IOC Circular Letter No. 2480
(Available in English only)

To: IOC Member States (main national co-ordinating bodies for liaison with the IOC)

cc.: Permanent Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC Member States
National Commissions for UNESCO in IOC Member States
Officers of the IOC and Major Subsidiary Bodies

Subject: Call for Nomination -- UN Secretary-General Oceans Compact Advisory Group

The UN Secretary-General launched his Oceans Compact in August 2012 (ref. IOC Circular Letter, 2448), aimed at protecting the oceans and the people whose livelihoods depend on it. This initiative intends to increase coordination of efforts regarding ocean protection within the UN System. It will also provide a platform to help countries protect the oceans' natural resources, restore their full food production to help peoples whose livelihoods depend on the sea, and increase awareness and knowledge about the management of the oceans.

The “Compact” will lead to a result-oriented Action Plan that will benefit from the guidance of a dedicated Ocean Advisory Group. In this respect, I am pleased to forward a letter from the Chair of the High Level Committee on Programme (United Nations), Mr Achim Steiner, on behalf of the UN Secretary-General, to invite Member States of the United Nations and Specialized Agencies to submit names for possible nomination to the Ocean Compact Advisory Group.

The Oceans Compact Advisory Group will be composed of 20 to 30 members, no two of whom shall be nationals of the same State, and will include approximately 10-15 government representatives, and approximately 10-15 high-level policy makers, scientists, ocean experts of recognized standing, private sector representatives, and representatives of non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations. The detailed terms of reference of the Oceans Compact Advisory Group are attached to this letter.

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.../...
The members of the *Oceans Compact* Advisory Group will be selected on the basis of equitable geographic representation from the five UN regional groups, competency, personal qualifications and experience particularly in ocean affairs, and gender balance.

Proposed nominations (consisting of contact details and *Curriculum Vitae* of the candidate) should be sent by **15 April 2013** by electronic mail to: oceanscompact@un.org.

I would also like to inform you that a time-bound administrative support group comprising of IOC-UNESCO, UNDP and UNEP has been formed to provide secretarial assistance to the work of the *Oceans Compact* Advisory Group in the coming months.

With the assurances of my highest consideration, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

[signed]

Wendy Watson-Wright
Executive Secretary, IOC
Assistant Director-General, UNESCO

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**Enclosures (3):**

- Letter from Chair of High Level Committee on Programmes (20 March 2013)
- Terms of Reference of the *Oceans Compact* Advisory Group (OCAG)
- *The Oceans Compact, Healthy oceans for prosperity* (also available in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish at http://www.un.org/Depts/los/oceanCompact/oceansCompact.htm)
20 March 2013

Excellency

On behalf of the Secretary General, I have the pleasure as Chair of the High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP), United Nations System Chief executives Board for Coordination, to invite you to submit the names, contact details and Curriculum Vitae of candidates for the Oceans Compact Advisory Group (OCAG).

The OCAG’s main role is that of providing advice to the United Nations Secretary-General and Chief Executives Board on the content of the Action Plan and how best to implement the Oceans Compact, including practical issues such as financing. The OCAG will also provide advice and expert guidance on the tasks to be undertaken to develop the Action Plan foreseen in the Oceans Compact. The Oceans Advisory Group is not a policy setting mechanism and will not provide advice on policy directions.

The Oceans Compact Advisory Group will be composed of 20 to 30 members, no two of whom shall be nationals of the same State, and will include approximately 10-15 government representatives, and approximately 10-15 high-level policy-makers, scientists, ocean experts of recognized standing, private sector representatives, and representatives of non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations.

The selection criteria for nominees are:

a) a university degree preferably related to ocean affairs or sustainable development including social and economic aspects is desirable;

b) All nominees should have relevant expertise and qualifications in a field related to ocean affairs, with at least 5 years at the international level;

c) Familiarity with the United Nations System is desirable;

d) Internationally recognized skills and experience in ocean leadership; and

e) Experience working in multi-disciplinary ocean projects or programmes
The members of the Oceans Compact Advisory Group will be selected on the basis of equitable geographic representation from the five UN regional groups, competency, personal qualifications and experience particularly in ocean affairs, and gender balance. Executive Heads of UN system organizations and entities with a mandate in ocean affairs will participate as ex officio members in the Oceans Compact Advisory Group.

