of VCs in COA #9

As of 18 December 2018, there were relatively few ‘Sustainable Fisheries’ commitments in the Arctic Ocean and Southern Ocean, which is to be expected as there is less fishing activity in the polar regions. The spread closely reflects the share of VCs by ocean area in COA 9, with the exception of a slightly lower percentage of VCs with global coverage in the North Atlantic in COA 9 and a slightly higher percentage in the Indian Ocean.

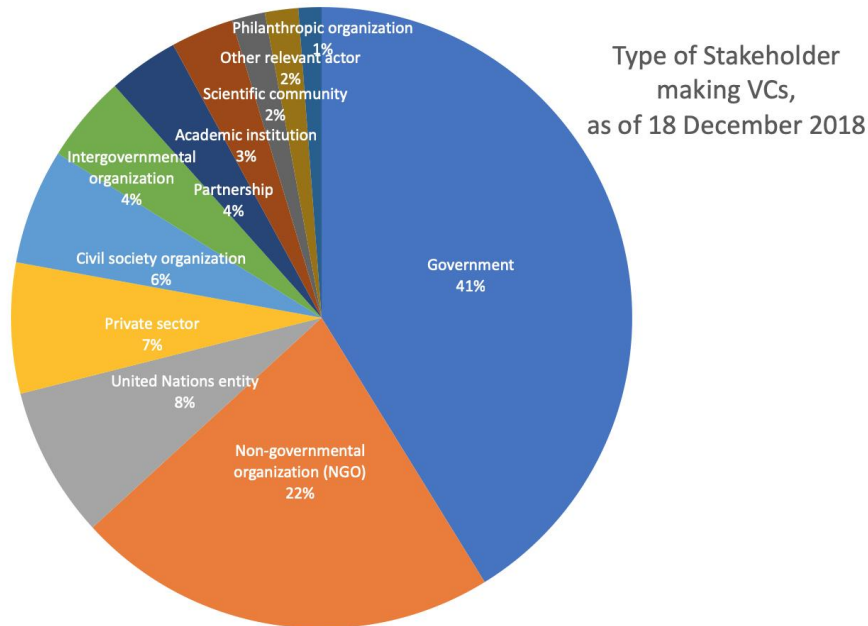


*This pie chart illustrates the percentage of COA#9 VCs by ocean area as of 28 August 2018.*

COA #9 VCs by Ocean Area	
GO	164
NP	84
SP	138
NA	109
SA	74
IO	127
AO	14
SO	25

*This table shows the number of COA#9 VCs by ocean area as of 28 August 2018.*

## Type of Stakeholder making VCs in COA #9



As of 18 December 2018, there continued to be low participation by Philanthropic Organizations, Academic Institutions and the Scientific Community in COA 9. Governments, NGOs and UN Entities have registered the largest number of VCs to date. Compared to the global spread, COA 9 has a lower percentage of VCs led by the Private Sector than Intergovernmental Organizations, more VCs from Academia than Partnerships and more from Philanthropic organizations than the Scientific Community (see COA 9 figures below).

COA #9 VCs by Entity Type - count and percent of total		
Academic institution	16	3.44%
Civil society organization	45	9.68%
Government	166	35.70%
Intergovernmental organization	33	7.10%
Non-governmental organization (NGO)	104	22.37%
Other relevant actor	5	1.08%
Partnership	11	2.37%
Philanthropic organization	7	1.51%
Private sector	31	6.67%
Scientific community	6	1.29%
United Nations entity	41	8.82%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>1</b>

