

SUMMARY

Crafting High-Impact Voluntary Commitments to Prevent and Reduce Marine Litter

Guide & Scorecard Overview



Ocean
Recovery Alliance

Made possible with funding from
United Nations Environment

To View Report & Annex, Please Visit:

<http://bit.ly/PlasticCommitments2020>

Crafting High-Impact Voluntary Commitments to Prevent and Reduce Marine Litter

Guide and Scorecard Overview

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28F Central Tower
20 Queen's Road
Central
Hong Kong
www.oceanrecov.org

DISCLAIMER

This report was made possible by funding from [UN Environment](#) with the research and methodology conducted and created by [Ocean Recovery Alliance](#), a non-profit organization (NGO) focused on creating innovative solutions and collaborations to improve the health of the ocean. Its dedication to broad ocean governance and new thought leadership, combined with its network of organizations, entrepreneurs and innovators, particularly related to plastic sustainability and circularity, helps create engaged and active dialogues where gaps often occur due to entities that often do not have a history of working with one another. The group creates purposefully designed activities to educate, build awareness and provide solutions which inspire positive societal change at community, national and international levels.

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Main authors:	Rob Steir, Berna Tural, and Doug Woodring
Contributors:	Amy Brooks, Mathilda Blume, Elisa Maria Klophaus, Connor Keisling and Linda O'Doughda
Design / Layout:	Upendra Kumar (GraphixCare) and Jo Farrell
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HAVE WE BREACHED THE LIMIT?

Dear Stakeholders Committed To Preventing and Reducing Marine Litter

Water knows no boundaries - nor does plastic pollution. Marine litter has reached a critical point, threatening the world's life-sustaining resource—our ocean. International stakeholders from all sectors—local and national governments, businesses large and small, industry associations, academia, and civil society organizations—are banding together. With an admirable intent to address this critical and growing problem, they are collaborating in ways never seen before.

Plastic pollution is a diverse challenge to solve, due to the wide variety of types, chemical mixtures, weights, colors and properties, meaning that it usually needs to be separated into its own “family” before it can be used at scale, with the quality needed for reincarnation into new uses. There is still a high likelihood that without new versions of commitments which can readily be grown and replicated, increasing amounts of plastic will continue to reach the ocean. This will be exacerbated by projected population expansion and consumption in the coming decades, which is countered with a lack of capacity across communities for recovery, reuse and repurposing, if it was not replaced or avoided in the first place.

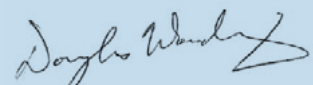
Since 2010, Ocean Recovery Alliance has been educating and building awareness among a broad spectrum of global stakeholders, young and old, about the problems of plastics and our ocean. Based in Asia, with programs and potential policy improvements that can be adopted across borders, it has often taken the lead in championing new ideas and creativity in bringing social and business changes together to create positive outcomes.

This report helps to showcase the fact that “business as usual” in how we organize our global efforts, allocate resources, and engage in plastic pollution reduction has not nearly been adequate enough to remediate the volumes of material that is being consumed, and then disposed of. Today, groups like the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and Terracycle have gained momentum in mobilizing more efficient material management for the future, supply chains and design for a reduction in waste. **This report complements these efforts by introducing a new, standardized set of guidelines and parameters which can be measured and monitored, allowing others to benefit from the visibility of successful commitments across all sectors of the economy. This also includes programs which target the recovery of the large volumes of “plastic waste” inventory which already exists on the planet today.**

We call this new paradigm, **Commitments 2.0**. This guide and scorecard for “Crafting High-Impact Voluntary Commitments to Prevent and Reduce Marine Litter” is meant to serve as a launching point for all stakeholders to use for the development of new voluntary commitments that can be replicated, locally adapted, and scaled worldwide.

By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, particularly from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.

~ UN Sustainable Development Goals



Douglas Woodring

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To view full report and annex, please visit:

<http://bit.ly/PlasticCommitments2020>

WE HAVE ONE PLANET

THE AMOUNT OF
PLASTICS ENTERING THE
OCEAN IS INCREASING
EVERY YEAR

SLOWING THE FLOW OF
PLASTIC INTO THE
OCEAN IS ONLY
POSSIBLE WITH GLOBAL
COORDINATION

WHAT WE CAN
MEASURE, WE CAN
IMPROVE

THE WORLD CAN SHARE
EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS

WE SHOULD
REPRIORITIZE &
IMPROVE OUR
COMMITMENTS

THE WORLD CAN USE
ALL RESOURCES – TIME,
EFFORTS, AND CAPITAL
– MORE WISELY

1

WHY A NEW MINDSET FOR CRAFTING VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS IS CRITICAL FOR PREVENTING & REDUCING MARINE LITTER

THE VITAL ROLE PLAYED BY VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS

Ocean-based voluntary commitments have been made since the United Nations convened the RIO+20 conference in 2012 by the global community, i.e. the stakeholders. The 2017 UN Ocean Conference alone generated over 1,400 voluntary commitments, complete with an official online registry - The Registry of Voluntary Commitments.

