

Actions taken to address the effects of climate change on the oceans : New Zealand submission to the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs

January 2017

Introduction

In order to assist in the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General on the topic of the effects of climate change on the oceans, the Office of Legal Affairs has invited contributions from States outlining action undertaken to address the effects of climate change on the oceans.

This submission outlines some of the actions that New Zealand is taking to address the effects of climate change on the oceans, with a particular focus on the impacts of ocean acidification.

Executive Summary

The effects of climate change on the oceans have a particular focus on Ocean Acidification (OA). OA is an emerging issue with significant implications domestically and in the Pacific region.

Internationally, as part of our climate-related support efforts, New Zealand provides development assistance to Pacific island countries to strengthen resilience to OA and to build their capacity to manage the impacts of this emerging issue with significant implications for their economies and the region. Domestically, central and local government provides funding and supports work into the socio-economic value of the ocean and the impacts of OA on ecosystems.

International action

New Zealand, in partnership with the United States and SPREP, co-hosted and co-funded the International Workshop on Ocean Acidification: State of the Science Considerations for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in 2014. New Zealand, in partnership with the United States and SPREP, co-hosted and co-funded the first partnership of its kind.

The Partnership aims to identify and implement practical adaptation actions; undertake research and monitoring initiatives; find ways to address capacity-building needs and raise awareness; and build resilience of people, communities, and the environment to OA, largely by reducing other local stresses on the marine environment. More broadly, over half of the New Zealand Aid Programme managed funds are allocated to the Pacific and the Partnership is helping to ensure that hard won development gains in the region are not undermined by the impacts of OA.

Other donor partners are welcome to join the Partnership which currently includes funding from the Principality of Monaco and co-financing from the James Cook University, Australia.

Domestic action

New Zealand collects scientific data from 14 coastal stations around the country working with regional councils and the aquaculture industry, using methodology aligned with the Global Ocean Acidification -Observing Network (GOA -ON) and standard references. \$GGLWLRQDOO\ WKH QDWLRQDO SURMHFW HQWLWOHG³&RDVWDO ODQDJHPHQW' & \$5,0s devoted to coastal water acidification on species of particular environmental and economic importance.

Outreach and engagement with 0ERUL VFKRROV DQG RWKHU FRPPXQLW\ JURXS

Awareness -raising

A sub-project within CARIM focuses on outreach and includes engagement with OERUL schools and other community groups for sampling, information exchange and awareness-raising across three regions of New Zealand. An OA factsheet has been provided for regional councils and a resource booklet is being produced for New Zealand schools. Scientists have discussed OA at a number of public and industry-based fora and non-science end -

Additionally, New Zealand and United States scientists and science organisations exchange information and coordinate activities on OA as part of the US -NZ Joint