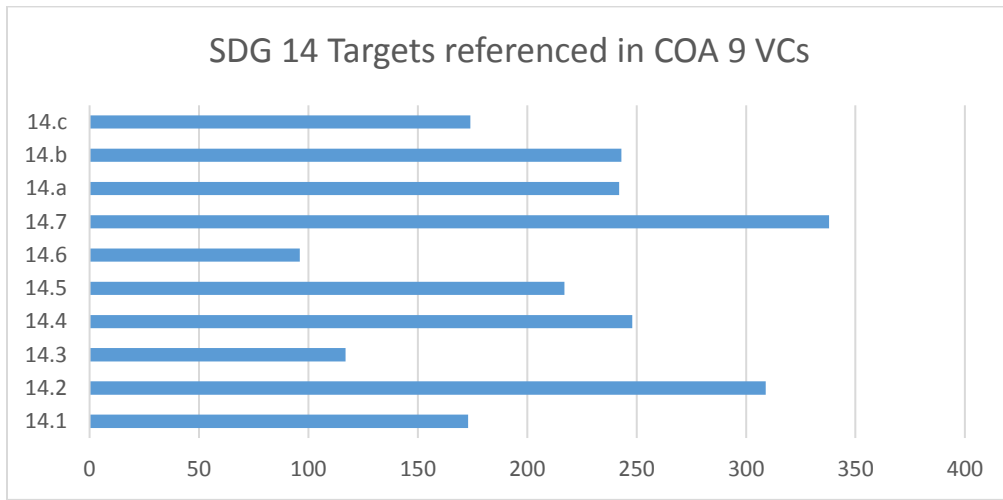
The data in this table shows the number of COA#9 VCs by entity type as of 28 August 2018.

## SDG 14 Targets covered by VCs in COA #9

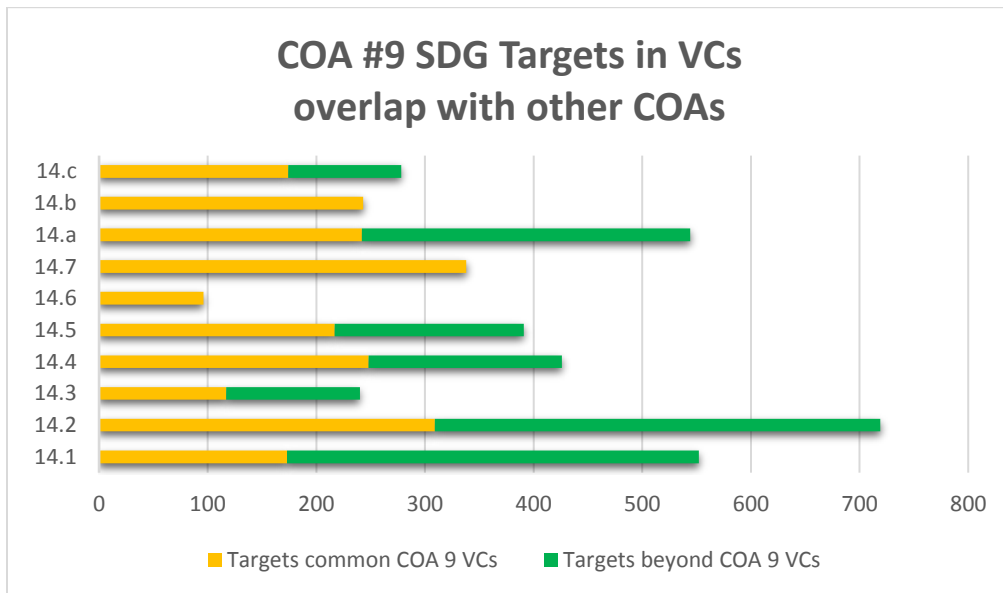
All of the SDG 14 targets are highlighted in VCs assigned to COA #9 “Sustainable Fisheries”.

FAO is custodian of SDG 14 target indicators 14.4.1, 14.6.1, 14.7.1, and 14.b.1, each of which are well represented in the VCs assigned to COA #9. In fact, 100 percent of VCs containing SDG targets 14.7, 14.6, and 14.b are assigned to COA #9. Just over 50 percent of VCs highlighting 14.4 were assigned to COA #9.

