

Our Ocean Conference Closes in Palau with more than 400 Commitments to Protect Ocean Health and Security

April 22, 2022

enter search term

\$16.35 billion. The conference – co-hosted by the Republic of Palau and the United States – was the first to be held in a small island developing state. Titled “Our Ocean, Our People, Our Prosperity,” the conference highlighted the importance of a healthy ocean to small island developing states—and to all communities where the ocean is a primary source of sustenance.

Since Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry started the Our Ocean Conferences in 2014, they have mobilized more than 1,800 commitments worth nearly \$108 billion across the issue areas of the conference, which include climate change, sustainable fisheries, sustainable blue economies, marine protected areas, maritime security, and marine pollution.

Our Ocean Conferences convene governments and non-state actors – including from the private sector, intergovernmental organizations, academia, and nongovernmental organizations – to commit to concrete action to advance ocean issues, including ocean-climate issues. More than 600 participants representing more than 70 foreign delegations and 150 non-state actors attended the seventh Our Ocean Conference. The role of Indigenous and youth leadership in protecting ocean health came to the forefront throughout the conference.

“Island nations are on the frontlines of the dual ocean and climate challenges. By hosting the meeting, Palau was not only able to show the world just how vulnerable we are to these crises, but also the many solutions available to tackle the problems today if we just choose to use them,” said Surangel S. Whipps, Jr., President of Palau.

The conference also highlighted the importance of ocean-based climate solutions, including shipping decarbonization, marine nature-based solutions, and offshore renewable energy, in keeping the 1.5-degree target within reach and improving global climate resilience.

“Together, we realized extraordinary new commitments and ambition across many sectors. That includes commitments not just from countries but also from the private sector and non-governmental organizations – all of which are critical to winning this fight. Our goal this week was to shine a spotlight on what is happening to our ocean – not just talk, but real commitments to take real actions and make a real difference. We recognize the stakes, and we are committed to acting with the urgency this moment demands.” said John Kerry, the US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate.

The role of Indigenous and youth leadership in protecting ocean health came to the forefront throughout the conference. *“Our ancestral life-giving ocean is the world’s last, and greatest, defense against climate change,”* said youth delegate Kalani Reyes, founder of Deep Pacific Collective of Pacific Peoples. *“We must work together, across generations to protect the ocean.”*

Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry and President of the Republic of Palau Surangel S. Whipps, Jr. co-hosted the conference. In addition to the plenary sessions, the conference featured 22 side events on issues from marine protected areas and blue foods to clean shipping and ocean-climate finance. The agenda of plenary sessions and side events is available on the conference website, www.ourocean2022.pw.

Commitments by issue area

Note that not all commitments are categorized by issue area

enter search term

- Sustainable blue economies: 89 commitments worth \$5.7 billion
- Marine protected areas: 58 commitments worth \$1.3 billion
- Maritime security: 42 commitments worth \$358 million
- Marine pollution: 71 commitments worth \$3.3 billion

Commitments map viewer: <https://ourocean2022.pw/commitments/>

Visit: www.ourocean2022.pw

Our Ocean Palau Photo Album: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/195340062@N05/>



All rights reserved
[JA2_7089](#)

Contact: For additional information, contact Sachi Singeo: +680 767-2403, Michael Crocker: +1 207 522 1366, Patricia Roy: +34 696 90 59 07, ClimateComms@state.gov