I hereby invite you to nominate candidates for the Oceans Compact Advisory Group by 15 April 2013 to oceanscompact@un.org

I remain available to engage with you on the Secretary-General’s Oceans Compact. Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration.

[Signature]

Achim Steiner
Chair: High-level Committee on Programmes
Oceans Compact Advisory Group

Terms of Reference

Background

1. On 12 August 2012 the Secretary-General launched an Oceans Compact that would commit the wide United Nations system to furthering “healthy oceans for prosperity”. The outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference were also incorporated into the Compact. The Oceans Compact highlights three objectives: protecting people and improving the health of the oceans; protecting, recovering and sustaining the oceans’ environment and natural resources; and strengthening ocean knowledge and the management of oceans.

2. The Secretary-General shaped his Oceans Compact to promote system wide coherence in the delivery of ocean-related mandates and encourage synergies within the United Nations system. As the next step in the implementation of his Oceans Compact, the Secretary-General will form a time-bound Oceans Compact Advisory Group (OCAG) that reflects the widest possible range of stakeholders and expertise as well as equitable geographic representation.

Scope

3. The Ocean Compact highlights that the role of the OCAG is to:
   - Facilitate stakeholder dialogues;
   - Catalyze support for concrete actions related to oceans;
   - Advise on strategies for resource mobilization; and
   - Catalyze system-wide cooperation and arrangements.

4. The OCAG’s main role is that of providing advice to the United Nations Secretary-General and Chief Executives Board on the content of the Action Plan and how best to implement the Oceans Compact, including practical issues such as financing. The OCAG will also provide advice and expert guidance on the tasks to be undertaken to develop the Action Plan foreseen in the Oceans Compact. The Oceans Advisory Group is not a policy setting mechanism and will not provide advice on policy directions.

Composition of the Oceans Compact Advisory Group (OCAG)

5. The OCAG will be composed of 20 to 30 members, no two of whom shall be nationals of the same State, and will include approximately 10-15 government representatives, and approximately 10-15 high-level policy-makers, scientists, ocean experts of recognized standing, private sector representatives, and representatives of non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations. The members of the OCAG will be selected on the basis of equitable geographic representation from the five UN regional groups, competency, personal qualifications and experience particularly in ocean affairs, and gender balance (Annex 1). Executive Heads of UN
system organizations and entities with a mandate in ocean affairs will participate as members ex officio in the OCAG.

**Nominations to the OCAG** (see Annex 1 for detailed description)

6. Candidates for the OCAG can be proposed by a) Governments for nomination by proposed by each of the five UN regions (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Western Europe and others), and b) the United Nations System Agencies with ocean-related mandates. Each region is to be represented by at least two members in the OCAG.

7. The UN Secretary-General will make the final selection and appointment of the members of the OCAG. When constituting the Advisory Group, the Secretary-General will consult with UN member States and the Chair of the HLCP, as appropriate.

8. The selection criteria for nominees are:
   a) a university degree preferably related to ocean affairs or sustainable development including social and economic aspects is desirable
   b) All nominees should have relevant expertise and qualifications in a field related to ocean affairs, with at least 5 years at the international level.
   c) Familiarity with the United Nations System is desirable
   d) Internationally recognized skills and experience in ocean leadership; and
   e) Experience working in multi-disciplinary ocean projects or programmes

9. The Support Group, described in paragraph 18 below will receive the curricula vitae of all nominees.

**Organization of work**

10. The UN Secretary-General will appoint the two co-Chairs selected from the 20 to 30 members of the OCAG, one of whom will be from a developing country, and the other from a developed country.

11. The functions of the co-Chairs include the following:
   a) Co-presiding over meetings of the OCAG;
   b) Liaising with the Office of the Secretary-General on behalf of the OCAG;
   c) Representing the OCAG at relevant meetings and briefings on the Oceans Compact Action Plan.