*This chart indicates SDG 14 targets highlighted in VCs assigned to COA #9, as of 24 August 2018.*



*This chart indicates SDG 14 targets highlighted in VCs assigned to COA#9 (in yellow) and all other COAs (in green), as of 24 August 2018.*



*This table represents number of SDG targets (as highlighted in VCs) assignment to individual COAs and the total number of VCs containing each SDG target, as of 24 August 2018. Green is high; Red is low.*

	COA #1 - Coral Reefs	COA #2 - LOS Implement	COA #3 - Mangroves	COA #4 - Marine Coastal	COA #5 - Marine pollution	COA #6 - Ocean acidification	COA #7 - Scientific Knowhow	COA #8 - Blue Economy	COA #9 - Sustainable fisheries	TOTAL VCs
Sum of 14.1	30	120	37	285	565	132	258	139	173	565
Sum of 14.2	79	182	71	723	273	158	377	247	309	725
Sum of 14.3	28	84	19	160	130	240	240	97	117	240
Sum of 14.4	36	115	31	289	145	96	221	181	248	426
Sum of 14.5	44	141	50	396	160	108	217	171	217	396
Sum of 14.6	4	57	9	77	57	52	72	58	96	96
Sum of 14.7	49	128	40	256	137	97	212	339	338	340
Sum of 14.a	53	161	37	345	217	152	551	200	242	554
Sum of 14.b	25	88	29	183	101	66	144	138	243	243
Sum of 14.C	31	264	23	210	129	91	189	145	174	283

	Academic institution	Civil society organization	Government	Intergovernmental organization	Non-governmental organization (NGO)	Other relevant actor	Partnership	Philanthropic organization	Private sector	Scientific community	United Nations entity	TOTAL
14.1	5	15	48	12	48	3	5	4	13	3	17	173
14.2	11	30	107	19	72	5	8	6	17	4	30	309
14.3	7	10	32	8	29	2	3	3	10	4	9	117
14.4	9	15	97	12	60	2	8	6	14	3	22	248
14.5	5	23	87	6	50	4	6	3	10	5	18	217
14.6	4	5	33	6	26	2	6	2	2	3	7	96
14.7	13	27	121	27	71	5	8	5	25	3	33	338
14.a	14	15	74	21	51	4	7	2	20	5	29	242
14.b	10	27	87	15	53	2	8	5	13	4	19	243
14.c	4	19	63	12	35	2	5	1	8	6	19	174

*This table represents the number of SDG targets (as highlighted COA #9 VCs) committed to by stakeholder type, as of 24 August 2018. Green is high; Red is low*

## Examining the dollar value of VCs in COA #9

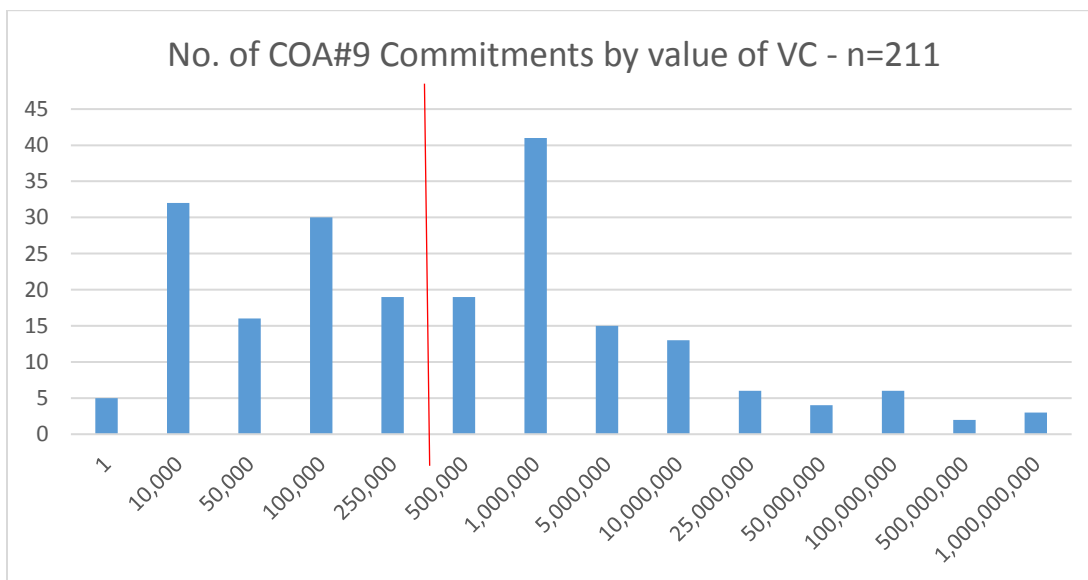
The volume of financial resources committed is difficult to calculate accurately, given the different methods of reporting on financial contributions by different VCs, the variety in the types of contributions, the different currencies used, and mistakes in data entry that are in the process of being rectified. Using the best currently available data, a total of 541 individual commitments included the provision of financial resources, with the total financing amounting to approximately 26.6 billion. The top 10 VCs are worth a combined total of \$22.7 Billion.

