Announced during the Sustainable Development Impact Summit 2019 and launched at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2020, UpLink is a digital crowd-engagement platform that connects entrepreneurs and champions with impactful solutions making progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Its goal is to link up the best SDG innovators to a growing network of experts and decision-makers who can implement the change needed for the next decade. As a global platform, UpLink responds to the demand for an inclusive approach to SDG action by targeting the creativity and expertise of grassroots innovators who can meaningfully contribute to the delivery of the SDGs.

Friends of Ocean Action and UpLink have partnered together to create a dedicated space for ocean innovators: UpLink Ocean. Through its challenges and collaborative action groups, UpLink Ocean aspires to empower anyone with impact-oriented ideas and solutions that address the most pressing challenges facing the ocean.
PHASE I

In Phase I, Friends of Ocean Action collaborated with UpLink for the inaugural Ocean Solution Sprint, which received over 90 submissions. Upon selection by an expert committee, 12 solutions progressed into a semi-final and then were presented at a final pitch competition in front of a panel of judges at the Virtual Ocean Dialogues. Each innovation offered a unique and creative approach to combating challenges facing the oceans – from drones and satellites to monitor ocean health and illegal fishing, to reusing plastic waste to build boats for local fishing communities, to containing sandblasted paint from oil rig structures to prevent micro-plastic pollution, and creating artificial coral reefs through art.

Find out more in the Friends of Ocean Action Phase I Impact Report.

PHASE II

UpLink Ocean is continuing its work with partners to identify the best in ocean innovation through its ocean challenges. These include challenges on restoring, protecting and investing in the ocean, blue food, and blue carbon.

The innovators identified from these challenges will be supported through a tailored programme to provide them with the resources needed to accelerate and scale up their solutions. This cohort programme is co-designed by UpLink’s impact partners and organized around four main pillars:

- **Visibility** – providing increased public exposure via the Forum’s digital media channels including social media
- **Access** – providing opportunities to participate in select Forum and UpLink Impact Partner events, communities and projects
- **Connection** – facilitating introductions to organizations and experts in the network of the Forum, the Friends and UpLink Impact Partners
- **Community building** – strengthening the innovators cohort community and integrating innovators into UpLink and relevant Forum communities

UpLink Ocean will serve as a broader networking platform that can connect communities and actors and therefore support the other pillars of Friends of Ocean Action.

Find out more about the winners of the challenge on restoring, protecting and investing in the ocean here and learn more about the cohort from the blue food challenge here.

About Friends of Ocean Action

Friends of Ocean Action is a unique, informal group of over 70 global leaders from a range of sectors who are fast-tracking scalable solutions to the most pressing challenges facing the ocean. The Friends focus their attention on achieving the targets of the Sustainable Development Goal for Life Below Water, SDG14, through five key and interconnected impact pillars – Creating a Digital Ocean, Building a Resilient Ocean, Activating Ocean Finance, Nourishing Billions and UpLink Ocean – as well as cross-cutting themes of a just ocean and advancing wider sustainable development through ocean action.

For more information, contact us by email at ocean@weforum.org, visit us at friendsfoceanaction.org and follow us on LinkedIn and Twitter @FriendsofOcean.