12. Members of the OCAG will serve in their expert personal capacity and will provide advice to the Secretary-General.

13. Members of the OCAG will serve for the period necessary to finalize the Action Plan and Resource Mobilization Strategy or as determined by the Secretary-General.

14. Members of the OCAG will be accountable to and report through the OCAG Co-Chairs to the Secretary-General. Through the Co-Chairs OCAG members will work closely with the UN Member States and relevant UN system organizations and entities, and in consultation as needed with other entities and individuals relevant to implementing the Oceans Compact, with a view to collecting information and generating ideas relevant to the work of the OCAG, and identifying possible sources of funding to implement the Action Plan as input to the Resource Mobilization Plan. To the greatest extent possible, use will be made of existing mechanisms and occasions for knowledge sharing.
15. The OCAG will be convened at the discretion of the Secretary-General. The OCAG will meet, as necessary, primarily by means of telecommunication. In principle and as agreed at the HLCP meeting of the 3rd and 4th of October 2012 the OCAG will hold its first face-to-face meeting to provide input into the scope of the Action Plan, overall structure and content, as well as recommendations for an OC Action Plan resource mobilization strategy. A second face-to-face meeting is also proposed to finalize the draft Action Plan after input from Member States and relevant UN system organizations and entities has been considered.

16. The OCAG will adopt its own Rules of Procedure.

Time line

17. Please see Annex 2 for the timeline.

Logistical and Administrative Support:

18. A Support Group of UN agencies/programmes composed of UNEP, UNDP, UNESCO-IOC, but not limited to, will provide logistical and administrative support to the OCAG. This interim time-bound Support Group will work closely with the OCAG, the CORE Group of UN entities engaged in implementing the Road Map (see Annex 1) and other UN entities as appropriate. It will also report to the Head of High Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP).
Annex 1: Nominations

A. There will be a call to Member States and UN specialized agencies, programmes, funds and bodies, and other competent international organizations to nominate experts to be considered to serve on the Advisory Group. They can submit names of experts for consideration either representing government or one of the following member groups:

- Government representatives,
- High-level policy-makers,
- Scientists,
- Ocean experts,
- Private sector representatives, and
- Representatives of non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations,

B. Representatives of the UN system organizations and entities\(^1\) currently initiating the formulation of the Action Plan (Core Group) will do the first screening of the CV’s received by the Support Group to ensure they meet all or most of the criteria noted in paragraph 8.

C. The Core Group will rank each nomination using a score sheet [see attached example] based on the criteria above. The total scores will be used to short-list the nominations to be submitted to the SG’s office for the final selection. The top five scores in each regional grouping and in each expertise grouping will be short-listed. This will result in a pool of 50 experts made up of 25 government representatives and 25 representatives for the other categories of members. The process of selection will be done on the basis of consultations and arrived at by consensus by the Core Group.

D. The SG’s office will then make the final selection upon recommendation of the Core Group, in consultation with Member States and the Chair of HLCP as appropriate, with due regard for equitable geographic representation, gender balance and expertise.