254 of the VCs assigned to COA #9 indicated a monetary value, they sum to approximately \$18.1 Billion. VCs exclusive to COA #9 sum to approximately \$5 Million. An attempt was made to include the stated values articulated for in-kind contributions with text, this increased the overall VC value to approximately \$50 billion.

*This table indicates total reported value of VCs assigned to each COA and total*

Total	\$26,633,089,843
1	\$393,864,851
2	\$8,381,248,286
3	\$9,658,003,204
4	\$22,228,213,682
5	\$23,810,190,352
6	\$15,208,761,082
7	\$17,113,081,955
8	\$17,470,682,539
9	\$18,128,118,140

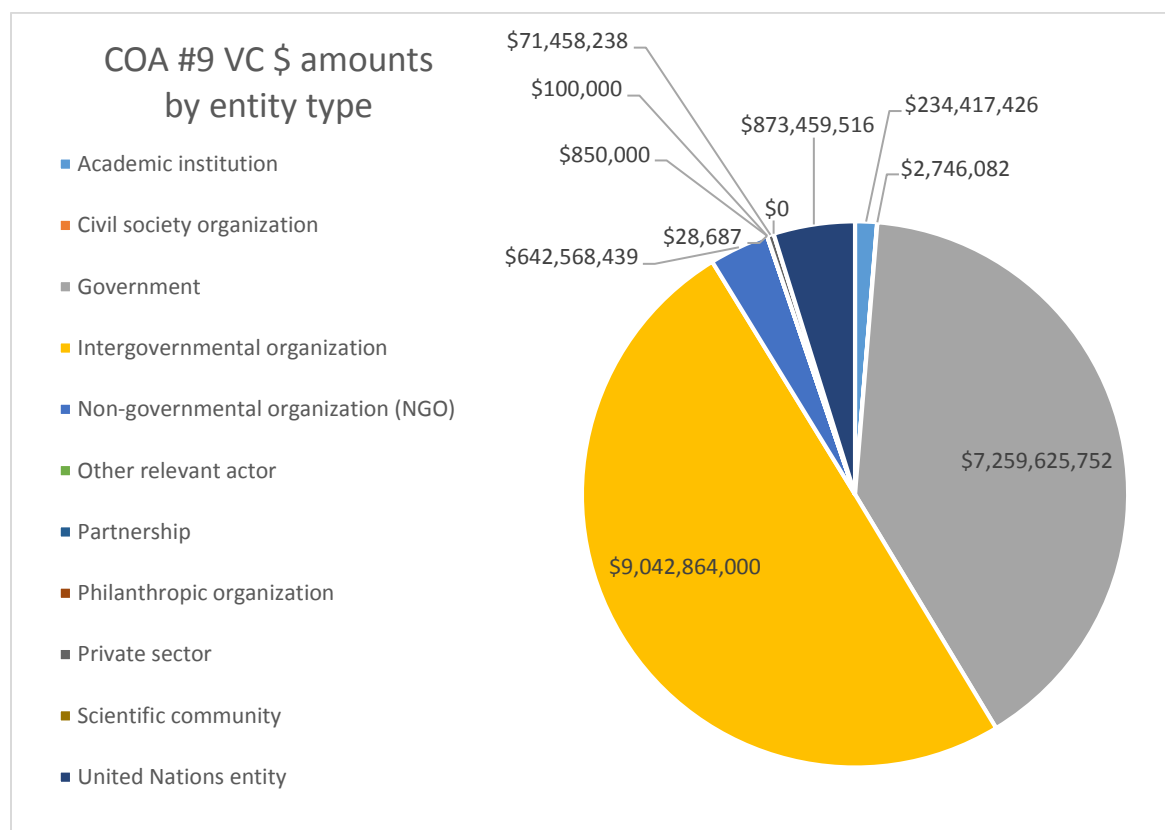
*This graph shows the 'binned' values of VCs assigned to COA #9, bars represent number of VCs above stated value (and below value of bar to the right)*



Governments and IGOs are the largest financial contributors to COA# 9. The largest source of funds for IGO-led COA9 VCs is the European Investment Bank-led VC [“Supporting in particular SIDSs to reduce their vulnerability to climate change and building a more resilient ocean economy.”](#)

Contributions from Philanthropic Organizations, Academic Institutions and Scientific Community have not materialized.

