



STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH All of God's Creation

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, June 12, 2022

Revitalizing Our Ocean

The ocean is “a space where a lot of sectors are operating: fishing, tourism, coastal development, ports, shipping.... All these different activities can generate income for our nations and communities, but they have to work hand in hand. At the end, it’s not a Planet Earth; it’s a **Planet Ocean**.... Every drop of water has life in it. And we also have to understand that we depend on the ocean, that it affects climate, that it makes our planet habitable.” (Interview with Kerstin Forsberg for TIME, April 25/May 2, 2022, by Jeffrey Kluger)

“The ocean connects, sustains, and supports us all — but its health is at a tipping point. We need to work together to create a new balance with the ocean that no longer depletes its bounty but instead restores its vibrancy and brings it new life.” (*Oceanic Global*, May 25, 2022) “Every day that our ocean’s ecosystems remain unprotected, drilling, mining and overfishing chip away at the fragile marine diversity that once thrived off our coasts.” (*Environment America*, December 17, 2021)

“One of President Biden’s most ambitious conservation goals is the **30x30 initiative**: a plan to protect 30 percent of U.S. lands and inland waters and 30 percent of ocean areas by 2030. Right now, only about 23 percent of U.S. ocean areas are fully or highly protected, leaving large swaths of marine ecosystems vulnerable to biodiversity decline and worsening climate change impacts.” (NRDC, Natural Resources Defense Council, December 2021)

On May 31, 2022, President Biden declared **June as National Ocean Month**.

“From the air we breathe to the food we eat, our magnificent ocean touches every aspect of our lives. It helps regulate the climate, supports millions of jobs, and serves as a place for exploration, commerce, and recreation. As it sustains and connects us, the ocean is woven into the cultures of local and Indigenous coastal and island communities....

Earlier this year, my Administration released a sobering report on sea level rise caused by climate change. Addressing this issue requires collaboration and commitment. Working with State, Tribal, Territorial, and local partners, we will co-develop ocean-based climate solutions, including the **United States Ocean-Climate Action Plan**, which will help us mitigate and adapt to the effects of the climate crisis....

A National Ocean Plan will develop the ocean economy and create good-paying American jobs while protecting vital marine ecosystems. Toward that aim, we are already deploying offshore wind energy and joining international initiatives to manage the planet’s ocean equitably and sustainably. We are also working to restore coastal habitats and ecosystems with nature-based solutions that protect coastal communities from flooding and storms.” (*A Proclamation on National Ocean Month, 2022*)

The beauty and bounty of our global ocean, which covers 71% of the planet’s surface, cannot be overstated. Let’s hold our nation to the plan to do our part to protect it!