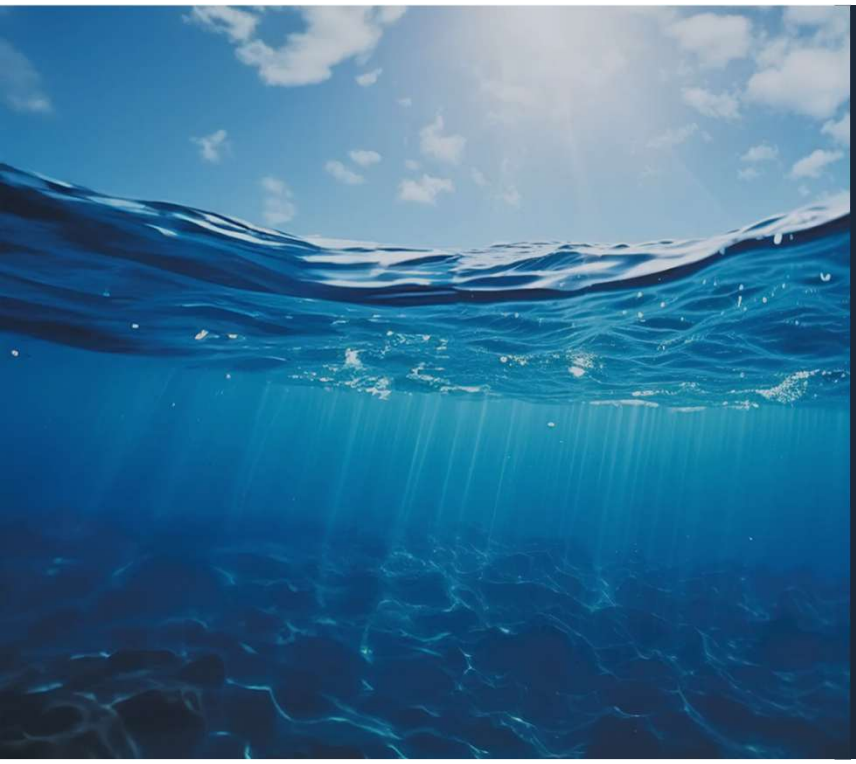
June 8, 2025

Business Call to Action



LAND AND SEA, A VITAL CONNECTION FOR A THRIVING AND RESILIENT ECONOMY

A call supported by more than 90 signatories from 27 countries including 55 businesses representing over €600 billion in turnover and 2 million employees.

ICC

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BUSINESS FOR NATURE

World Economic Forum

Mouvement des Entreprises de France

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Land and Sea, a Vital Connection for a Thriving and Resilient Economy

The ocean is vital to life on land and sea both now and in the future, as it is intrinsically connected to countless natural and human systems. Over the last decades, use and dependence on the ocean have dramatically risen, creating millions of jobs, boosting economies, while supporting the energy transition and global trade. As a consequence, our social and economic dependencies on marine ecosystems have increased, however, our environmental impacts increasingly threaten the services the ocean provides. The ocean is integral to the global economy, representing over 3 trillion USD in global GDP, sustaining over 3 billion people who rely on its resources for protein and livelihoods.

It facilitates 80% of global trade, carries 95% of international data traffic and supports 50% of global tourism activities. It plays a vital role in our livelihoods and in sustainable development, is essential to the climate system and water cycle, supplies oxygen and acts as a reservoir of biodiversity.

The ocean offers vast opportunities for businesses and people alike in building a sustainable, inclusive global economy. To make these opportunities happen, it is imperative to ensure a healthy, productive ocean and its sustainable use. The theme of the upcoming third UN Ocean Conference (UNOC-3) “Accelerating action and mobilizing all actors to conserve and sustainably use the ocean”, underscores this need. Given the interconnected nature of the climate, biodiversity and pollution crisis, implementing Sustainable Development Goal 14 is essential for achieving all SDGs and a prosperous future. We encourage UNOC-3 to strengthen global cooperation and accelerate action to conserve and sustainably use the ocean.

We call on all stakeholders to act towards a healthy and productive ocean and to safeguard its role in sustaining the global economy and our future prosperity, as key outputs of UNOC-3.

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We call on all businesses to accelerate action

In all economic sectors, leading businesses and organisations are already acting through alliances, coalitions, charters, individual and collective commitments to promote the needed ecological transition and a sustainable blue economy (see annex). However, there is a need to rapidly scale-up efforts. These include, but are not limited to, the decarbonisation of maritime transport and ports, development of renewable marine energy, pollution prevention and control, green and grey coastal protection infrastructures, blue biotechnologies, sustainable fishing and eco-tourism.