\(^1\) FAO, IMO, OLA-DOALOS, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO-IOC, World Bank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Lead Agency/Support</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Definition of Terms of Reference (TORs) and constitution of the Oceans Compact Advisory Group (OCAG)</strong>&lt;br&gt;TORs cover such issues as:&lt;br&gt;1. accountability and reporting to Member States,&lt;br&gt;2. criteria and process for nominating and selecting members of the Oceans Compact Advisory Group from the various stakeholders defined in the Compact&lt;br&gt;3. Leadership of OCAG&lt;br&gt;4. rules of procedure for the Advisory Group&lt;br&gt;5. Provide estimated costs for running the OCAG and possible sources of funding (cash and in-kind)**&lt;br&gt;</td>
<td>UNEP (lead) UNESCO-IOC, IMO, World Bank, FAO, UNDP, OLA/DOALOS</td>
<td>Last quarter of 2012</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Identifying the administrative, coordination and financial support for running the Oceans Compact Advisory Group</strong>&lt;br&gt;An agency will need to be nominated to support the AG in holding meetings and preparing and disseminating documents emanating from the OCAG</td>
<td>Support Group – UNEP, UNDP, UNESCO-IOC</td>
<td>February 2013</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Periodical &amp; informal Briefings with Member States and major stakeholders’ groups</strong>&lt;br&gt;Hold an informal briefing to inform Member States and major groups; sharing of OCAG TORs and the process that will be used for developing the Action Plan</td>
<td>Executive Office of the SG</td>
<td>After CEB meeting or after HLCP meeting</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Preparative calendar of awareness raising events for the stakeholders</strong>&lt;br&gt;In parallel to the formulation of the Action plan, a calendar of events for engaging stakeholders including high-level ones developed to raise awareness of the Compact. Events facilitating raising awareness of the Oceans Compact and Action Plan implementation identified. Exact details for campaigns etc. will be done in consultation with DPI</td>
<td>Department of Public Information (DPI)</td>
<td>January-May 2013</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Draft of the elements of the Action Plan</strong>&lt;br&gt;A document describing the elements of the Action Plan would be prepared in advance by the CORE Group</td>
<td>UNESCO-IOC leads on first draft</td>
<td>March/April 2013</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Convening and hosting of the first OCAG meeting</strong>&lt;br&gt;After OCAG constituted, first meeting held and members provide further input into the scope, overall structure and content of the Action Plan, and identifying possible funding sources for resource mobilization</td>
<td>UNDP &amp; UNESCO-IOC jointly</td>
<td>Early 2013 (need to be flexible)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td><strong>Informal briefing to Member States</strong>&lt;br&gt;</td>
<td>Head of HLCP</td>
<td>March 2013</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td><strong>Preparing the first draft of the Action Plan and a draft Resource</strong>&lt;br&gt;Relevant UN entities provide comments on the Action Plan and the Resource Mobilization Plan. Both plans should be circulated for comment to the other UN agencies once drafted, revised</td>
<td>See Task 1</td>
<td>April 2013</td>
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<td>Task</td>
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<td>Mobilization Strategy (RMBS) and submitted to the OCAG</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>OCAG review and comment on the draft Action Plan and RMBS</td>
<td>See Task 1</td>
<td>April 2013</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Draft Action Plan and RMBS revised as per OCAG comments</td>
<td>See Task 1</td>
<td>May 2013</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>OCAG call for comments from member states, stakeholders including UN entities</td>
<td>See Task 1</td>
<td>Late May 2013</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Informal briefing to Member States</td>
<td>Head of HLCP</td>
<td>early June 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Action Plan and RMBS revised</td>
<td>See Task 1</td>
<td>Late June 2013</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Second meeting of OCAG</td>
<td>To brief the OCAG, further comments to the Plan &amp; Strategy, sign off on the final version and forwarding to the Secretary-General for approval</td>
<td>UNESCO-IOC &amp; UNDP jointly</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Action Plan and RMBS is approved by Secretary-General and launched in New York</td>
<td>SG’s office</td>
<td>early August 2013</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Possible informal briefing to Member States</td>
<td>Head of HLCP</td>
<td>August 2013</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Action Plan and RMBS are implemented by stakeholders and UN agencies</td>
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<td>2013-2016 (or beyond)</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Annual Reporting</td>
<td>Implementation and progress in implementation of the Action Plan are reported to Member States through annual reports of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea as well as at informal briefings for Member States, as necessary. Briefings on the UN-Oceans relevant activities in implementation of the Action Plan are also provided to the annual Informal Consultative Process meeting</td>
<td>DOALOS (through compilation of contributions from all relevant agencies and stakeholders on the implementation of the Action Plan) UN Oceans to ICP</td>
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<td>Task</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Informal briefings to Member States</td>
<td>Head of HLCP</td>
<td>6 months after implementation starts</td>
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THE OCEANS COMPACT

HEALTHY OCEANS FOR PROSPERITY

An Initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General
The world’s oceans are key to sustaining life on the planet. The ocean constitutes a conduit for ninety per cent of the world trade, and for connecting people, markets and livelihoods. In light of the ocean’s interconnectedness, all nations of the world should strive to make the oceans places of safety and sustainability of maritime activities for all humankind.