As of November 1st, 2019, there were 1,573 voluntary commitments registered, of which 646 have been tagged to address Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 14.1, focusing on the prevention and significant reduction of marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine litter and nutrient pollution.

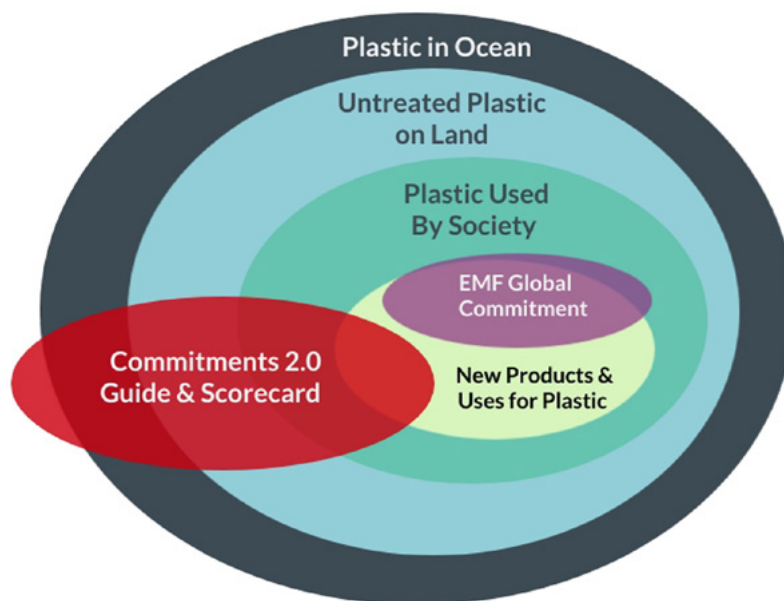
Listing voluntary commitments on a unified, transparent registry is important for stakeholders working on the reduction of plastic pollution, as it helps to showcase inspiring examples of what may work (and lessons for what might not). It also helps to raise the visibility for industry, decision makers, leaders and consumers, and how they might be able to complement these activities, or create their own.

In sum, these voluntary commitments should serve as the vanguard of what the world is doing to prevent and reduce marine litter.



Figure 1: <https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments>

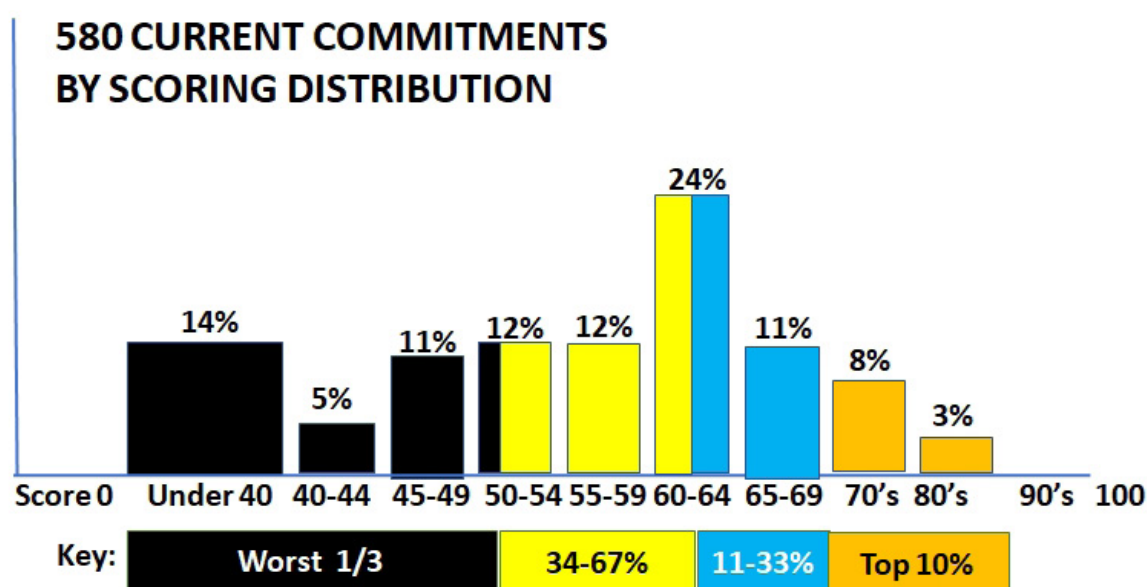
RETHINKING HOW STAKEHOLDERS CRAFT IMPACTFUL VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS



In our analysis of all of the commitments scored, the Voluntary Commitments announced to prevent and reduce marine litter are usually focused on the following types of initiatives:

- (a) Those centered on plastic pollution which is already in the ocean, and which needs to be collected and disposed of;
- (b) Those which target plastic which is littering the land, or has yet to be discarded by local communities; and
- (c) those focused on new products and packaging which may bring reductions in use, avoidance or alternative materials, increased use of recycled content, or which reduce the harmful effects of the plastic in some way.

The review of 580 commitments which focused on, or had high association with, SDG 14.1 and marine litter, included commitments (publicly listed between 2014 and 2018 at various Our Ocean Conferences, the UN Ocean Conference, and from the World Plastics Council).



