



## OCEAN ACTION HUB

### OCEAN FORUM

*“Increasing economic benefits to SIDS and LDCs and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets”*

*27 March – 14 April 2017*

#### Background Note

##### *About the Ocean Forum*

The [Ocean Action Hub](http://www.oceanactionhub.org) is hosting a series of online discussions over the course of the preparatory process for The Ocean Conference in order to engage stakeholders in assessing the challenges and opportunities related to implementing SDG14. Bringing together governments, UN agencies, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, NGOs, civil society organizations, academic institutions, the scientific community, private sector, philanthropic organizations and other actors, each online discussion will focus on one of the agreed Partnership Dialogue themes and implementation of related SDG targets. The present discussion is focused on increasing economic benefits to SIDS and LDCs and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets, SDG target 14.7 and 14.b.

##### *About increasing economic benefits to SIDS and LDCs and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets*

- *Target 14.7: By 2030, increase the economic benefits to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs) from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.*

SIDS face particular sustainable development challenges, including small populations, limited resources, vulnerability to natural disasters and external shocks, high dependence on foreign imports, and little or no opportunity to create economies of scale. LDCs often share many of the same challenges, with some of SIDS also being LDCs.

The oceans play a central role in the culture of SIDS, while at the same time being tightly linked to their economies. The sustainable development of SIDS and the oceans agenda are therefore intertwined. All SIDS are Parties to UNCLOS. Many SIDS have maritime zones which are disproportionately larger than their land territory.

Economic benefits from the oceans for SIDS and many of the LDCs can be derived from sustainable “blue economy”.

The blue economy concept moves beyond business as usual to consider economic development and ocean health as compatible propositions. While there is no universally agreed-upon definition of the blue economy, it is generally understood to be a long term strategy aimed at supporting sustainable

economic growth through oceans-related sectors and activities, while at the same time improving human well-being and social equity and preserving the environment.

The concept follows from scientific findings that ocean resources are limited and that the health of the ocean has drastically declined due to human activities. These changes are already profoundly impacting human well-being and societies, and are likely to amplify in the future. Reflected in the work of the United Nations for many years, and embedded in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the blue economy concept came out of the 2012 Rio+20 Conference.

The blue economy concept consists of diverse components, including established ocean sectors such as fisheries, aquaculture, tourism and maritime transport, and emerging and new sectors, such as offshore renewable energy, deep seabed extractive activities (where sustainable) and marine biotechnology.

Fisheries and tourism are currently the predominant ocean-dependent industries in SIDS and coastal LDCs, and maritime shipping is their lifeline to global markets.

The long-term sustainability of fisheries in SIDS has been threatened by overexploitation of living marine resources, land-based pollution, and inadequate fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance systems. Implementation of regulations and management frameworks to address overfishing is a particular challenge for SIDS and LDCs, in some cases, due to lack of capacity. In spite of these challenges, fisheries management and the economic value derived from fisheries for SIDS have been improving through a number of measures.

The tourism industry in SIDS is overwhelmingly based on oceans, coasts and marine resources. Tourism accounts for over one quarter of the GDP in many SIDS and represents 9% of total exports. However, the growth of the industry often brings loss of fragile habitat and biodiversity, marine pollution, inadequate waste management, resource consumption and competition, and limited community engagement and benefit. In addition, the tourism industry in SIDS and coastal LDCs is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change as well as fluctuations in global economies.<sup>1</sup> In the face of these challenges, the tourism industry is taking steps toward enhanced sustainability and increasing local employment, building and maintaining local supply chains, managing informal local trading and fostering community-based initiatives.

Aquaculture can be an important element of the blue economy, if essential investments are made in enabling sustainable aquaculture policy and legal frameworks, applied research, capacity-building and information. Marine renewable energy sources have been identified as priority areas for SIDS, including in the recent Martinique Action Plan for Renewable Energy Development on Islands, which calls for concrete action to support energy transition into renewables in SIDS, including ocean energy. Seabed exploration and exploitation of minerals and other resources has been of particular interest to Pacific SIDS. Marine biotechnology can provide an option for SIDS and coastal LDCs to grow their economies. Finally, there are significant opportunities for new and innovative sources of financing such as debt for nature swaps and blue bonds.

➤ *Target 14.b: Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets*

According to estimates, artisanal small-scale fishers and related workers comprise over 90 percent of people employed globally in capture fisheries and related activities, although they only capture less than 35 per cent of the global catch. Small-scale fisheries provide more than 60% of protein intake in some developing countries, including SIDS. Many indigenous peoples and their communities also depend on small-scale fisheries.

Providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets presents challenges and will require a range of actions such as implementing policies that promote

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, 2016, First Global Integrated Marine Assessment.

business activity without increasing pressure on fisheries, improving access to education to foster community development and empowerment and undertaking legal changes that can benefit small-scale fisheries. Enhanced coordination and collaboration among all relevant international and regional organizations will be most effective to support artisanal small-scale fisheries.<sup>2</sup>

*Discussion Questions:*

1. What are the **challenges** faced in your country, region or community in achieving targets 14.7 and 14.b and what will be the benefit of their implementation?
2. What do you see as **priority actions** which we can all rally around in achieving targets 14.7 and target 14.b by 2030 as stipulated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?
3. Please share any **existing or new voluntary commitments** undertaken, either individually or in partnership, that you are aware of and that aim to contribute to the implementation of targets 14.7 and 14.b and advance effective actions from local to global levels.

*To participate, post your response in the discussion forum here:*  
<http://www.oceanactionhub.org/SIDS-LDCS-SSF-discussion>

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<sup>2</sup> Source: Edited extract from the Background note of the Secretary-General for the preparatory process of the Ocean Conference A/71/212.