

A New World Standard for Ocean Health

20 August 2012

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- Ocean Health Index is the world ' s first model for monitoring ocean sustainability
- Incubated in the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on Oceans, the Ocean Health Index aims to provide governments, businesses and the public to make informed decisions in safeguarding the health and economic value of the world ' s oceans
- For more information about the World Economic Forum ' s Network of Global Agenda Councils <http://www.weforum.org/community/global-agenda-councils>
- To view the Ocean Health Index: <http://www.oceanhealthindex.org>

Geneva, Switzerland, 20 August 2012 – The Ocean Health Index, a new measurement tool to monitor the health of the world ' s oceans and coastlines, has been launched with the endorsement of the World Economic Forum ' s Global Agenda Council on Oceans.

Drawing on data from 50 distinct biophysical and socio-economic indicators, the Ocean Health Index is the first measurement that aims to assess the ocean ' s capacity to provide long-term benefits for human well-being by helping leaders, businesses and the public to identify the critical issues the ecosystem currently faces and how best to counter threats to its long-term sustainability. The project was led by the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis (NCEAS), the University of British Columbia ' s Sea Around Us, Conservation International, National Geographic Society, the New England Aquarium and the Pacific Life Foundation.

“ The Ocean Health Index is the first study to produce an empirical measure that can track the ability of the ocean to sustainably deliver a portfolio of benefits to people, ” said Greg Stone, the chief scientist for Oceans, Conservation International, and a member of the Global Agenda Council on Oceans. “ By defining it in this way, it recognizes that there are many pathways to a healthy ocean and allows decision-makers flexibility in choosing which route to take towards maintaining ocean health. An integral part of what determines ocean health is what people want and need. ”

Martina Gmur, the head of the Network of the Global Agenda Councils, added: “ The Ocean Health Index ' s goals are set as realistic targets that recognize the needs of 7 billion people rather than simply assuming that any human presence is negative. In this way, it offers a realistic opportunity to catalyse a transformational change in the way we nurture, nourish and protect our oceans for the benefit of future generations. ”

The Global Agenda Council on Oceans is a group of international experts from business, academia and civil society, whose goal is to originate, develop and implement ideas that will lead to the sustainable management of the world ' s ocean resources.

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