Policymakers, ocean scientists, thought leaders, entrepreneurs, environmentalists, and philanthropists from nearly 90 countries – as well as viewers from around the world – joined Secretary of State John Kerry for the June 16-17, 2014, Our Ocean Conference. Participants announced new partnerships and initiatives valued at over $1.8 billion as well as new commitments on the protection of more than 3 million square kilometers of the ocean, an area roughly the size of India.

Protecting Ocean Areas

- President Obama announced a commitment to protect some of the most precious U.S. marine landscapes. The Administration will immediately consider how it might expand protections near the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument in the south-central Pacific Ocean, which contains some of the most pristine tropical marine environments in the world.

- President Tong of Kiribati announced the decision of his government to ban commercial fishing in the Phoenix Islands Protected Area – an area over 400,000 square kilometers or roughly the size of California – as of January 2015.

- President Remengesau of Palau described a proposed new National Marine Sanctuary that would cover most of Palau’s exclusive economic zone – an area almost 500,000 square kilometers or nearly two times the size of New Zealand.

- Leonardo DiCaprio pledged through his foundation $7 million to meaningful ocean conservation projects over the next 2 years.

- Elizabeth Wright-Koteka and Kevin Iro of the Cook Islands announced their nation’s intent to phase in the expansion of the Cook Islands Marine Park to cover the entire exclusive economic zone of the Cook Islands, starting with a “no commercial fishing zone” out to 50 miles around islands.

- Sir David King of the United Kingdom announced an upcoming public process to consider establishing a marine conservation zone covering most of the exclusive economic zone of the Pitcairn Islands – an area roughly 830,000 square kilometers or greater than three times the size of the United Kingdom.

- Kenred Dorsett of The Bahamas announced additional marine protected areas to be created by the end of 2014, bringing The Bahamas’ existing network of marine protected areas to at least 10 percent of its near-shore marine environment.
Promoting Sustainable Fisheries

- President Obama announced a comprehensive new national program on seafood transparency and traceability that will enable U.S. consumers to know that the seafood they buy has been harvested legally and sustainably.

- Norway will allocate more than 150 million dollars to promote fisheries development and management abroad, including the building of a third research vessel to train fisheries experts and managers from around the world.

- The United States, in collaboration with /tone™ and GSM Association, launched the mFish public-private partnership, a new initiative to provide mobile devices to small-scale fishers in developing nations with apps designed to access market and weather information and more easily report catches to fisheries managers. The initial pilot markets are in the Philippines and Indonesia.

- The United States announced development of an innovative program, to be pilot tested in partnership with Palau, to detect illegal fishing and other illegal activities at sea using surveillance information from multiple sources. This will enable targeted and cost-effective at-sea enforcement.

- Foreign Minister Dussey of Togo announced a new agreement among Togo, Benin, Ghana, and Nigeria to combat illegal fishing in their area of West Africa.

- With several governments at the conference willing to ratify the Port State Measures Agreement, we will soon be more than halfway toward entry into force of this ground-breaking new treaty that aims to prevent illegally harvested fish from entering the stream of commerce.

Reducing Marine Pollution

- The United States announced the Trash Free Waters program to stop trash and debris from entering the ocean, through sustainable product design, increased material recovery and reuse, and a new nationwide trash prevention ethic.

- Daniella Russo announced the Think Beyond Plastic™ Innovation Forum to advance entrepreneurship and to inspire innovations to reduce global plastic pollution, including in our ocean.

- Norway will allocate up to $1 million for a study on measures to combat marine plastic waste and microplastics.

Preventing and Monitoring Ocean Acidification

- Norway announced that in 2015 it will allocate over $1 billion to climate change mitigation and adaptation assistance, including a substantial contribution to the Green Climate Fund.
• The United States announced an investment of more than $9 million over three years to sustain ocean acidification observing capability of the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network.

• The United States announced new projects through the International Atomic Energy Agency totaling $1.24 million to meet challenges of ocean acidification and marine pollution in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

• The United States announced a contribution of $640,000 to support the Ocean Acidification International Coordination Center in Monaco, bringing its total contribution to $1 million.

• The United States announced new funding for a joint initiative with Canada and Mexico to catalogue North American coastal habitats – such as mangroves, seagrass beds, and salt marshes – that capture and hold carbon and to evaluate the possible use of carbon credits to protect these habitats.

• Mark Spalding of the Ocean Foundation announced the “Friends of the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network” – a new fund to support the network – with a goal to raise an initial $1 million or more by June 30, 2015.

Building Capacity

• Naoko Ishii, CEO of the Global Environment Facility, announced unprecedented funding of $460 million to conserve and restore marine biodiversity, foster sustainable fisheries, and strengthen coastal management.

• Sri Mulyani Indrawati of the World Bank highlighted a new $10 million World Bank/Global Environment Facility investment pending before the World Bank board that would improve management of valuable tuna fisheries and other highly migratory fish stocks in four areas in the developing world.

Supporting Coastal Communities

• The U.S. Agency for International Development announced new coastal programs valued at more than $170 million to support marine conservation, sustainable fisheries, coastal adaptation, and efforts to combat illegal fishing and wildlife trafficking in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Pacific.

• Ted Waitt of the Waitt Foundation announced “Fish Forever” – a commitment of $2.5 million over five years in collaboration with Rare, the Environmental Defense Fund, and the University of California Santa Barbara Bren School – to help communities manage fisheries sustainably.

• The United States announced new assistance to nations in Asia and the Pacific Region to reduce risks from natural disasters, to strengthen community resilience in rebounding from such disasters, and to promote sustainable fisheries management.
Mapping and Understanding the Ocean

- The United States announced the activation of **two new ocean research vessels**, the R/V Neil Armstrong and the R/V Sally Ride, providing a new generation of scientists with cutting-edge technology to explore the ocean and reach for the stars.

- Lynne Hale of The Nature Conservancy announced a three-year effort to **Map the Ocean’s Wealth**, with a **$3.8 million** lead investment from the Lyda Hill Foundation, to quantify and map key ecosystem services that the ocean provides.

- Ted Waitt of the Waitt Foundation announced a **new tool to track the creation and development of marine protected areas** (www.mpaatlas.org), as well as an initiative to help Caribbean nations undertake coastal and marine spatial planning and management.

Our Ocean Conference 2015

- Foreign Minister Muñoz of Chile announced Chile’s intention to host a follow-on **Our Ocean Conference in 2015**.