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UN OWG ADOPTS PROPOSAL FOR GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS INCLUDING OCEANS

Dear Global Ocean Forum colleagues:

We are delighted to let you know that the UN Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals has completed its work, after 13 sessions, with a consensus document, *Introduction and Proposed Goals and Targets on Sustainable Development for the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, putting forth 17 proposed global sustainable development goals (SDGs), including **Goal 14 on Oceans, Seas, and Marine Resources**.



This was in response to the Rio+20 mandate to launch “an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process on sustainable development goals that is open to all stakeholders, with a view to developing global sustainable development goals” (*The Future We Want*, Para 248), and the SDG proposal package will now be submitted for consideration to the 69th UN General Assembly in September 2014. As we have reported in GOF News earlier (see article [Sustainable Development Goal on Oceans and Seas is Becoming a Reality](#)), the Global Ocean Forum has been very active in the SDG process, supporting Member States in pushing for a “stand-alone” goal on oceans and seas.

This edition of GOF News provides a commentary on the overall SDG package; on the ocean goal, targets and means of implementation; on related provisions which can be applied to support oceans and seas targets, in an Addendum; and notes next steps that will take place in the SDG process and the way forward in the post-2015 development agenda.

The Overall SDG Package and Process

All are encouraged to review the SDG package that has been adopted ([click here](#)). The OWG outcome document represents an ambitious and visionary agenda to be achieved by 2030 (earlier in some cases), to protect the earth and to achieve a better life for all. We find the overall SDG package very inspiring. The goals, targets, and means of implementation contained in the 20 page document are all aspirational but also achievable. The document should be read in its entirety since the goals, targets, and means of implementation for each of the 17 goals and 169 targets (including 62 targets on means of implementation) aim to be complementary and mutually reinforcing. As noted in the Introduction to the Proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, “These goals constitute an integrated, indivisible set of global priorities for sustainable development.The goals and targets integrate economic, social, and environmental aspects and recognize their interlinkages in achieving sustainable development in all of its dimensions” (p. 4). In an Addendum, we note how other specific goals, targets, and means of implementation can reinforce and support Goal 14 on oceans, seas, and marine resources.

As members of civil society, we want to praise the work of the OWG, especially the very skillful and decisive guidance of the process by the co-chairs (Mr. Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya, and Mr. Csaba Kőrösi, Permanent Representative of Hungary), the supportive role of UNDESA, and the both visionary and pragmatic stance of Member States participating in the process, and their willingness to compromise to achieve consensus, which has resulted in an excellent proposed guide to sustainable development for the next phase. We also very much appreciated the “open” nature of the Open Working

Group, with the co-chairs and UNDESA encouraging and providing tangible opportunities for civil society input.

Goal 14 on Oceans, Seas, and Marine Resources

It is a big accomplishment, we think, that oceans and seas are one of the SDG global goals. As we had reported earlier (see article [Sustainable Development Goal on Oceans and Seas is Becoming a Reality](#)), initially very few stakeholders believed that a “stand-alone” goal on oceans and seas could be achieved, but then later on, with the leadership, especially, of the Pacific Small Island Developing States and Timor Leste, wide-ranging support for including oceans and seas in the SDGs was garnered from Member States from all parts of the globe.

Below is the verbatim text of Goal 14 on oceans, seas, and marine resources, including targets and means of implementation. For each, we provide a brief commentary in italics. In general, the goal, targets, and means of implementation reinforce and give renewed focus and urgency to existing international prescriptions on oceans and seas emanating from the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), and the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD)(Rio+20).

Proposed Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

14.1: By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, particularly from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution

Reinforces 1992 provisions (17.22, 17.24-17.28), 2002 provision (33), and 2012 provisions (34a & b, 58e, 158, and 163). Emphasizes marine pollution of all kinds, including marine debris (first highlighted by Rio+20) and the ongoing reduction of nutrient pollution. Provides a 2025 time target in contrast to the 2020 time target of the Convention on Biological Diversity’s Aichi Biodiversity Target 8.

14.2: By 2020, sustainably manage, and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience and take action for their restoration, to achieve healthy and productive oceans

Reinforces 1992 provisions (17.5, 17.6, and 17.85), 2002 provisions (21, 30 c & d), and 2012 provisions (158, 165, 166, and 176). It is noteworthy that the target emphasizes both marine and coastal ecosystems, resilience, and restoration actions.

14.3: Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels

Ocean acidification had not been addressed directly in the 1992 and 2002 summits since the phenomenon was not yet well understood. Echoes the 2012 provision (166), with a new emphasis on minimizing and taking action on ocean acidification.

