

# The Ocean Super Year Declaration

MAY 2021

Ocean health is intrinsically linked to human wealth and health. The interconnected nature of the ocean, global economy and society underscores the interconnectedness of critical multilateral international fora taking place this year: the UN Food Systems Summit; the Convention on Biological Diversity COP15; UN Climate Change COP26; the G7 Summit; the G20 Summit; and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit. We also recognize the importance of the commencement in 2021 of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. While we want to underline the importance of ocean health for food security, livelihoods, biodiversity and climate, we recognize that these issues are deeply intertwined.

The ocean holds great potential to deliver global benefits that not only contribute to the targets and goals of these fora but also contribute significantly to overall human health and well-being across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We understand that sustainable blue solutions require inclusive and just approaches if they are to be successful, with Indigenous Peoples and local communities playing a pivotal role in sustainable ocean management and protection. Equally, gender parity in solutions for a thriving ocean is essential for a meaningful and lasting transformation. In this Ocean Super Year, we call for commitment and urgent action from global leaders to make the bold changes necessary for lasting ocean health – and, ultimately, human well-being and survival.

Friends of Ocean Action is a coalition of over 65 ocean leaders who are fast-tracking solutions to the most pressing challenges facing the ocean. Its members – the Friends – come from business, civil society, international organizations, science and technology. The group is co-chaired by Ambassador Peter Thomson, the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean, and Isabella Lövin, Former Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden. The Friends have organized the highly influential Virtual Ocean Dialogues of 2020 and 2021.

The mission of Friends of Ocean Action is to use the knowledge, means and influence of the Friends to help the international community take the urgent steps needed to “conserve and sustainably use our ocean, seas and marine resources for sustainable development” (SDG14). It is in this spirit that we make the following Declaration, calling on the world's governments and all relevant stakeholders to work towards achieving the following goals at key international fora of relevance to the ocean throughout this year – the postponed Ocean Super Year.

## **World Trade Organization (WTO) Special Ministerial Conference**

July 2021

We call on all relevant parties to:

- Welcome and support WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala's decision to call for a special ministerial conference of the WTO on 15 July 2021 to conclude ongoing negotiations for the elimination of certain fisheries subsidies that contribute to overfishing, overcapacity and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, in line with SDG14 Target 6
- Call on WTO ministers to attend the special ministerial conference on 15 July and secure a sufficient level of ambition and effectiveness to establish the environmental and social integrity of a WTO Fisheries Subsidies Elimination Agreement

## **Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)**

August 2021 (tbc)

We call on all relevant parties to:

- Reaffirm marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) as critical for the health of our ocean, people and planet
- Support the adoption of a robust, binding High Seas Treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction to ensure that:
  - sustainable area-based management provisions allow for the designation and effective management, monitoring and control of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the high seas
  - benefits arising from the sustainable exploitation of deep-sea marine genetic resources are fairly and equitably shared
  - Environmental Impact Assessments are carried out and taken into account to prevent irreversible damage to high seas marine biodiversity
  - effective provisions are in place for scientific cooperation, capacity building, information exchange and technical assistance for developing countries

## **UN Food Systems Summit**

September 2021

We call on governments to:

- Recognize the vital contributions of “blue foods” (aquatic foods) in achieving food security and building healthy, nature-positive and resilient food systems and believe that blue foods must be fully integrated into the Summit's agenda and outcomes
- Embrace the priorities for a sustainable blue food system that are set out in SDG14, including to end overfishing and the harmful subsidies that drive it, to conserve and restore productive marine and coastal ecosystems, and to ensure that small-scale fishers have access to resources and markets



- Integrate blue foods into the major action initiatives developed for the Summit, including seafood in programmes to reduce food waste, building blue foods into dietary guidelines and school feeding programmes, and ensuring that initiatives for food system innovation develop opportunities for aquaculture that can provide affordable nutrition and sustainable, equitable livelihoods

## **Conference on Biological Diversity (CBD) Conference of the Parties 15 (COP 15)**

October 2021

We call on all relevant parties to:

- Support calls for adoption of the 30x30 target by parties in the CBD's post-2020 framework, to protect and conserve by 2030 at least 30% of the ocean through a combination of highly and fully protected Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures that deliver comparable benefits for biodiversity
- Work to ensure areas designated for protection appropriately and effectively engage local communities during planning, designation, implementation and enforcement so that management meets the needs of ecosystems and people

## **Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) 2021**

November 2021

We call on Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation economies to:

