

Our Ocean ACTION PLAN



Our Ocean, One Future

Washington, DC September 16, 2016

Our future is inextricably linked to the future of our ocean. It provides food and income for billions of people, regulates our climate and weather, and generates half the oxygen we breathe. The health and prosperity of our children and their children depend upon the health and productivity of our ocean.

But the ocean is in trouble. We have been taking out too many fish, adding too much pollution, and destroying the very marine and coastal ecosystems that protect and sustain us.

We know what we need to do. We must end overfishing, illegal fishing, and harmful fishing practices, which deplete fish stocks and destroy marine habitats. We must stem the staggering flow of plastics, nutrients, and other pollutants into our waterways and coasts. We must limit the carbon we emit into our atmosphere, where it leads to ocean acidification, coral bleaching, and sea level rise. We must protect coastal and marine ecosystems so they can be safe havens for biodiversity and buffers against climate change.

Our Ocean is about taking these actions. It's about conservation of marine ecosystems and sustainable use of marine resources – as the world has agreed in the sustainable development goals. It's about a blue economy in which science-based conservation and sustainable management of the ocean and its resources is the pathway to economic development and growth, not the obstacle.

Now is the time to act. Join us, so that future generations can enjoy the bounty and beauty of this spectacular ocean-covered planet we call home. Join us, so that our legacy is a healthy and productive ocean for a healthy and prosperous future.

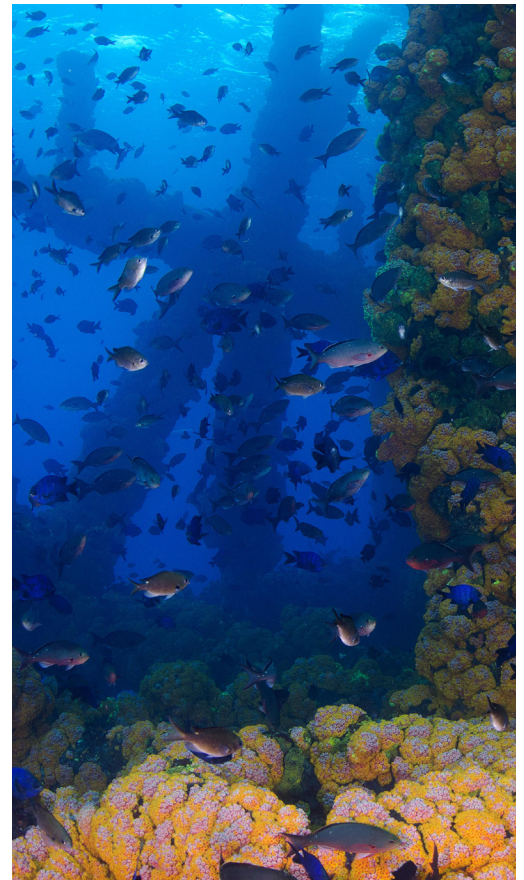


Photo by National Geographic

FISHERIES FOR THE FUTURE

End overfishing in the ocean. End overfishing on all marine fish stocks by 2020, with the goal of restoring overexploited, depleted, and recovering stocks. To achieve this, we must –

- set fishing rules based on the best available science, even if it means foregoing catch in the near term;
- develop fair, equitable, and transparent procedures for allocating fishing rights;
- enforce fishing rules using all available technologies and impose meaningful penalties on violators;
- strengthen fishery management and conservation regimes adopted through regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) and hold RFMOs accountable for management failures;
- eliminate by 2020 fisheries subsidies that contribute to overfishing and overcapacity of fishing fleets; and
- require fishing fleets to use gear and fishing techniques that reduce to an absolute minimum the bycatch of other species, waste, and discards of fish.

Prevent illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. To achieve this, we must –

- build a global community to combat illegal fishing through the Safe Ocean Network;
- reduce incentives for illegal fishing by preventing illegally harvested fish from entering the stream of commerce, consistent with international law, using all tools available;
- achieve global and effective implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement to stop the landing and transshipment of illegally harvested fish in any port;
- improve tracking of fishing vessels by ensuring that by 2020 all large fishing vessels (100 gross tons and above) have obtained an International Maritime Organization (IMO) number – a unique and permanent identifier;
- build capacity to prevent wildlife trafficking of marine species through the regional Wildlife Enforcement Networks and through INTERPOL; and
- enhance and expand the traceability of seafood throughout the global supply chain so that consumers can choose seafood that has been harvested legally and sustainably.

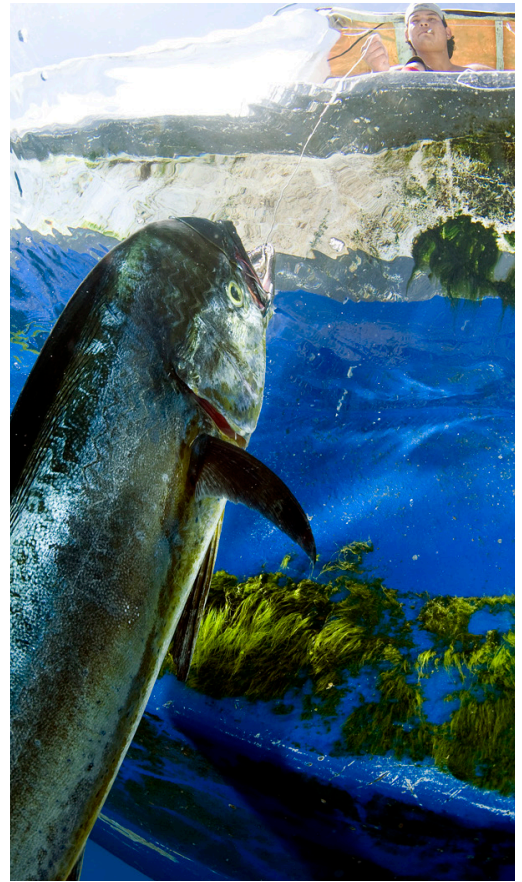


Photo by National Geographic

STEMMING THE TIDE OF OCEAN POLLUTION

Reduce nutrient pollution to the marine environment. Reduce total nutrient pollution from land-based sources to the marine environment by 20 percent by 2025 in order to reduce hypoxic zones and harmful algal blooms.

Reduce marine debris. Significantly reduce the input of debris, especially plastics, into the marine environment so as to achieve a 50 percent reduction of marine debris by 2035.

THE OCEAN IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

Encourage the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions globally by supporting entry into force and implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Stem the increase in ocean acidification by reducing carbon emissions and protecting and restoring blue carbon sinks.

Create worldwide capability to monitor ocean acidification. Achieve worldwide coverage of the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network and significantly increase the number of trained monitors and managers by 2020.

SAFEGUARDING OCEAN PLACES

Create more marine protected areas. By 2020, conserve, and where possible significantly exceed, 10 percent of coastal and marine areas, including through effectively managed marine protected areas and fully protected marine reserves.

Protect coastal ecosystems that provide critical services. Conserve at least 20 percent of coastal ecosystems, such as mangroves, tidal marshes, seagrass beds, and coral reefs, that provide critical ecosystem services by 2020. These ecosystems provide habitat and nursery grounds for many species of marine life, store carbon, and protect vulnerable coastlines against storm surges.



Photo by National Geographic