



United Nations Division for Sustainable Development Goals
Department of Economic and Social Affairs

**Meeting of the Communities of Ocean Action
From Commitments to Action: Implementing SDG14**

30–31 May 2019
Incheon, Republic of Korea

Background Note

**Session V: Scaling Up Ocean Action based on Science and Innovation at the Time of
Climate Change**

Background

Marine science is of critical importance to eradicating poverty, contributing to food security, conserving the world's marine resources, helping to understand, predict and respond to natural disasters and promoting the sustainable development of the oceans and seas. Innovation in technologies related to the ocean is essential to improve our actions toward the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean and its resources. Marine science projects have stimulated technological advancements, which, in turn, have accelerated the pace at which scientific knowledge of the ocean is generated. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in its SDG14, further confirms the important role of scientific knowledge, research capacity and transfer of marine technology for sustainable development. To this end, in 2017, the General Assembly decided to proclaim the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development from 2021 to 2030. Furthermore, the General Assembly underlined the importance of science and innovation in the context of ocean action by deciding that the overarching theme of the 2020 Ocean Conference would be "Scaling up Ocean Action based on science and innovation for the implementation of Goal 14: stocktaking, partnerships and solutions".

Climate Change is the defining issue of our time. From the migratory pattern changes of marine living resources that threatens food production, to rising sea levels that increase the risk of catastrophic flooding, the impacts of climate change are global in scope and unprecedented in scale. The adverse impacts of climate change and ocean acidification impose additional pressures on the health of the ocean and its resources. At the time of climate change, managing human activities that rely on and affect the oceans and seas in a sustainable manner requires informed decision-making. Science and innovation are essential to predict or forecast, mitigate and guide the adaptation of societies and infrastructure to climate change and will support the synergistic implementation of SDGs 13 and 14.



In the lead-up to the 2020 UN Ocean Conference, strengthening the science-policy interface to ensure that relevant data is collected, analysed and communicated to policy-makers and ultimately incorporated into policy, is critical for the sustainable development of the ocean and its resources. Scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation could significantly contribute to accomplishing our common objective to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Guiding questions to frame the discussion:

- What would be the science-based and innovative areas of action that should be highlighted to support the implementation of SDG14?
- How to stimulate science-based and innovative ocean action to advance the implementation of SDG14?
- What are the respective roles of the Communities of Ocean Action (COAs) and voluntary commitment (VC) holders in scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation?
- What factors should be taken into account in ensuring that science-based and innovative actions aimed at meeting SDG14 and addressing adverse effects of climate change maximize co-benefits and minimize negative trade-offs?