

**Ocean, forest and biodiversity, Plenary Statement made ICSU  
(International Council for Science)**

8th session of Open Working Group on SDGs, 3rd February 2014, New York

Thank you Mr co-Chair

This is a statement on behalf of The Science & Technology Community.

Science reminds us that the ocean covers 2/3 of our planet's surface, hosts the largest connected ecosystem, regulates our climate, allows for global trade and provides numerous essential life supporting services and provisions such as oxygen, food, materials and a sense of place.

Science has also shown evidence that biodiversity underpins Earth's life support systems for people, now and in the future, through direct and indirect benefits, such as good health, water, energy, and climate regulation. Critically biodiversity provides adaptive capacity supporting current and future generations in the face of global change.

Marine, biodiversity and forest scientists, for example in the context of the FUTURE EARTH programme launched at Rio+20, are supporting all nations in their quest to sustainably use of ocean, terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems for development.

They are delivering an increasing amount of information based on integrated global observing systems, data sharing and earth system models.

They are active in building scientific and technical capacities around the world.

They support societies in finding solutions that integrate increased use and protection of the ocean and ecosystems in an equitable way.

As a conclusion, the Science & Technological Community recommends:

- 1) The establishment of an overarching SDG on ocean and coasts; and
- 2) To develop a set of biodiversity-related targets to ensure the conservation of biodiversity and its role in the maintenance of the Earth "life-support system" as part of an SDG on healthy and productive ecosystems.

Examples of specific targets are presented in three ICSU papers placed on the website of this process, one on biodiversity, one on ocean and coasts, and one forests.

Thank you Mr co-Chair

*Given by Dr Anne-Hélène Prieur-Richard, Acting Executive Director, DIVERSITAS, and Dr Martin Visbeck, Helmholtz Center for Oceans, Germany*