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**GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR
OCEANS**

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More than 70 nations, private companies and international organizations declare support for Global Partnership for Oceans

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil, June 16, 2012 -- Over 70 countries, civil society groups, private firms and international organizations have declared their support for the new Global Partnership for Oceans (GPO), signaling their commitment to work together around coordinated goals to restore the world's oceans to health and productivity.

Among those throwing their public support behind a "Declaration for Healthy and Production Oceans to Help Reduce Poverty" at the Rio+20 conference are 14 private firms and associations including some of the largest seafood purchasing companies in the world, representing over \$6 billion per year in seafood sales, as well as one of the world's largest cruise lines.

In total so far, 10 nations, 26 civil society groups, 14 private sector firms and associations, eight research institutions, five UN agencies and conventions, seven regional and multi-lateral organizations and six private foundations are supporting the Declaration. Further support is expected in the run-up to the formal Rio+20 Conference.

The Global Partnership for Oceans is a new and diverse coalition of public, private, civil society, research and multilateral interests working together for healthy and productive oceans. It was first announced in February 2012 by World Bank President Robert B. Zoellick at the World Oceans Summit and has been gathering growing support.

Private sector support includes the seafood purchasing and food retailing companies, COSTCO, Darden Restaurants, Gorton's Inc., High Liner Foods Inc., Icelandic Group and Sanford Ltd as well as cruise line, Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd, media production company MediaMobz and investors Paine & Partners and Oceanis Partners. The World Ocean Council, an international business alliance of 50 companies committed to corporate ocean responsibility, are also supportive of the new Partnership.

Country supporters include: Australia, Monaco, New Zealand, Norway, South Korea, and the US Government's overseas development arm, USAID -- all participating as part of their commitment to international sustainable development. Coastal and island nations, including Fiji, Kiribati, Palau, Samoa the Seychelles are also participants in the Partnership, which they see as key to providing coordinated support to their development needs.

National and international civil society organizations like Conservation International, Environmental Defense Fund, IUCN, Plant-A-Fish, RARE Inc., The Nature Conservancy and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) as well as specialized groups like Sustainable Fisheries Partnership, Ecotrust, Ocean Recovery Alliance, and Aquaculture Stewardship Council, among many others, are also putting their knowledge and operational capabilities behind the Partnership.

Announcing the unprecedented public statement of commitment in a keynote address to the Global Ocean Forum here today, **World Bank Vice President for Sustainable Development Rachel Kyte** said the Global Partnership for Oceans (GPO) had garnered enormous support from across the oceans spectrum.

“Everyone can see the value in being part of a Partnership that aims to turn around the decline in our oceans,” Kyte said. “Everyone stands to benefit if the oceans are better protected, better managed and better understood for the important ecosystem services they provide.”

Norway’s Minister for Development Heikki Holmas said: *“Norway supports the Global Partnership for Oceans because it reinforces and reinvigorates global efforts to ensure the sustainable use of the oceans and to further curb illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing. The GPO is vital to ensuring that a fair share of better managed ocean resources is redistributed to benefit the world’s poorest.”*

The Declaration commits the Partnership to mobilizing “significant human, financial and institutional resources for effective public and private investments in priority ocean areas”. It aims to improve capacity and close the recognized gap in action in implementing global, regional and national commitments for healthy and productive oceans.

It also recognizes that despite global commitments made to date as well as the efforts of many organizations, governments, enterprises and individuals, the oceans remain “under severe threat from pollution, unsustainable harvesting of ocean resources, habitat destruction, ocean acidification and climate change”.

To tackle these threats, the Partnership is targeting three key focus areas:

- sustainable seafood and livelihoods from capture fisheries and aquaculture;
- critical coastal and ocean habitats and biodiversity;
- pollution reduction.

Among the GPO’s agreed goals are targets for significantly increasing global food fish production from sustainable aquaculture and sustainable fisheries; halving the current rate of natural habitat loss and increasing marine-managed and protected areas to at least 10 percent of coastal and marine areas; and reducing marine pollution especially from marine litter, waste water and excess nutrients.

*“Over the past 10 years we have made great strides towards ocean sustainability in our operations and through investments made by The Ocean Fund,” said **Jamie Sweeting, Vice President, Environmental Stewardship & Global Chief Environmental Officer of Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd.**, “However, we believe that by combining our efforts with those of others within the Global Partnership for Oceans we will achieve better results for healthy oceans as well as for our business.”*

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For more information on the Global Partnership for Oceans:

www.globalpartnershipforoceans.org