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INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE TO  
COMBAT OCEAN ACIDIFICATION

# WELCOME PACKET

Dear

## Thank you for your interest in joining the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification (OA Alliance).

As a member of the OA Alliance you will be part of an international network of governments and organizations dedicated to taking urgent action to protect coastal communities and livelihoods from the threat of ocean acidification and other climate-ocean impacts. OA Alliance membership represents nearly **300 million people and over 366 thousand kilometers of coastline.**



The OA Alliance was launched at the **2016 Our Ocean Conference by the four subnational governments of California, Oregon, Washington and British Columbia, Canada** in direct response to some of the first observed impacts of ocean acidification on oyster hatchery production across the North American West Coast during the mid-2000s.

OA Alliance members are leading discussions across climate and ocean platforms, ensuring that climate and ocean commitments, policies and communications accurately reflect their interdependence.

State, municipal, tribal, indigenous and First Nation governments are on the front lines of experiencing the direct impacts of climate and ocean change as they must continually absorb and prepare for adverse impacts to coastal communities and coastal and marine resources including:

- Marine heat waves
- Harmful algal blooms
- Coral bleaching
- Sea-level rise
- Ocean Acidification
- Ocean warming and hypoxia
- More frequent and intense storms

**Together, these impacts are causing harm by displacing people, damaging coastal communities and property, decreasing food security and impacting jobs.**

Policymakers and stakeholders at local, regional, and international scales are collaborating to respond to the accelerating global threat. Local and regional actions can increase the resilience of marine species and ecosystems, yielding multiple co-beneficial outcomes.

The OA Alliance helps decision-makers better understand climate impacts to marine resources and implement actions that reduce impacts and increase biodiversity, adaptive capacity and resiliency.





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In this welcome packet, you will find the following information:

1. A letter from the Governors of California, Washington, Oregon and the Premier of British Columbia inviting you to join the OA Alliance.
2. The Global Call to Action that all members formally endorse upon joining.
3. A Letter of Commitment affirming your decision to join the OA Alliance (to be signed and returned to [Jessie@OAlliance.org](mailto:Jessie@OAlliance.org)).

As a member of the OA Alliance you will be encouraged to create a unique OA Action Plan that will advance some—or all—of the following goals:

- Reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide emissions, the number one cause of ocean acidification
- Advance scientific understanding of climate-ocean impacts
- Reduce local pollutions that exacerbate ocean acidification
- Protect the environment and coastal communities from climate-ocean impacts
- Expand public awareness
- Sustain international and multi-governmental support for addressing this global problem

An OA Action Plan will help guide your government in implementing actionable responses to climate-ocean threats in your region and help leverage existing expertise, partners and resources.

The OA Alliance will help members create OA Action Plans by sharing resources, like [the OA Action Plan Toolkit](#), and by showcasing expertise and experiences of members through webinars, technical information exchanges, synthesis products and through in-person meetings and workshops.

We look forward to working together and taking actions to protect our ocean resources, communities and economies from this global threat.

Sincerely,  
The International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification  
Secretariat



INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE TO  
COMBAT OCEAN ACIDIFICATION





November 18, 2016

To: Governments and organizations committed to protecting ocean health

As leaders of California, Oregon, Washington and British Columbia, we invite you to join the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification (Alliance), a network of governments and organizations responding to threats from ocean acidification.

Ocean acidity has increased by 30 percent and is expected to double over pre-industrial levels by the end of this century, as the ocean absorbs one-third of the carbon dioxide generated by human activities. Extensive field studies conducted worldwide already show significant impacts on fisheries and marine ecosystems from ocean acidification, which will worsen in the future.

To avert a larger crisis, the science is clear that we must act immediately to reduce carbon emissions. Last year, 195 countries signed the historic Climate Agreement in Paris committing to meaningful action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Alliance seeks to build on this momentum by taking action to protect the health of the oceans and addressing the impacts of ocean acidification on our economies and coastal communities.

We invite you to join the Alliance by signing onto the Global Call to Action and committing to actions that:

- Advance scientific understanding of ocean acidification.
- Reduce the causes of acidification.
- Protect the environment and coastal communities from the impacts of a changing ocean.
- Expand public awareness and understanding of acidification.
- Build sustained support for tackling this global problem.

We also invite you to attend the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification Summit, to be held in California on December 13, to declare our commitment to combatting a critical threat to our marine ecosystems and the communities and economies that depend on them.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Edmund G. Brown Jr. in black ink.

Edmund G. Brown Jr., Governor  
State of California

Handwritten signature of Christy Clark in blue ink.

Christy Clark, Premier  
Province of British Columbia

Handwritten signature of Kate Brown in black ink.

Kate Brown, Governor  
State of Oregon

Handwritten signature of Jay Inslee in black ink.

