

UN ESCAP inputs to the Background Note for UN Ocean Conference 2020  
DRAFT 29.10.2019

- u SDG14 and related activities are fundamental to the realization of the 2030 agenda, as it is one of the main components of the biosphere. The Pacific Ocean basin is the largest and deepest on earth, providing food and nutrition, connectivity, employment, biodiversity, economic development, and even identity to millions of peoples in the region. Nonetheless, the current patterns of human and corporate behavior, relying on the use and abuse of the ocean, critically jeopardizes the sustainability of marine ecosystems and the very existence of the ocean for future generations. Inaction hinders

SDG3), including the most vulnerable communities. Women disproportionately rely on jobs in the fishing and food-processing industry. Therefore, the interlinkage with gender equality (SDG5) cannot be ignored. Violations of human rights have been reported in the fishing industry, with different cases of forced work, human trafficking and slavery (Target 8.7). Furthermore, fish stocks and marine ecosystems are being jeopardized by overfishing and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU). Additional efforts must be made to reach sustainability in the fishing industry and to secure adequate nutrition in our region. While some progress has been made to combat illegal, unreported and



on the ocean and no forum for the regional exchange of information and best practices on integrated ocean statistics and policies. This prevents evidence-based programming and optimal use of resources. SIDS and coastal member States in Asia-Pacific look to ESCAP to strengthen their capacity to identify and meet needs and close data gaps to achieve SDG 14 and others. In 2018, ESCAP initiated a project to strengthen the capacity of member States to achieve SDG14. The project is enhancing partnerships among international, regional and national stakeholders focusing on an agreed statistical framework for the standardization of ocean-related statistics and their application to the



marine pollution, sustainable fisheries and sustainable transport. Two Coalitions are under development to convert the political momentum into action: an Asia-Pacific

protection of the ocean (with the United Nations Environment Program); and the Pacific Ocean Data Coalition, which serve to foster fast-track solutions to the challenges to the Pacific Ocean through (i) the joint promotion of open data sharing, building an accessible and harmonized data platform across sub-regional, regional and global level; and (ii) sharing of good practices and capacity building on ocean data for Asia and the Pacific.

- Partnerships with the private sector and civil society: Engaging the private sector in the delivery of the SDG14 is essential. As governments can provide regulations, the end-users of the ocean will be citizens and companies that must comply with the regulatory framework. For example, regulating marine transport requires commitment and partnerships with shipping companies. Reaching sustainable fisheries demands appropriate regulation, enforcement and compliance by fishing companies and fishermen. Achieving successful partnerships will facilitate achieving SDG14. This includes the support and guidance from the UN Global Compact through its regional networks, but also, the support from governments to captivate corporate responsibility and financing to catalyze action. Promoting the engagement of civil society in decision-making through participatory and consultation mechanisms is also vital.

- Risk Reduction (ESBN) is working on three ways in which the private sector can help augment ocean data. One, it has engaged commercial ships, operating in Pacific waters around South-East Asia. By leveraging on precise Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS), these ships can detect and report sea surface motions. The provision of such data in real time is vital especially for tsunami monitoring and timely early warning. Second, the ESBN Task Force is studying the possibility of using stationary oil and gas platforms as sea-surface motions, once again vital information for tsunami monitoring. Third, ESBN is supporting the Joint Task Force led by three UN agencies (ITU/WMO/UNESCO-IOC), to turn future submarine telecommunication cables into ocean-spanning observation networks by equipping them with sensors that could also provide real-time data for ocean and climate monitoring including for seismicity related sea-level movements. A central feature of the smart cables concept is that it brings together and addresses the two key challenges of the 21st century: the increasing pressure for global connectivity and the urgent need for coherent concerted global effort