As representatives of the global business community, and in order to conserve and restore marine and coastal ecosystems, ensure their sustainable use, seize the opportunities for resilience, growth and innovation, we support business actions in the following areas and encourage all economic actors - whether directly or indirectly connected to the ocean - to join us in these efforts, such as:

- Increase understanding of ocean challenges by building internal capacity, tools and contributing to ocean knowledge by sharing business data while supporting and partnering with scientific bodies.
- Measure, assess and disclose the material dependencies, impacts, risks and opportunities, related to the ocean, within activities and across the entire value chain - from raw material extraction to post-consumer waste, including into existing voluntary and/or mandatory reporting frameworks.
- Integrate ocean considerations into climate, nature and social impact roadmaps informed by science, along with targets on ocean-related metrics.
- Apply the precautionary science-aligned approach, to new initiatives and projects to ensure operations are environmentally safe prior to commencing.
- Develop and adopt a comprehensive strategy to prevent, reduce and, where possible, eliminate pollution from plastic and other sources across the entire value chain and promote circular economy solutions for plastics.
- Scale-up solutions and innovative finance, notably sustainability-linked instruments, to incentivise the conservation and the sustainable use of the ocean.
- Work towards a just transition by promoting the attractiveness of green transition jobs, developing workers' skills, improving livelihoods, food security and a safe and healthy living environment and by including coastal communities and stakeholders in operational decisions.
- Engage in promoting awareness of ocean challenges and advocate for the priorities outlined herein.

We urge policymakers to establish ambitious, science-driven policies and measures that stimulate business action, and to jointly address land and ocean for enhanced global resilience

Global and local policymakers have a key role to play to enable the global business community to effectively deliver and spur impactful change. To accomplish this, businesses need stable, enabling, standardised frameworks and policies that drive sustainable innovation and accelerated action, while promoting fair competition. Therefore, we call on policymakers to:

- Agree, adopt and implement international agreements and processes: champion strong, sustainable outcomes for existing and upcoming ocean-related agreements and processes (e.g. ratify and complete WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, ratify BBNJ Agreement, adopt IMO climate measures, secure an ambitious and workable internationally legally binding instrument to address plastic pollution, support a science-based precautionary pause with regard to deepsea mining). Implement aligned policies and engage stakeholders, including businesses, in consultations.

- Invest in ocean science: commit to funding ocean science to address the data gaps, and decision-making, and support a strong science-policy interface to provide timely, credible and salient scientific information to inform policies and actions. This includes supporting the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030).

- Recognize the ocean-nature-climate nexus: continue decarbonization efforts and integrate ocean considerations and industry solutions into national policies as well as into the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) submitted under the Paris Agreement's and the Kunming?Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework's National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). This could strengthen the blue economy by providing a strong investment case for businesses and ensure a level playing field for ocean?positive practices.

- Accelerate efforts on the 30x30 target: preserve long-term economic and social benefits, both through increased territorial protection and restoration and the establishment of large High Seas Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) for 30% of the Earth by 2030, including harmonized and ambitious MPAs definition.

- Adapt to sea-level rise: promote long-term and zone-based planning, encourage public private partnerships, community resilience, dialogue among all local stakeholders on coastal adaptation and cooperation with economic players, particularly for those regions most vulnerable to or dependent on the oceanic ecosystem.

- Develop robust and innovative finance mechanisms: align policy and regulatory frameworks to channel capital towards sustainable ocean practices, promote blended finance, blue bonds, sustainability-linked finance, pricing mechanisms to finance and de-risk investments, particularly in developing countries.

- Raise awareness: make the ocean everyone's business by initiating and supporting educational initiatives on the land-sea connection and the opportunities that a sustainable ocean economy can unlock to engage all stakeholders and make the ocean a shared responsibility.

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This Declaration has been convened by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), World Economic Forum (WEF), We Mean Business Coalition (WMB), Business for Nature (BfN), Mouvement des Entreprises de France (MEDEF), UN Global Compact Network France and Association française des Entreprises pour l'Environnement (EpE).

This declaration is the result of a collaborative effort by various business networks. The document represents the view of the partners. However, it does not commit every member of every network.

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ICC, UN Global Compact, WE MEAN BUSINESS COALITION, BUSINESS FOR NATURE, World Economic Forum, Mouvement des Entreprises de France, Pacte Mondial Réseau France, epe entreprises pour l'environnement