*This graph represents the value of VCs assigned to COA #9 by stakeholder type.*



*Table showing information contained in pie graph*

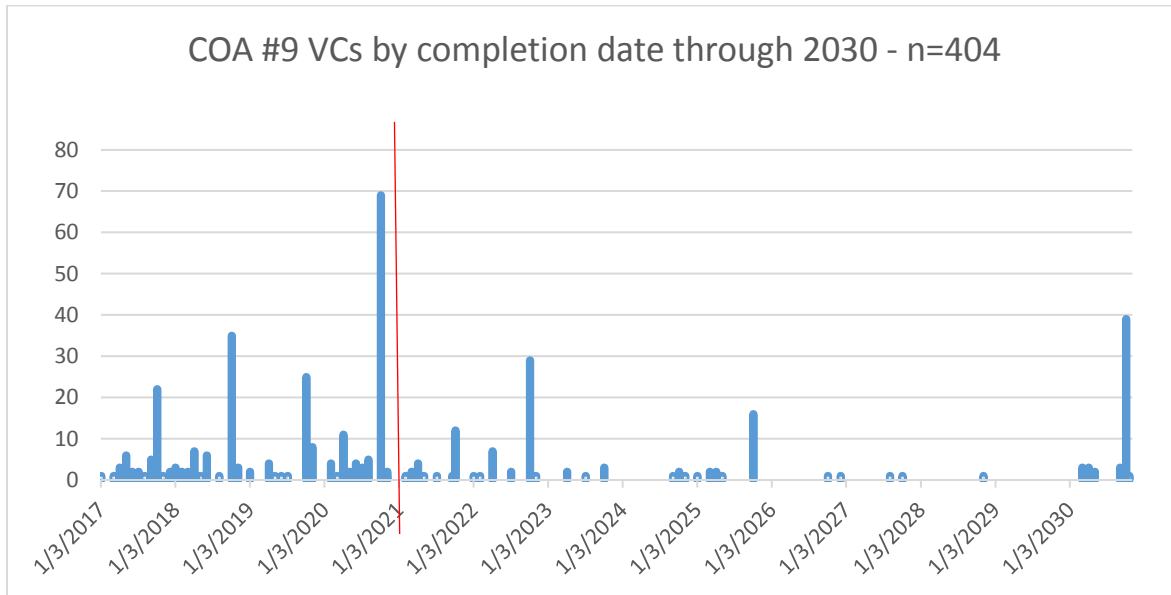
Academic institution	\$234,417,426
Civil society organization	\$2,746,082
Government	\$7,259,625,752
Intergovernmental org	\$9,042,864,000
Non-governmental org	\$642,568,439
Other relevant actor	\$28,687
Partnership	\$850,000
Philanthropic organiza	\$100,000
Private sector	\$71,458,238
Scientific community	\$0
United Nations entity	\$873,459,516
Grand Total	\$18,128,118,140