Jay Inslee, Governor  
State of Washington



# International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification A GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION

## I. The Threat of Ocean Acidification

*We, the endorsing parties to this Call to Action hereby agree as follows:*

- A. Emissions of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) into the atmosphere are increasing the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> being absorbed by the world's oceans. Increasing CO<sub>2</sub> levels have altered the basic chemical composition of our oceans causing them to become more acidified.
- B. Increasing acidification combined with other climate-change driven changes in ocean conditions, including warmer temperatures and reduced oxygen levels, are already causing unprecedented damage to ocean and marine ecosystems.
- C. Acidification adversely impacts commercial, recreational, subsistence, and ceremonial shellfish harvest and other seafood industries around the world, which sustain jobs, support coastal economies and feed billions of people. Species of crab, lobsters, oysters, clams, mussels, squid and species of plankton that are critically important food chain species for fish, marine mammals and other ocean life are adversely impacted.
- D. If CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are not reduced quickly and dramatically, acidification will worsen and further damage ocean species, marine ecosystems, and coastal economies.
- E. Several existing international networks coordinate science, research and monitoring efforts on ocean acidification regionally and around the world. Increased global participation in these science and monitoring networks are essential to understand and prepare for the threat posed to our oceans.
- F. In 2015, 195 countries signed the historic Climate Agreement in Paris committing to meaningful and timely action to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. The world's nations must succeed in reducing emissions in order to secure the health of the oceans, and thereby protect the natural systems on which the planet depends.

## II. Global Call to Action

- A. We the endorsing parties commit our strong support for actions to reduce emissions and mitigate future changes to the ocean, and we call for ambitious international action to combat ocean acidification and other climate-related changes in ocean conditions. For this purpose, we hereby establish the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification (Alliance).
- B. The mission of the Alliance is to identify, coordinate and expand meaningful and timely actions to combat ocean acidification and limit other climate change-driven changes to the world's oceans.



- C. The Alliance will advance the five goals listed below in order to identify, coordinate and expand actions to combat ocean acidification. Through the Alliance, members will work collectively and individually to secure, pursue and advocate for these actions.

1. **Advance scientific understanding of ocean acidification:** Improve the understanding of ocean acidification globally and within the members' regions, including support for developing and implementing adequate monitoring networks, and prioritized research and monitoring within their region.

The Alliance is committed to working with and supporting existing global networks dedicated to science and monitoring of ocean acidification and to share information and best practices that will benefit the global community.

2. **Take meaningful actions to reduce causes of acidification:** Implement actions that will prevent or slow acidification through reducing atmospheric emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>, reducing additions of land-based pollutants, including nutrients that contribute to acidification, and other measures that will mitigate the causes of acidification.
3. **Protect the environment and coastal communities from impacts of acidification and a changing ocean:** Implement actions to assist ocean-dependent communities and industries to adapt to changing ocean chemistry, and actions that increase the resilience of regional marine ecosystems and the ability to withstand increasing acidity in marine waters.
4. **Expand public awareness and understanding of acidification:** Engage policy makers, scientists and the public about the damage resulting from, and the growing threat posed by, ocean acidification, as well as local actions that may be taken to mitigate ocean acidification. The Alliance will seek to participate in, and host or convene discussions where appropriate at, international events focused on climate change action and the impact of carbon emissions on ocean health.
5. **Build sustained international support for tackling this global problem:** Secure adequate funding, nationally and regionally, for ongoing, enhanced, and coordinated research and monitoring systems that will continue to inform governments, other organizations and the public across the world about the increasing impacts to marine resources and ecosystems. Significantly increase investment in actions to mitigate and adapt to these impacts.

- D. The Alliance invites countries, states and provinces, counties and cities, Tribes and First Nations, and governments that are concerned about the impacts of ocean acidification and are ready and able to highlight the issue of ocean acidification, both within their region and globally to join the Alliance. The Alliance further invites universities, non-governmental organizations, associations, businesses, and other parties to join and participate as affiliate members.





- E. Alliance members commit to supporting the work of the Alliance broadly and to taking meaningful actions within their jurisdiction as allowed by their existing capacity, by crafting their own jurisdictional action plans. Action plans should focus on advancing the five goals of the Alliance.
- F. Alliance members will be supported in their efforts through information exchange of the most recent and relevant science, best practices to mitigate and adapt, sharing examples of existing action plans, and through periodic convening of members at high-level international oceans and climate-related meetings.
- G. This declaration shall have no legal effect; impose no legally binding obligation enforceable in any court of law or other tribunal of any sort, nor create any funding expectation; nor shall signatories be responsible for actions of third parties or associates.
- H. Decisions on actions taken or supported by the Alliance shall be made by notice and consensus of the members, or where consensus is lacking, by a supermajority of the members. The Alliance may identify and appoint an administrative center to manage Alliance activities and resources. As needed, further procedures will be determined at future gatherings of the Alliance.

***Endorsed by the Founding Members of the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification on December 13, 2016, in San Diego, California.***





## International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification LETTER OF COMMITMENT

With this letter, we join the **International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification** and, in doing so, **endorse the Global Call to Action** committing to advance the key goals of the Alliance that:

- Advance scientific understanding of ocean acidification.
- Reduce the causes of acidification.
- Protect the environment and coastal communities from the impacts of a changing ocean.
- Expand public awareness and understanding of acidification.
- Build sustained support for tackling this global problem.

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(Member Name)

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(Signature)

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(Printed Signers Name)

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(Title/Position)

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(Date)

**Disclosure:**

We understand that joining the OA Alliance and signing this document is voluntary and shall have no legal effect; impose no legally binding obligation enforceable in any court of law or other tribunal of any sort, nor create any funding expectation; nor shall signatories be responsible for actions of third parties or associates.

