



**Statement by
David Cooper
Acting Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity
World Oceans Day
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Theme: Awaken New Depths**

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The ocean sustains life on our planet and is central to the healthy functioning of nearly all of Earth’s processes. It is the world’s largest ecosystem, home to nearly one million known species, and contains tremendous untapped potential for scientific discovery. Unexplored ocean ecosystems hold undiscovered species and important new medicines, vaccines, food, energy, and more.

But ocean ecosystems are under threat from climate change, pollution and overexploitation among other drivers of biodiversity loss. If we don’t act now, we won’t have any healthy ocean ecosystems left to explore.

Work under the Convention on Biological Diversity to describe ecologically or biologically significant marine areas has enhanced our understanding for parts of the ocean that are most crucial to healthy, functioning ecosystems.

But science and knowledge will only take us part of the way. We need to act on this knowledge. We have seen that well-structured approaches to conservation and sustainable use clearly deliver strong outcomes, especially when driven by those people and communities that live and work with ocean ecosystems every day.

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, or [The Biodiversity Plan](#), was developed to be a catalyst to mobilize a whole-of-society approach.

It seeks to uncover the enormous amount of experiences, lessons, knowledge, and skills across the world that can help to solve many of the problems that we face.

It speaks to the entirety of the global community: from the office of a Minister trying to find a way for her country to reduce poverty without destroying sensitive ecosystems, to a local fisherman worried about dwindling fish stocks and how he will provide for his family, and to children worried about their future and what kind of planet will be left for them.

Every one of us has a part to play – businesses, governments, young people, indigenous peoples and local communities, you, and me. And that’s why, on this World Oceans Day – and every day – I encourage you to be part of the Plan; The Biodiversity Plan.

Together, we can take care of our oceans, awaken new depths, and uncover how we can live in harmony with our blue planet.