## Timeline of Voluntary Commitment in COA #9

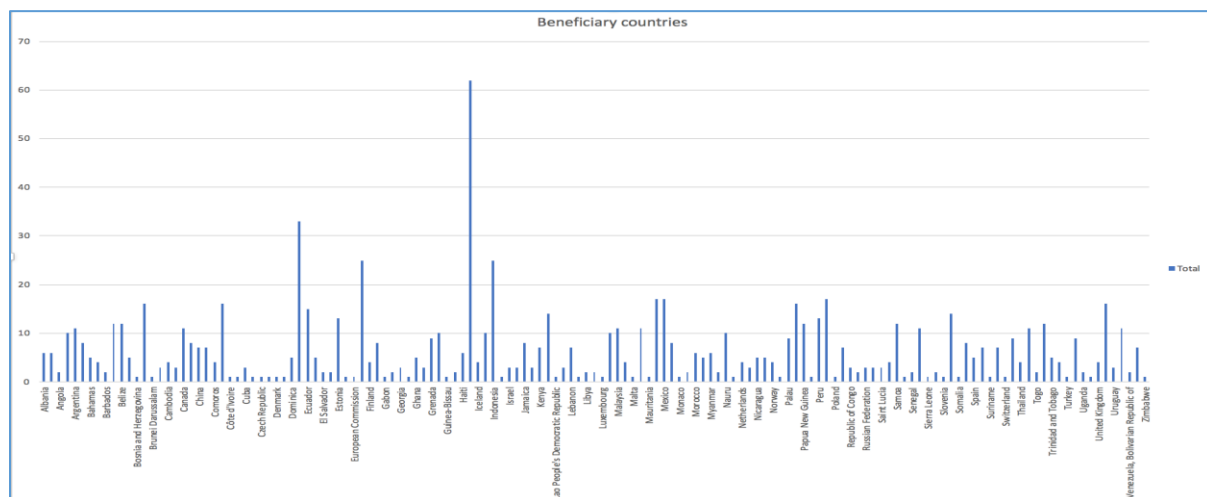
Of the 465 VCs assigned to COA #9 404 have indicated completion dates by the end of 2030. An additional six VCs have indicated completion dates beyond 2030, and not represented in the below table. 250 VCs assigned to COA #9 have indicated completion dates by the end of 2020.

Table represents VC with completion dates through 2030. Red line is on 2020.



## Global coverage of Voluntary Commitments

In terms of global coverage, VCs from all COAs, including COA9, are listed as undertaking initiatives in the following countries, with Honduras listed as receiving the greatest number of VCs, followed by the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Indonesia, Fiji, Mexico, Mauritius, the Philippines, Panama and Costa Rica (see top 20 beneficiary countries list below).



BENEFICIARY COUNTRIES	COUNT
Honduras	62
Dominican Republic	33
Fiji	25
Indonesia	25
Mauritius	17
Mexico	17
Philippines	17
Brazil	16
Costa Rica	16
Panama	16
United States of America	16
Ecuador	15
Kiribati	14
Solomon Islands	14
Estonia	13
Peru	13
Belgium	12
Belize	12
Papua New Guinea	12
Samoa	12

## COA 9 Activities 2018

### COA 9 Communications

COA 9 has been actively promoting the Community of Ocean Action since its launch following the Ocean Conference in June 2018 via Social Media, including Facebook and Twitter and through the Ocean Action Hub website. Communication has also been sent on behalf of the COA 9 co-leads (UNDP Administrator, FAO ADG for Fisheries) to all COA 9 members encouraging them to provide updates on their commitments in the registry, to register new commitments and encourage others to do the same.

Further, efforts have been undertaken on behalf of the co-leads, by staff within their respective agencies – UNDP and FAO – to mainstream the work of happening through the UNOC, and to educate officers on the role of the COAs generally, and specifically the role and activities of COA 9 to follow-up on the implementation of UNOC voluntary commitments; to catalyze and generate new voluntary commitments; and to facilitate collaboration and networking amongst different actors in support of SDG 14. Below is a non-exhaustive list of some of the events where COA 9 staff had the opportunity to engage with partners and stakeholders during 2018.

#### Workshop – IIED development of a MEL Handbook for SDG 14 – Dakar, Senegal

With support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) is developing a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Handbook for SDG14 “Life Below Water”. The Handbook will not duplicate current or past work; instead, it will add value and provide further insights that can guide action. The expectation is that this handbook will be developed in phases, growing in scope and complexity to meeting the changing needs of governments as reporting on SDG 14 progresses through 2030.

UN Officers associated with COA 9, and other COAs, provided an overview of UN agency roles as custodians of SDG indicators and participated actively in the discussions around what information the handbook should contain. The Officers stressed, and were fully supported Member State representatives, that the first iteration of the handbook should be practical and operational.

