

"Sustainable Weather, Climate, Oceans and Water Services for a Resilient Pacific"

Fourth Meeting of the Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC-4) Working Papers

14-18 August 2017
Honiara
Solomon Islands

Agenda Item 9.0 : Outcomes of the UN Oceans Conference

Purpose:

1. To inform the Meeting of the outcomes of the UN Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 (UN Ocean Conference) and implications for NMHSs.

Sustainable Development Goal 14 targets relevant to NMHSs

2. SDG 14 aims to "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development". The increasingly adverse impacts of climate change (including ocean acidification), overfishing and marine pollution are jeopardizing recent gains in protecting portions of the world's oceans.
3. Of the 10 SDG14 targets only 3 align with the standard roles and responsibilities of the NMHSs:
 - i. 14.3 - Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels – This target focuses on ocean acidification, but discussions concerning it examine the impacts of climate change on the ocean in general. While NMHSs are not directly involved in climate change adaptation work, they do play an important role in climate observations and forecasting, including provisioning of Coral Reef Bleaching forecasts.
 - ii. 14.7 - By 2030, increase the economic benefits to Small Island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism – Services provided by NMHSs such as severe weather forecasts are essential in supporting economic growth.
 - iii. 14.A - Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technology, taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology, in order to improve ocean health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular small island developing States and least developed countries – Marine weather and ocean forecasts and observations are a key part of the work of NMHSs. However, to date there has only been limited support in this area, and the lack of financial and information support for NMHSs can potentially be addressed by this target.

UN Ocean Conference:

4. The Pacific Islands led the fight to have an ocean goal included in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 14 – Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development), and continued to lead the global implementation of this goal through the organizing of the UN Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 (UN Ocean Conference). The UN Ocean Conference was co-hosted by the Governments of Fiji and Sweden and was held at the UN Headquarters in New York. The stated goals of the conference were to:
 - i. Identify ways and means to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14;
 - ii. Build on existing successful partnerships and stimulate innovative and concrete new partnerships to advance the implementation of Goal 14;
 - iii. Involve all relevant stakeholders, bringing together Governments, the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions, the scientific community, the private sector, philanthropic organizations and other actors to assess challenges and opportunities relating to, as well as actions taken towards, the implementation of Goal 14;
 - iv. Share the experiences gained at the national, regional and international levels in the implementation of Goal 14; and
 - v. Contribute to the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by providing an input to the high-level political forum on sustainable development.
5. In the lead-up to the Conference a preparatory meeting was held at the UN Headquarters in New York in February to discuss the format of the Conference and its key outcomes – the Call for Action, Voluntary Commitments, and the Partnership Dialogues:
 - i. The Call for Action is a high-level declaration by global leaders on their commitment to achieving SDG 14.
 - ii. The Voluntary Commitments are a registry of commitments by governments, IGOs, NGOs, and CSOs on how they will work to achieve SDG 14. These commitments are time bound and have achievable goals to help ensure that they are achieved.
 - iii. The Partnership Dialogues were high-level discussions themed on the SDG 14 targets, held in parallel with the plenary discussions at the conference.
6. The Conference Preparatory Committee (prep-comm) was attended by SPREP and the other CROP agencies where we worked to support Members on technical and policy issues and to prepare for the regional preparatory meeting.
7. A regional preparatory meeting for the Conference was held in Suva, Fiji in March. High-level representation from the region, including leaders and the President of the UN General Assembly, CROP agencies and regional partners were in attendance. The meeting discussed the SDG 14 targets, reviewed the draft Call for Action declaration, and Pacific engagement leading up to and during the Conference.

Key Outcomes:

8. The Call for Action from the UN Ocean Conference (Annex 1) recommended that it be endorsed at the 71st session of the UN General Assembly. The Ocean Registry of the 1374 Voluntary Commitments which can be found at: <https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/>. Portugal will host the next UN Oceans Conference in three years' time (2020).

Recommendations:

9. The Meeting is invited to:

- **Acknowledge** the leadership and effort put forth by Fiji in co-hosting the UN Ocean Conference with Sweden;
- **Note** the SDG 14 Targets of relevance to NMHSs; and
- **Note** the outcomes of the UN Ocean Conference including the Call for Action declaration and Voluntary Commitments.

Attachments

- Annex 1 UN Ocean Call for Action declaration

1 August 2017