

WHAT IS THE 10X20 INITIATIVE

In September 2015, Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that includes 17 Goals and 169 targets. While striving to achieve all goals and targets, we would like to recall a specific initiative concerning one specific goal, Goal 14 that seeks to “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development” and one specific target: **“By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information”** .

Why did we choose to concentrate on this goal and this target?

First of all, we believe in the central role of the Oceans and Seas in safeguarding the planet and the wellbeing of all its people, not only those who live on the sea. For this reason we have relentlessly fought to have a standalone goal for them. As for target 5, we thought that its tight timeframe, 2020, together with its measurability were a challenge that, if faced immediately, could serve as an example for all other goals and targets, a showcase for mobilization of and partnership among Member States and other actors, ranging from scientists to foundations to private companies.

We have launched the 10x20 Initiative from within this framework.

As a kickoff event of the 10X20 Initiative, Italy, the Ocean Sanctuary Alliance and UNEP organized a Conference in Rome last March on **“Marine Protected Areas: An Urgent Imperative - A Dialogue Between Scientists and Policymakers”**. Building on the call made by target 5 as to the use of the “best available science”, **the innovative event successfully allowed for an open and interactive dialogue between scientists (which also agreed on a “scientists’ consensus”) and diplomats on the benefits and challenges inherent to the creation of marine protected areas**. The Conference has led to the adoption of a concerted “call to action”, which represents at the same time an instrument of political and technical guidance that will help national governments, United Nations agencies and development investors over the next 4 and ½ years to promote MPAs around the world that are designated and designed on the basis of the best available science, and that are effective, equitable and financially sustainable. On the basis of the Rome Call to Action, we are now working on practical steps to contribute to the achievement of the target, as for instance a “toolbox” for the establishment of marine protected areas.

In addition to that, a Steering Committee has been created, established by Member States under the leadership of Italy and with the stewardship of the Ocean Sanctuary

Alliance (OSA). The Steering Committee is meant to be **an instrument of advocacy for the voluntary establishment of MPAs, a means for generating support for these initiatives, a forum for exchanging knowledge, information and best practices, and a vehicle for disseminating information and know-how.** While the focus of the Steering Committee will be on the full realization of the target, it will also concern itself with issues of sustainability, as well as social and economic impacts and benefits.

For best results, the Steering Committee **aims at bringing together governments, international organizations, NGOs, foundations and private companies, in short, all stakeholders of the marine conservation target.**

In addition to Italy as chair for the biennium 2016-2017, **the Bahamas, Kenya, Palau and Poland** have been nominated Vice Chairs for the triennium 2016-2018. The Ocean Sanctuary Alliance will hold the Vice-Chair permanently.

We hope that a growing number of Member States can contribute to this initiative.

This target can be achieved only if we work all together.