#### 3rd World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress – Chiang Mai, Thailand

The 3rd WSFC was a transdisciplinary forum for anyone interested in small-scale fisheries to participate in an interactive discussion about the future of the world's small-scale fisheries. The Congress brought together nearly 300 participants and facilitated opportunities for researchers, students, young professionals, practitioners, fishers and fishers’ organizations, environmental groups, and policymakers to share information about all aspects of small-scale fisheries and to formulate action plans and capacity development programs to support the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines).

FAO presented an overview of the UNOC and the activities of COA 9. Participants of the congress were encouraged to register voluntary commitments if they hadn’t already, and to provide updates to existing commitments.

#### Asia Pacific Day for the Ocean – Bangkok, Thailand

At the halfway mark between the 2017 Ocean Conference and the next global meeting planned in 2020, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in close cooperation with custodian agencies of the COAs and the UN Special Envoy for the Ocean, organized the first Asia-Pacific Day for the Ocean. The Day provided a platform to take stock of progress made on Voluntary Commitments in ocean basins and seas in the region, to share lessons learned from ongoing efforts, expand the Communities, and catalyze new initiatives for a healthy ocean in the region.

Officers from COA 9 contributed to the organization of Session D: Sustainable fisheries and blue economy. Presenters included representatives from FAO, USAID, Fiji Women in Fisheries Network, SEAFDEC, Reef Defenders, Ocean Policy Research Institute of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, and Department of Fisheries, Thailand.

The importance of fisheries to livelihoods, food security, economies, and cultures in the region were underscored, and a wide range of challenges faced by the sector were discussed, including overfishing, harmful fishing, IUU fishing, gender inequalities, deficient labor and working conditions, low political will, poverty, extreme weather events, and climate change. A suite of tools, technologies, and approaches to support sustainable fisheries along the value chains were highlighted, including partnerships and participatory processes necessary to meet SDG 14 goals. Regional cooperation was highlighted as key to resolving issues that are often shared or transboundary in nature.

Although much still needs to be done to improve sustainability of fisheries, many efforts are underway and improvements in fisheries sustainability have been documented. The UNOC and its COA platforms were commended for facilitating collaboration and networking amongst different actors in support of SDG 14.

#### Committee on Fisheries 33 – Side Event on Mainstreaming 2030 Agenda

At the 33<sup>rd</sup> session of FAO’s Committee on Fisheries, a side event on “Mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda” was organized in partnership with member states and the UN Special Envoy for the Ocean. During this event, FAO’s efforts to accelerate the contribution of sustainable food and agriculture to the 2030 Agenda: Guidelines for decision makers were presented. Collaboration between FAO’s Technical Committees on cross-sectoral work under the 2030 Agenda, including the UNOC, were highlighted. Finally, concrete steps to assist and collaborate with countries to mainstream the 2030 Agenda in the food and agriculture sector, and engagement in the UNOC process, including with Communities of Ocean Action, was discussed.

#### UNDP Ocean Action Volunteers Campaign

As a complement to the work of the Communities of Ocean Action, in May 2018 UNDP launched the ‘Ocean Action Volunteers’ campaign to mobilize online volunteers globally to identify organizations working in their local community on initiatives related to SDG 14 and support them to register a VC. To date, the volunteers have identified 43 VCs, of which 20 have been approved and published as VCs in the online registry. 23 remain in the pipeline for approval. 8 of these VCs have been assigned to COA 9, of which 5 have been approved and are listed below.

Organization name	Org. type	Headquarters location	Ocean Basin	SDG 14 Targets covered
Marine Conservation Cambodia	NGO	Cambodia	Indian Ocean	14.1, 14.2, 14.3, 14.4, 14.5, 14.7, 14.A, 14.B, 14.C
RespectOcean	Association	France	Global	14.1
Cochin Social Service Society	NGO	India	Arabian Sea	14.2, 14.4,14B
Marine Conservation Philippines	NGO	Philippines	North Pacific	14.1, 14.2, 14.4, 14.5, 14.7
EUROCHAMTT	Private Sector	Trinidad and Tobago	North Atlantic	14.1,14.4,14.A,14.C