14.4: By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting, and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics

Building on 1992 provisions (17.79, 17.84, 17.86, and 17.87) and 2002 provisions (30 and 31), it reinforces the 2012 commitments (168, 169, 170, and 171). Provides a 2020 time target replacing the 2015 time target of the 2002 Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. New time target is aligned with the Convention on Biological Diversity’s Aichi Biodiversity Target 6. Echoes the 2012 provision (168) to restore stock levels at maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics and emphasizes the effective regulation of harvesting.

14.5: By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on best available scientific information

Building on 1992 provisions (15.5g, 17.7, 17.8, 17.85, and 17.87) and 2002 provisions (32 and 44), it reinforces the 2012 commitments (177 and 198). Provides a 2020 time target in line with the Convention on Biological Diversity's Aichi Biodiversity Target 11.

14.6: By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, and eliminate subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing, and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiation

Reinforces 2002 provision (32f) and 2012 provision (173). Time target is aligned with the Convention on Biological Diversity's Aichi Biodiversity Target 3.

14.7: By 2030 increase the economic benefits to SIDS and LDCs from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism

While building on past 2002 (31 and 58) and 2012 (174 and 175) provisions, this target represents an important new emphasis by clearly calling for an increase of economic benefits from marine resources to developing countries and SIDS by 2030, with specific reference to three sectors—fisheries, aquaculture, and tourism.

MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

14.a: increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacities and transfer marine technology taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology, in order to improve ocean health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular SIDS and LDCs

While building on the capacity development provisions of the 1992 (17.40, 17.43, 17.68, 17.69, 17.92, 17.94, 17.95, 17.120a, and 17.136) and 2002 summits (10f, 30g, 32b, 33a & b, 36, and 58c), and building on the 2012 capacity development provisions emphasizing the IOC Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology (120 and 160), this Means of Implementation, for the first time, emphasizes the importance of the enhanced contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular SIDS and LDCs. It is important to note that the ability to study, collect, and sustainably use marine biodiversity resources is one of the major gaps in capacity in SIDS and LDCs.

14.b: Provide access of small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets

Reinforces 1992 provisions (17.81) and reiterates the 2012 provision (175). Does not mention subsistence fisherfolk, women, local communities, and indigenous people.

14.c: Ensure the full implementation of international law, as reflected in UNCLOS for states parties to it, including, where applicable, existing regional and international regimes for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by their parties

Building on the 1992 provisions (17.117 and 17.120a), 2002 provisions (158-160, 162, and 165) of increasing cooperation on all levels, and including the 2012 provisions (75, 76, 159, 185) on implementing the obligations under UNCLOS, this Means of Implementation, broadly emphasizes the full implementation of UNCLOS and of other existing regional and international regimes for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources

Other Relevant Goals, Targets, and Means of Implementation

In addition to Goal 14, many of the targets in the other SDGs can reinforce and add additional dimensions to the ocean and seas SDG, and can be applied in a complementary and mutually reinforcing manner. As noted earlier, the goals constitute “an integrated, indivisible, set of global priorities;” moreover, “targets are defined as aspirational global targets, with each government setting its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition, but taking into account national circumstances” (Introduction, p. 4).

In an Addendum, at the end of this article, we provide a listing of other goals, targets, and means of implementation which, in our view, are most relevant to oceans, seas, and marine resources, also including, for each, a short commentary in italics.

Next Steps

As noted, the SDG package is a proposed package for action by the UN General Assembly. Leading up to the start of the 69th UNGA, a High-Level Stocktaking Event will take place 8-9 September 2014, where the President of the General Assembly will deliver a summary of the post-2015 processes and consultations. The summary will inform the UN Secretary General’s synthesis report on the post-2015 development agenda to be released in November 2014. Intergovernmental negotiations will commence in September during the meetings of the 69th UNGA, and will continue until August 2015, where revisions and changes to the package could take place. The adoption of the set of global goals, targets, and means of implementation will take place at a high level summit in September 2015.

It is, therefore, important to continue to articulate the support of Member States and civil society for the SDGs, especially for Goal 14 on Oceans and Seas.

Following action by the UN General Assembly, there will be a need to develop precise indicators for each goal, target, and means of implementation. More on this at a later date.

With best regards,

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Global Ocean Forum

ADDEDUM. Other Relevant Sustainable Development Goals, Targets, and Means of Implementation

As discussed, in addition to Goal 14, many of the targets in the other SDGs can reinforce and add additional dimensions to the ocean and seas SDG, and can be applied in a complementary and mutually reinforcing manner. Below, we provide a listing of other sustainable development goals, targets, and means of implementation, which, in our view, are most relevant to oceans, seas, and marine resources, also including, for each, a short commentary in italics. Please note that we are focusing on those we deem to be *most* relevant, other goals and targets are applicable as well.

