



## Input to the 2022 UN Ocean Conference

The Pew Charitable Trusts is a global non-profit organization, with a major focus on science-based, non-partisan, and sustainable solutions to help protect the planet and people. We work in partnership to advance public policy so that nature and people can thrive. We thank the conference organizers for this opportunity to input on the 2022 UN Ocean Conference.

The 2022 UN Ocean Conference provides an important moment for the world to take stock of the threats facing our global ocean and to find paths forward to ensuring healthy ecosystems and healthy communities. It is of the utmost importance that we use this moment to propel forward concrete actions that will result in substantive conservation benefits for the ocean.

To that end we recommend renewed commitment to the following:

- **Support, Manage, and Finance Marine Protected Areas:** Studies consistently show that large, fully protected marine reserves protect biodiversity, safeguard traditional cultures closely linked to the sea, and allow plant and animal species to recover, all of which benefit areas far beyond the boundaries of the protected areas. Pew is working with partners to ensure marine protected areas are established, managed, and financed in ways that are durable and scalable.
- **Finalize the BBNJ High Seas Treaty:** Negotiations are under way at the United Nations to finalize a new high seas treaty focused on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond national jurisdiction. The treaty could allow nations to establish comprehensive, cross-sector marine protected areas (MPAs) on the high seas. These areas, when well-managed, can be effective tools in building ocean resilience to climate change, avoiding fisheries collapse, and preserving biodiversity.
- **Secure ratification of the Cape Town Agreement:** Adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in 2012, the Cape Town Agreement for the Safety of Fishing Vessels aims to make every commercial fishing vessel a safe working place, by setting safety standards for vessel construction and related seaworthiness, fire-safety regulations and emergency procedures. In 2019, 51 States committed to ratify the Agreement by October 2022, for the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its adoption. To enter into force, 22 States must ratify and declare a combined fleet of at least 3,600 fishing vessels. With only 4 months to go until the target date, only 5 States and 1,675 vessels are currently missing to make the protection of fishers' safety a reality. Ratifying the Cape Town Agreement will protect fishers and cut back on illegal unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.
- **Reduce Plastic Pollution:** In 2020 Pew, with our partners SYSTEMIQ, published a report *Breaking the Plastic Wave: Top findings for Preventing Plastic Pollution*, with an accompanying article published in the journal *Science*. Our report included a global analysis using first-of-its kind

modeling, showing that we can cut annual flows of plastic into the ocean by about 80% in the next 20 years by applying existing solutions and technologies.

- **End Harmful Fishing Subsidies:** The World Trade Organization agreement to reduce harmful fishing subsidies is an important step forward in ensuring the long-term sustainability of the world's fisheries. We look forward to the rapid ratification and implementation of this agreement.

The UN Ocean Conference offers a catalyzing moment that will set the trajectory of ocean conservation in the years to come. We hope governments and stakeholders will translate their commitments into concrete actions so that we can conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for years to come.

*Submitted by Megan Jungwiwattanaporn, Officer, Environment*