They provide a range of benefits for human well-being and prosperity – food production, employment creation, temperature moderation, carbon sequestration, nutrient cycling, habitats and biodiversity, tourism, an energy source, and others. Humans, however, have put the oceans under risk of irreversible damage by over-fishing, climate change and ocean acidification (from absorbed carbon emissions), increasing pollution, unsustainable coastal area development, and unwanted impacts from resource extraction, resulting in loss of biodiversity, decreased abundance of species, damage to habitats and loss of ecological functions.

We need to reverse these trends by using the vast potential wealth of the oceans to build a society that uses ocean resources wisely and is less vulnerable to ocean-related hazards. We need to adopt a more proactive vision for the oceans and establish a new understanding of their capacity. We need to create new partnerships while strengthening key existing ones, and develop ways of sharing the wealth of the oceans to benefit all.

The Oceans Compact is an initiative to set out a strategic vision for the UN system to deliver on its ocean-related mandates, consistent with the Rio+20 outcome document “The Future We Want”, in a more coherent and effective manner. It aims to provide a platform for all stakeholders to collaborate and accelerate progress in the achievement of the common goal of “Healthy Oceans for Prosperity”. It is essential to address the issues of declining ocean health and productivity as well as weak ocean management. The Oceans Compact will be underpinned by pragmatic short-, medium- and long-term strategies to increase cross sectoral coordination and cooperation at the national, regional and global levels as well as within the United Nations system. The intent is to address the cumulative impacts of sectoral activities on the marine environment, including through implementing ecosystem and precautionary approaches.
The Oceans Compact builds upon the range of existing and ongoing activities of UN system organizations. The Compact will assist Member States to implement the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, and other relevant global and regional conventions and instruments, and promote participation in those instruments.

The Oceans Compact is guided by the overarching idea of providing for sustainable use, management and conservation of the world’s oceans. It builds on:

- scientific, traditional and indigenous knowledge, where the three pillars of sustainable development – social, economic and environmental – are balanced;
- a fully recognized global land-ocean connectedness;
- addressing drivers of unwanted impacts from human use on the well-being of people and oceans; and
- reduced vulnerability to the ocean-related disasters for coastal communities. This holds particularly true for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and low-lying states and regions.

The Oceans Compact aims to mobilize and enhance the UN system’s capacity to support actions by Governments, and promote the engagement of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, scientists, the private sector and industry to tackle challenges in protecting and restoring the health and productivity of the oceans for the benefit of present and future generations.

In January 2012, I launched the United Nations Secretary-General’s Five-Year Action Agenda as “A plan to make the most of the opportunities before us. A plan to help create a safer, more secure, more sustainable, more equitable future. A plan to build the future we want.” The Action Agenda provides an opportunity to kick-start the long-term plan for the Oceans Compact.

From Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and the Millennium Declaration to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the UN General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals in 2010, and more recently the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), Governments have re-affirmed the need to intensify efforts to protect and sustainably manage the oceans, seas and coastal areas and their living resources. The Rio+20 Conference represented an opportunity to collectively embrace such commitments. The Oceans and Seas Section of the Rio+20 outcome document now needs to be translated into an Action Plan with concrete targets/expected results, benchmarks and timelines.
I will encourage Member States, the private sector and civil society to make global and individual commitments to restoring oceans to healthy, productive and resilient systems as a matter of urgency and against the appropriate baselines to ensure human well-being and prosperity. To attain the goal of “Healthy Oceans for Prosperity”, we need to discover new and innovative ways to protect ocean resources, use them more efficiently, while ensuring sustainable use and conservation of natural resources by all stakeholders. Three inter-related objectives advance this goal:

1. **Protecting people and improving the health of the oceans through:**
   - Reducing the vulnerability of people to the effects of ocean degradation and natural hazards, including tsunamis, and anthropogenic environmental degradation, including possible sources of livelihood for coastal populations;
   - Developing ways and means of adaptation to the impacts of climate change, including sea level rise;
   - Promoting more sustainable management of coastal areas;
   - Reducing pollutants from sea and land-based activities, including gas and oil extraction, marine debris, harmful substances and nutrients from wastewater, industrial and agricultural runoff entering the world’s oceans;
   - Reducing over-fishing and eliminating destructive fishing practices;
   - Encouraging a green economy approach in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication;
   - Strengthening the implementation of existing agreements.