Proposed goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere

1.5 - by 2030 build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations, and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social, and environmental shocks and disasters

This is especially applicable to island and coastal communities in over 150 coastal and island nations who will suffer climate-related impacts such as stronger hurricanes/typhoons/cyclones, sea level rise, ocean acidification, and changes in ocean circulation and salinity.

Proposed goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture

2.3 - by 2030 double the agricultural productivity and the incomes of small-scale food producers, particularly women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets, and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment

Allows for small-scale fishing communities to enhance their economic status and retain their cultural identity

Proposed goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

6.3 - by 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater, and increasing recycling and safe reuse by x% globally

Chemicals and garbage make their way to the ocean, degrading the quality of the coastal and marine environments

6.5 - by 2030 implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate

Water resources are linked and better coordination will enhance coastal and ocean communities as well as improve the health and resilience of oceans and seas

6.6 - by 2020 protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes

Ecosystems are linked and restoration of these ecosystems (especially wetlands, rivers, and lakes) will enhance the prospects of achieving healthy and resilient oceans and seas

Proposed goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all

7.a - by 2030 enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technologies, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, and advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technologies

Relates to economic gains by investment in renewable offshore energy (wind, tidal, etc) and reduction in the use of fossil fuels will have beneficial effects on the health and resilience of oceans and seas

Proposed goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

8.9 - by 2030 devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products

Coastal and marine tourism is one of the most important tourism sectors; this provision may help to boost employment and sustain the cultural identity of coastal and island communities

Proposed goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

9.1 – develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and trans-border infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all

Relevant to ports and other coastal infrastructure in coastal and island communities

Proposed goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

10.6 – ensure enhanced representation and voice of developing countries in decision making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions

Relevant to the needs of developing countries especially in relation to financing to support sustainable management of ocean and coastal resources

Proposed goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

11.5 – by 2030 significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of affected people and decrease by y% the economic losses relative to GDP caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with the focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations

Relevant to vulnerable coastal and island communities affected by disasters

Proposed goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

12.4 – by 2020 achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle in accordance with agreed international frameworks and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment

Relevant, especially to vulnerable coastal and island ecosystems and communities whose health and livelihood could be adversely affected by chemicals and waste

Proposed goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

13.1 – strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate related hazards and natural disasters in all countries

Responding to climate change in a timely manner will lessen future economic losses, loss of cultural identity of climate change displaced peoples, and environmental impacts of climate change on coastal and island communities and the marine environment

13.2 – integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning

Planning for and creating policies and strategies to combat climate change will lessen future economic losses, loss of cultural identity of climate change displaced peoples, and environmental impacts of climate change on coastal and island communities and the marine environment

13.3 – improve education, awareness raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction, and early warning

Increasing the awareness of climate change impacts in vulnerable coastal and island communities can help in the preservation of life as well as reduce future economic losses and environmental impacts from climate change

13.a – implement the commitment undertaken by developed country Parties to the UNFCCC to a goal of mobilizing jointly USD100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible

Adequate financing will help coastal and island communities to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change

Proposed goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

15.1 – by 2020 ensure conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements

Ecosystems are interlinked (especially wetlands) and greater health of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems will contribute to healthier oceans and seas

15.6 - ensure fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources, and promote appropriate access to genetic resources

Technology to sample and utilize marine genetic resources is rapidly increasing; thus access to and fair and equitable sharing of these resources is important for many nations (this relates to 14.a)

15.8 - by 2020 introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems, and control or eradicate the priority species

Invasive species can ruin ecosystems and cause native species to become extinct, leading to economic consequences for coastal and island communities, which depend on fishing, tourism, etc.

Proposed goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

17.3 – mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources

Relates to financing of sustainable development for healthy and resilient oceans and seas and coastal and island communities

17.6 – enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation, and enhance knowledge sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, particularly at UN level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism when agreed

Knowledge sharing may boost economic returns and help enhance skills and education for integrated, ecosystem-based management of oceans and seas

17.9 – enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South, and triangular cooperation

Enhanced skills and education of coastal and island communities may enhance economic development related to the marine environment and resources

17.16 – enhance the global partnership for sustainable development complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources to support the achievement of sustainable development goals in all countries, particularly developing countries

Global partnerships for sustainable development involving multi-stakeholder partnerships, are especially important for oceans and seas since these typically involve common pool, transboundary resources

The Global Ocean Forum, organized at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, works with national ocean leaders from over 110 countries, to advance the global agenda on oceans, coasts, and small island developing States through policy analyses, multistakeholder dialogues, and public education and outreach. The Global Ocean Forum is hosted at the Gerard J. Mangone Center for Marine Policy in the University of Delaware's College of Earth, Ocean, and Environment.

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