

# Ocean Conservancy's Ocean Acidification Action Plan

---

*September, 2018*

## **Ocean Conservancy's engagement**

As a founding Affiliate non-governmental partner of the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification (the Alliance), Ocean Conservancy is committed to supporting the Alliance's work to increase global attention on actions that address the causes of ocean acidification (OA) and changing ocean conditions, and reduce future impacts to coastal communities, economies, and the health of our ocean. We believe the Alliance is an important international network that is well-positioned to facilitate measurable international action on ocean acidification. Our work with the Alliance is guided by the goals for all work on ocean acidification at Ocean Conservancy, while making the best use of our unique organizational strengths.

## **Goals for our ocean acidification work**

- Develop an engaged, powerful group of decision-makers and stakeholders from all levels of government who factor OA into their decision-making and who begin to take steps to address the causes of acidification.
- Enable decision-makers to identify OA as a tangible, actionable threat to coastal businesses and livelihoods that is occurring along with other ocean issues.
- Provide ocean-focused reasons for elected leaders at all levels to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from industrial activities.

## **Ocean Conservancy's ocean acidification program**

Ocean Conservancy has had a dedicated ocean acidification program since 2012. We use a strategic blend of policy, communications, and science synthesis that is proven to deliver results on the above three guiding goals in U.S. Federal, regional, and state environments. By elevating the stories of businesses and communities that stand to be affected by acidification and using the latest science and policy to develop practical actions that combat ocean acidification, we have mobilized substantial bipartisan support for action on ocean acidification in a highly polarized political era.

## **Organizational strengths we provide to the Alliance**

- Long-term engagement on ocean acidification communication, science and advocacy
- Repeated success in developing practical, bipartisan policies that advance OA science and action
- Extensive network of OA-focused coastal community members, elected leaders, communicators, scientists, and citizen advocates
- Consistent success in communicating about ocean acidification to a range of audiences
- Internationally recognized science expertise in ocean acidification and ocean climate change
- Comprehensive understanding of the links among ocean acidification and other pressing ocean change issues

## Ocean Conservancy's support of the Alliance

Ocean Conservancy has provided ocean acidification expertise and expert connections, support capacity, and vision to the Alliance since the Alliance's founding in 2016. We provided staff support to the Alliance in 2017-2018 to assist Alliance recruitment and onboarding of new members., and we have offered strategic guidance on outreach. Going forward, we will continue many of these activities in our work as Alliance Affiliate members. Our work will fall into three interrelated major categories, detailed below.

### 1) *Connecting thought leaders and engaged partners working on ocean issues:*

- **Convening leaders:** In 2017 we helped convene OA Alliance members at the Our Ocean Conference and the Conference of the Parties 23. Global collaboration is essential to elevate oceans within international climate negotiations and protect coastal communities. We will continue to help bring leaders together to discuss acidification and other ocean issues.
- **Identifying the path forward:** We have produced a highly regarded [peer-reviewed publication](#) outlining the legislative and non-legislative actions that communities can take to begin acting on ocean acidification. This type of analysis requires deep expertise in the issue and how it interacts with other ocean issues and policies. We will continue to provide synthesized knowledge and science-policy integration in pursuit of practical, well-researched actions addressing acidification.

### 2) *Facilitating knowledge exchanges among experts from all arenas:*

- **Exchanging best practices:** Shellfish growers have been the first responders to changes in ocean chemistry and are often on the cutting edge of dealing with OA impacts. We have already facilitated several information exchanges among shellfish growers domestically and abroad. We will organize similar exchanges among individuals from OA Alliance member nations and groups.
- **Elevating voices of communities impacted by OA:** When ocean acidification threatened the Pacific Northwest U.S. oyster industry, we provided pathways for those family business owners and workers to tell their stories to their elected officials and the public, contributing to lasting action. We will continue to help those with stories to share them with leaders positioned to make change, at all levels of government.

### 3) *Integrating and synthesizing knowledge:*

- **Disseminating science & communications techniques:** Through outreach materials for a range of audiences, we provide plain-language explanations of the latest developments in ocean acidification to decision-makers and stakeholders. We also counsel partners on how to tell these stories accurately and movingly, providing impetus for action. We will continue to do so, partnering with Alliance members wherever possible to multiply our impact.
- **Bridging the gap between science and policy:** Using targeted ocean acidification legislation, we have cultivated ocean champions in the U.S. Congress. We can show OA Alliance members what has worked and offer advice on turning research results into local solutions.

## Partnership opportunities

Ocean Conservancy has a long history of working with partners of all kinds. The International OA Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification is ideally positioned to build unexpected partnerships and collaborations among members. We look forward to working with other Alliance members to develop imaginative ways to raise awareness about acidification and to spur action. Please get in touch!