   In this regard, it is particularly important that:
   a. Regions and countries most vulnerable to marine related hazards (including sea level rise) be identified and mitigation and adaptation plans developed;
   b. Early warning systems for tsunamis and other extreme events be established for all vulnerable regions;
   c. By 2025, based on collected scientific data, all countries set relevant national targets for nutrients, marine debris and wastewater.

2. **Protecting, recovering and sustaining the oceans’ environment and natural resources and restoring their full food production and livelihoods services through:**
   - Rebuilding of over-exploited, depleted and recovering fish stocks, including by encouraging States to renew efforts to ensure that living resources are no longer endangered by over-fishing and destructive fishing practices taking into account the effects of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing;
   - Conserving and restoring marine habitats important for carbon sequestration and storage;
   - Conserving and protecting marine and coastal biodiversity;
   - Halting the spread of invasive alien species; and
   - Strengthening the implementation of existing instruments and measures.
In that regard: I will work with all Member States to promote the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets related to marine and coastal biodiversity, with a view to ensuring that:

- **By 2020,** at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes; and

- **By 2015,** the multiple anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs, and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change or ocean acidification are reduced so as to maintain their integrity and functioning.

I will support Governments’ efforts to meet the 2015 target agreed in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation to maintain or restore stocks to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield.

I am committed to supporting Member States in their work in the context of the General Assembly Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. In particular, together, we must endeavor to complete, before the end of the 69th session of the General Assembly, the process initiated within the Working Group to ensure that the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction effectively addresses those issues, including through the implementation of existing instruments and the possible development of a multilateral agreement under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The UN system will also work with Member States to step up efforts to prevent and combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, including actions to ensure that flag States comply fully with existing obligations and exercise effective control over their nationals, vessels engaged in such fishing are identified and offenders are deprived of the benefits accruing from it and capacity needs of developing countries are identified and supported. We must also step up efforts to reduce the capacity of the world’s fishing fleet to levels commensurate with the sustainability of fish stocks, including through ongoing capacity assessment. We also need to encourage the elimination of subsidies that contribute to overfishing and overcapacity and to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, including through the strengthening of disciplines on subsidies in the fisheries sector.

To this aim, I will deploy efforts to jointly promote with Member States, consistent with international law, the applicable international instruments and relevant General Assembly resolutions and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Guidelines:

- the development and implementation of science-based management plans, including by reducing or suspending fishing catch and effort commensurate with the status of the stock;
- enhanced actions to manage bycatch, discards, and other adverse ecosystem impacts from fisheries including by eliminating destructive fishing practices; and
- enhanced actions to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems from significant adverse impacts including through the effective use of impact assessments.
3. Strengthening ocean knowledge and the management of oceans through:

- Promoting marine scientific research,
- Strengthening general science-based knowledge and capacity building for ocean management;
- Addressing the need for robust ocean observation and relevant infrastructure, including capacity development in ocean and coastal areas;
- Deploying all efforts to better understand the effects of climate change on the marine environment and marine biodiversity;
- Undertaking further research on, and observation of, the impacts of ocean acidification and supporting efforts to address levels of ocean acidity and the negative impact of such acidity on vulnerable marine ecosystems, particularly coral reefs and mangroves;
- Continuing to address with caution ocean fertilization, consistent with the precautionary approach;
- Supporting the development of the global integrated assessment of the state of the marine environment including socio-economic aspects by 2014;
- Enhancing management frameworks along with coordinated global, regional and national mechanisms to ensure integrated ecosystem management, and protection of coastal populations; and
- Promoting the sustainable use and conservation of ocean resources.

This must be underpinned by a robust global ocean observation and knowledge infrastructure and the successful operation of the General Assembly’s Regular Process. In that regard, while all relevant UN system bodies will provide the necessary support to the Regular Process, it is crucial for Member States to provide the required resources to enable the sustainable functioning of the Process for it to achieve its work.

