11. What will happen with The Ocean Conference Registry of Voluntary Commitments once the Conference has concluded?

The Ocean Conference Registry of Commitments will remain open after the Conference, with all the details of voluntary commitments publicly accessible online. This will facilitate continued information sharing, creation of SDG14 partnerships, and replication and upscaling of good practice as well as ongoing analysis of SDG 14 gaps and challenges. The list of voluntary commitments will be part of the report of the Conference, which will be part of the United Nations Official Document System (ods.un.org), also publicly available.

12. We have registered our voluntary commitment in the online registration form. How long will it take before it appears in The Ocean Conference Registry of Voluntary Commitments?

The Secretariat of the Conference will perform an editorial review of the submission to ensure that it adheres to the established criteria (see above). If there are any missing elements, the Secretariat will contact you through email to follow up. The Secretariat aims to publish new voluntary commitments after a maximum of two working days after the registration. Please note that processing time may be longer closer to the conference itself.

13. If we have already registered a voluntary commitment, is it possible to update it?

Yes, you can log in to your voluntary commitment and update it. Any update made before 9th of June will be included in the final conference report.

14. Will registering a voluntary commitment now limit how that voluntary commitment may be announced at the Oceans Conference?

No. The Voluntary Commitment register provides the formal place to register a voluntary commitment. It is up to the Member State(s) or any stakeholder to consider how they wish the commitment to be featured at the Conference, other than on the register. The timing of registration is independent to how a stakeholder may plan to present the commitment during the Conference. The early registration is encouraged as a demonstration effect to other stakeholders and for its inclusion in any summary voluntary commitment update during the Conference.

15. We are thinking of developing a voluntary commitment at a national/country level – where can we get further help?

- The official Conference website www.oceanconference.un.org provides information on the criteria for a voluntary commitment.
- The www.oceanactionhub.org provides information, resources, networks, and how to connect with other stakeholders to support the development of voluntary commitments.
- The United Nations Resident Coordinator Offices and the UNDP Country Offices in your country can also provide information and technical support.
1. What are voluntary commitments for The Ocean Conference?

Voluntary commitments for The Ocean Conference are initiatives or pledges undertaken by any stakeholder - individually or in partnership - that aim to contribute to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal 14.

Voluntary commitments are expected to be specific in nature, quantifiable where possible, focused on contributing to one or more target(s) under SDG 14.

2. What criteria do voluntary commitments need to fulfill?

Voluntary commitments for The Ocean Conference are encouraged to:

- Advance the implementation of SDG 14 and associated targets, reflecting inter-linkages between SDG 14 and other Sustainable Development Goals.
- Respect the principles of the United Nations and the legal framework in force on the oceans.
- Build on existing successful initiatives (scaling it up, new phase, etc.) or launch a new one.
- Include means of implementation - such as finance or capacity building - as an element to help ensure sustainability of the initiative.
- Follow the SMART Criteria - a commitment that is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Resource based, with Time-based deliverables.

3. What is the purpose of registering voluntary commitments for The Ocean Conference?

Member States have decided that a list of voluntary commitments will form a part of the official outcome of The Ocean Conference. A list of voluntary commitments will be produced at the end of the Conference for inclusion into the final report of the Conference, based on online registrations and announcements during the official proceedings of the Conference.

The Ocean Conference Registry of Voluntary Commitments will provide a broad platform for facilitating information sharing, fostering collaboration among a range of stakeholders, assessing where implementation is taking place, provide gap analysis, and catalysing additional action to address challenges that oceans and seas are facing.

4. Who can register voluntary commitments for The Ocean Conference?

Anyone can register voluntary commitments for The Ocean Conference, including Governments, non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations, academic and research institutions, the scientific community, the private sector, philanthropic organizations, the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations, international and regional financial institutions - individually or in partnership. Entities entering voluntary commitments are not required to be registered to attend the Ocean Conference itself.

5. What is the timeframe for a voluntary commitment?

Any commitment made since the SDGs were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015 can be registered. The registry will also remain open after the conference.

6. Our organization/entity has an existing voluntary commitment for SDG 14. Can it still be registered in The Ocean Conference Registry?

Yes. Submissions to The Ocean Conference Registry may include commitments that have been made since the adoption of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Sept 2015).

7. We already have a registered partnership or voluntary commitment in the Partnerships for SDGs online platform (https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnerships), or in the SIDS Action Platform (http://www.sids2014.org/), but wish to commit to SDG 14 and The Ocean Conference. Do we need to register again at The Ocean Conference Registry?

If your existing initiative meets the criteria for an SDG 14 voluntary commitment, you may update the existing initiative and add it to The Ocean Conference list of commitments directly.

8. Where should we register our voluntary commitment?

The Ocean Conference Registry of Voluntary Commitments, and the online registration form, is available on Conference website at: https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/

9. When should we register our voluntary commitment?

The Ocean Conference Registry of Voluntary Commitments officially opened on 15 February 2017, and registrations can now be made online. To be included in the Ocean Conference list and the report, voluntary commitments should be registered online, or announced at the Conference, by 9 June 2017.

The platform will remain open for registration of voluntary commitments after the Ocean Conference. The UN Secretariat encourages voluntary commitments to be made early in the process, and will highlight registered voluntary commitments through its various outreach channels, including the Conference website, and social media campaigns.

10. What part of the information that we submit will appear publicly?

The Ocean Conference Registry of Voluntary Commitments relies on transparency by all parties, and therefore, all information submitted in the form will be made publicly available in the registry.