



# BLUE LEADERS 30x30

In 2019, heads of State and Ministers from around the world came together for two high profile events to amplify calls to urgently reduce emissions and promote the resilience of the ocean in the face of the climate crisis. This group of leaders has become known as, 'The Blue Leaders.' The first Blue Leaders



event took place in New York on the margins of the 2019 United Nations General Assembly and the second in Madrid, Spain during the 2019 UN Climate Change Conference, 'The Blue COP.' At each of these events the Blue Leaders have championed the call to realize protection of 30% of the ocean by 2030 (30x30), through the establishment of a global network of highly and fully protected MPAs and the successful negotiation of a robust new UN High Seas Treaty.

The next Convention on Biological Diversity COP will determine the post-2020 biodiversity conservation targets, including a new target for the protection of the ocean. Scientists and conservationists have called for **highly and fully protecting at least 30% of the ocean by 2030** to stave off the worst impacts of climate change and other compounding stressors. In order to secure a new global ocean protection target, the international community must agree to it by consensus. Therefore, in order to ensure a 30% protection target, a large coalition of countries must be catalyzed to drive momentum forward. The new

global ocean protection target will also set a goal for what percentage of the ocean should be highly and fully protected. The Blue Leaders are unique from other groups calling for 30x30 in that they are focused on calling for 30% to be **fully and highly** protected.

“Fully protected” means that no extractive or destructive activities are allowed and “highly protected” means only light extractive activities, such as subsistence or small-scale fishing with minimal impact, are allowed. Fully protected ocean parks where extractive, polluting, and destructive human pursuits are banned provide sanctuaries for ocean wildlife.

In addition to calling for a new global ocean protection target under the CBD, the Blue Leaders are also championing the successful conclusion of a new United Nations Treaty for the conservation of marine biodiversity on the high seas. This new treaty could help establish conservation measures including marine protected areas in areas beyond national jurisdiction. The negotiations for this treaty are ongoing and high-level government conservation leadership is needed to ensure the conservation provisions are robust and effective.

The government of Belgium has initiated a Blue Leaders social media campaign which aims to





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maintain high level engagement around 30x30 and the high seas agreement. The campaign utilizes twitter and Instagram to feature videos and photos of Blue Leaders showcasing their country's commitment and support for 30x30 and the high seas treaty. The campaign is also working to activate the public in key countries.

Blue Leaders who have joined the virtual campaign as of March 2021 include: Belgium, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, Nigeria, Spain and Sweden.

The Blue Leader countries who participated in the 2019 events include: Belgium, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, France, Germany, Maldives, Micronesia, Monaco, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Seychelles, Sint Maarten, Spain and Sweden.

The Blue Leaders are supported by partner organizations, the Natural Resources Defense Council and Mission Blue. To join, please contact Sophie Mirgaux, Belgium's Special Envoy for the Ocean:

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KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

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