There should be as soon as feasible:

- A clearly defined consensus on user requirements for sustained monitoring of ocean ecosystems, their services, and human impacts, as a part of an integrated Global Ocean Observing System;
- Robust monitoring and knowledge-sharing systems in place to underpin decision-making;
- A completed first cycle of the UN Regular Process by 2014 and further ocean monitoring, research and capacity-development needs identified;
- A global and regional assessment of capacity building requirements conducted and a strategy formulated and implemented;
- A global observing network on ocean acidification developed, producing regional impact assessments of ocean acidification on vulnerable ecosystems and economic activities;
- UN support to Member States, upon their request, to develop integrated and coastal ecosystems-based and science-based conservation and management policies where they do not exist, and to strengthen them where they exist.

Realizing the objectives of the Oceans Compact will require the creation of enabling conditions so that interventions and actions can be undertaken as part of an integrated and results-oriented “Action Plan” and, where appropriate, up-scaled to ensure an improved quality of life and enhanced opportunities for the hundreds of millions of people whose lives depend on the oceans. This will involve:

- Increasing capacity and technical assistance to Member States that may require it. In that regard, I call for the elaboration and implementation of a global strategy to build national and regional capacity in ocean affairs, including the ability of States to implement existing agreements and arrangements and use available
tools, such as marine spatial planning, integrated coastal zone management, assessments, monitoring and surveillance, to better address the cumulative impacts on the marine environment;

- Building and sharing the scientific, traditional and indigenous knowledge base for sustainably managing ocean and coastal resources, protecting coastal populations, and maintaining ecosystem services;

- Creating the economic and social conditions to ensure sustainable livelihoods and economic development through green practices, increased societal awareness and respect of human rights including the right to food and active participation of all interested parties in the elaboration and implementation of integrated ocean-related policies;

- Improving ocean governance through enhanced and coordinated global, regional and national mechanisms;

- Increasing participation in, and the implementation of, global and regional agreements addressing the protection and preservation of the marine environment and its living marine resources against all sources of pollution and other forms of physical degradation.

Our growing scientific knowledge, communications, technology and resources, coupled with the productive potential of the oceans, mean that it is possible to feed a significant part of the world and enjoy healthy oceans. Nevertheless these efforts need to be scaled-up, strengthened and secured with innovative and sustainable financing and appropriate technologies, and underpinned by effective institutional and legal frameworks to facilitate viable management and sustainable development over the coming decades. This will take time and sustained political commitment.

In various areas of the oceans there are policy and regulatory frameworks in place that are facilitating transformative change. Good governance and compliance schemes that address the issues of non-compliance by some ships with internationally agreed marine safety and environment standards as well as governance systems to support integrated, sustainable and ecosystem-based management of fisheries and aquaculture must be developed, including the full and effective implementation of international agreements, marine safety and environmental standards and arrangements.

Changing the way we use the oceans will require changes in many areas including in market and finance incentives such as certification and investor schemes, responsible governance of tenure to marine space, fisheries and coastal land that underpin sustainable livelihoods, and environmental, social and governance reporting. But further work is warranted. Developed and developing countries’ public and private sectors need to improve their capacity for ocean administration and knowledge sharing, and to promote capacity building. Civil society’s capacity to engage in ocean issues could also be strengthened through citizen science, ocean awareness and literacy, environmental citizenship and youth programmes.

To accompany the elaboration of the Oceans Compact Action Plan, to facilitate stakeholder dialogues and to catalyze support in various quarters for concrete actions in oceans, I propose to create, in consultation with stakeholders, a time-bound Oceans Advisory Group, composed of Executive Heads of involved UN system organizations, high-level policy-makers, scientists, leading ocean experts, private sector representatives, representatives of non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations. This Oceans Advisory Group will thus bring together different stakeholders and contribute to developing a new focus and direction for the work on ocean issues. The Oceans Advisory Group will also advise on strategies for mobilizing resources needed for the implementation of the Oceans Compact Action Plan through mechanisms such as the Global Environment Facility and the World Bank Global Partnership on Oceans. It will serve to catalyze UN system-wide cooperation and arrangements in support of the Oceans Compact. The elaboration of the UN system wide Action Plan for implementation of the Oceans Compact will be coordinated through UN-Oceans, as appropriate.