- Commit to a concerted regional effort to prevent and combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing across the Pacific, delivering on the ambitions of the APEC Roadmap on Combating IUU Fishing, including through the elimination of harmful fisheries subsidies
- Ratify and implement the UN Food and Agriculture Organization's Agreement on Port State Measures

## **UNFCCC Climate Change Conference (COP 26)**

November 2021

We call on all relevant parties to:

- Raise ambition by aligning nationally determined contributions (NDCs) with the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global temperature increases to 1.5°C and the objective of net-zero economies by 2050
- Raise ambition by enhancing resilience including through national adaptation plans and finance for ocean-related action
- Halt the loss, increase the protection and the extent, and improve the condition of coastal and marine ecosystems, in particular the critical ecosystems of mangroves, seagrasses, salt marshes, kelp beds, sand dunes, reefs and deep ocean ecosystems

- Recognize and account for the value, importance and limits of nature-based solutions as a priority for adaptation of coastal and marine systems and the interface between land and ocean in action on nature-based resilience.
- In advance of COP26, commit to NDCs that include sustainable blue economy measures such as scaling up investments in offshore clean and renewable energy, the greening of shipping, sustainable seafood production, nature-based solutions, and accelerate their implementation
- Support adaptation measures that not only protect the ocean but also prepare the most vulnerable communities for climate change impacts, understanding that low-income communities tend to rely more directly on nature than wealthier communities

## UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development

2021-2030

We call on all relevant parties to:

- Identify gaps in ocean knowledge for sustainable development and build the scientific capacity and knowledge-generation mechanisms to deliver science-based solutions
- Liberate ocean data across public and private sectors to enable the use of science to address the ocean's most pressing challenges
- Invest in programmes to reduce inequitable distribution in research capacity, enabling more countries, researchers and communities to contribute to a global knowledge base for action
- Work to increase diversity, equity and inclusion in marine science, enhance ocean literacy and empower the next generation of ocean professionals to pursue the objectives of the UN Decade of Ocean Science and lead the way towards a sustainable ocean beyond 2030.

## Signed by the following members of Friends of Ocean Action

### **Diva Amon**

Founder and Director, SpeSeas, Trinidad and Tobago

### **Thomas Thune Andersen**

Chairman of the Board of Directors, Lloyd's Register, UK

### **Marc Benioff**

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Salesforce, USA

### **Claes Berglund**

Director, Public Affairs and Sustainability, Stena, Sweden

### **Dona Bertarelli**

Special Advisor for the Blue Economy, UNCTAD, Switzerland

### **Richard Branson**

Founder, Virgin Group, UK

### **Maria Damanaki**

Principal Advisor, SYSTEMIQ, UK; Principal Advisor, The Paradise International Foundation, China

### **Minna Epps**

Director, Global Marine and Polar Programme, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Switzerland

### **Patricia Espinosa Cantellano**

Executive Secretary, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Mexico

### **Danny Faure**

Former President of the Seychelles and African Union Champion on the Blue Economy

### **Daniela V. Fernandez**

Founder & CEO, Sustainable Ocean Alliance, USA



**Andrew Forrest AO**

Chairman and Founder, Fortescue Metals Group, Fortescue Future Industries, and Munderoo Foundation, Australia

**Kerstin S. Forsberg**

Co-Founder and Director, Planeta Océano, Peru

**Katherine Garrett-Cox**

CEO, Gulf International Bank Asset Management, UK

**Jingjing Guo**

Olympic diving champion; Ambassador, Key Connect; Ocean Program Director, Global Green Technology Center (GGTC); China

**Wakao Hanaoka**

Founder and CEO, Seafood Legacy, Japan

**Naoko Ishii**

Professor and Director, Center for Global Commons, University of Tokyo, Japan

**Nina Jensen**

CEO, REV Ocean, Norway

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**Pascal Lamy**

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**Jim Leape**

Co-Director, Center for Ocean Solutions, Stanford University, USA

**Laura Liswood**

Secretary General, Council of Women World Leaders, USA

**Isabella Lövin**

Former Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden

**Árni Mathiesen**

Senior Adviser, Iceland Ocean Cluster; Chairman of the Board, Better Transport, Iceland

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**Enric Sala**

Explorer-in-Residence, National Geographic Society, USA

**M. Sanjayan**

CEO, Conservation International, USA

**Atsushi Sunami**

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**John Tanzer**

Global Ocean Practice Leader, WWF International, Australia

**Peter Thomson**

UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for the Ocean

**Asha de Vos**

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**Jan-Gunnar Winther**

Director, National Center of Ocean and the Arctic, Norway