

Remarks of Ellen K. Pikitch, Stony Brook University, March 22, 2016, United Nations Room E, 1:15-2:15 PM

UN Briefing on the Conference:

Marine Protected Areas: An Urgent Imperative. A Dialogue between Scientists and Policymakers, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Rome (March 7-9, 2016 (10 x 20 Conference).

*Check against delivery*

Excellencies, colleagues, and other distinguished guests.

It's an honor to address you regarding the results of the 10 x 20 Conference that took place in Rome earlier this month. The conference brought together 25 scientists from around the globe and diplomats representing 33 countries and succeeded in producing its two intended outcomes:

1) A scientists' consensus statement that describes the characteristics, governance principles and financing arrangements that are most likely to lead to effective marine protected areas (MPAs);

and

2) The Rome Call to Action -- a roadmap for achieving the 10 x 20 goal which was jointly agreed by the scientists and diplomats. This is a guide for implementing MPAs that are based on the best available science and are effective, equitable and financially sustainable.

There are 34 points of agreement in the Scientists' Consensus statement, and 14 points in the Rome Call to Action.

Here I will highlight six key points agreed by the scientists that are echoed in the Rome Call to Action:

1. There are many substantial benefits to be gained by increasing MPA coverage including increased food security and livelihood options, and greater resilience in the face of climate change.
2. MPA creation is to be based on the "best available science" and, in fact, there is a wealth of excellent science -- much of it developed in the past decade -- to draw upon.
3. Effective MPAs require full or strong protection and must be well planned and implemented.

4. Diversity and inclusiveness is key to effective implementation and governance of MPA's.
5. We are far from the goal now with only 3.5% of the ocean receiving any form of protection and many gaps in coverage, while at the same time we recognize that 10% needs to be considered a waypoint –not an endpoint
6. MPA's are a good investment in the long term – with benefit:cost ratios recently estimated at 3:1 for 10% coverage and 20:1 for 30% MPA coverage. HOWEVER, the costs come upfront while the benefits are only realized over time, creating a major impediment to securing financing.

Additional Highlights of the Rome Call to Action:

The following specific Calls were made to:

**Nations:** Incorporate the establishment of MPAs into national strategies to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**Funding sources** to promote, mobilize and accelerate investment in the establishment and maintenance of MPAs, as part of the international effort towards the achievement of sustainable development.

**Scientists and other MPA experts** – (and in particular those gathered in Rome) offer their assistance both globally and in specific regions. Specifics to include: identification and mapping of priority areas, and development of a tool-box of best practices for MPA creation, implementation, governance and financing.

**The Steering Committee of the 10x20 Initiative** to bring this call to action to the attention of member states and the international community and to devise and conduct follow-up activities, including further dialogue and development of a “tool-box” for MPAs.

Another highlight of the conference were the MPA case studies presented by scientist-diplomat teams from Palau, The Bahamas, Kiribati, and Italy. These presentations demonstrated that when carefully planned and executed, MPAs do, in fact, yield a wealth of benefits.

In concluding, I thank you for your attention, and would like to acknowledge and thank the government of Italy for its support and leadership of the 10x20 initiative, as well as the UNEP, OSA and all the participants in the conference in Rome.