UNDERWHELMING AND UNDERPERFORMING - ANALYSIS OF 580 VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS FROM 2014–2018

Using the new **Commitment Scorecard** which was created for this report, the results showed that we are not collectively doing enough to prevent or reduce marine litter around the world.

Only 11% of 580 commitments received scores higher than 70 (out of 100) due to poor data capture, lack of funding updates, non-disclosure of key information, and loosely-defined commitment completion dates.

As a result of this analysis (with further information on the scorecard and toolkit explained below), we believe that the goals and objectives of how new commitments are built and developed requires an adjustment in focus, engagement, and problem-solving mindsets, compared to what has been collectively applied in the past. With a new lens from which to view commitments, which is not only related to the physical manifestation where the commitment makes impacts, we have introduced the term **Commitments 2.0**.

Commitments 2.0 can help to inspire and align thinking in how new commitments are crafted differently in order to achieve maximum impact. Contrasting versions of commitments can be seen on the next page:

CURRENT COMMITMENTS

- Primarily crafted to build and expand awareness
- Use scientific investigation to prove the problem, and to quantify its severity in order to spur action
- Promote policy considerations to enact plastic bag bans and levies (for example)
- Create one-off projects and programs without actively thinking how they can be replicated and scaled by others
- Allow stakeholders to act as if “Business as Usual” works, and that nothing more is expected of them after they publicly list the commitments

THE NEW MINDSET OF COMMITMENTS 2.0

- Primarily to drive actions: replicate and scale what is working
- Mobilize action by securing funding/resources for completing both large and small data-driven commitments with results-sharing outcomes
- Work closely with local governments (and local needs)
- to turn policies into results
- Create purposeful projects and programs that can be replicated and scaled by others
- Allow for stakeholder accountability for commitments via ongoing data capture, measurement, and recognition of successes

3

INTRODUCING A GUIDE TO MORE IMPACTFUL COMMITMENTS

FEATURING:

- Five Guiding Principles
- 11 Key Criteria For Crafting Impactful Commitments
- Step-by-Step ***Commitment Template***
- The ***Commitment Scorecard***

FIVE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In order to facilitate stronger commitments and results, a set of 11 key criteria has been created with five guiding principles which a well-structured voluntary commitment can aim to adhere to:

- 1) **Structure commitments to be replicated and scaled:**
A ***Commitments 2.0*** stakeholder first looks to find another stakeholder who completed a similar commitment with the similar target results. If none exists, the new voluntary commitment should be designed to be replicated and scaled, if possible.
- 2) **Pursue collaborations that engage multiple stakeholders:**
A ***Commitments 2.0*** stakeholder realizes that the greater the number of collaborators, including local constituents and groups involved, the greater the probability of success.
- 3) **Capture data and share results:**
A ***Commitments 2.0*** stakeholder ties data capture and measurement into the commitment plan in order to track progress, impact, and effectiveness of the commitment. These data are then shared with the global community to be considered for use in other countries/locations as best applicable.
- 4) **Build in long-term impact and continuity:**
A ***Commitments 2.0*** stakeholder devises a local commitment that can be self-sustaining, continuous, and, at the same time, impactful.
- 5) **Secure proper/adequate funding (based on the relevant project needs and scale), with short-term milestones:**
A ***Commitments 2.0*** stakeholder has to secure appropriate resources (staff, funding, volunteers, partners, etc.) at all stages of each voluntary commitment to assure success.

THE 11 KEY CRITERIA OF HIGH-IMPACT VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS

After reviewing the written descriptions of the 580 voluntary commitments focused on reducing marine litter and microplastics which are hosted on the UN Environment's platform, it was found that each commitment could be broken down into 11 distinct key criteria.

Each is valuable, with a set of traits which stakeholders can use when constructing a new voluntary commitment, updating or modifying existing ones.

- 1 Primary Stakeholder
- 2 Primary Intervention Focus
- 3 Type of Initiative
- 4 Location
- 5 Scalability
- 6 Outcome/Effort and Time
- 7 Intent
- 8 Time to Completion
- 9 Resources Allocated
- 10 Resources Deployed
- 11 Data Capture

We further define these 11 criteria and break them into 3 distinct sections:

- 1 Facts
- 2 Magnitude/Potential Impact
- 3 Velocity/Acceleration

FACTS						
PRIMARY STAKEHOLDER	Multi-National Governments	National Government Regional/Local Government	Plastic/Waste Industries	Industry or Business NGO'S/PPPs	ACADEMICS	Individuals/People
INTERVENTION FOCUS	(Action-Oriented) Both P&U and EO	(Action-Oriented) Either P&U and EO; plus a KO purpose	(Action-Oriented) IO	(Knowledge - Oriented) Both P&U and EO	(Knowledge - Oriented) Either P&U and EO	(Knowledge-Oriented) IO
TYPE OF INITIATIVE	Reduce/Eliminate Uses of Plastic	Commercialization	Collect & Treat Waste	Facilitate/Coordinate Role	Education/Awareness	Other
	Product Redesign	Donor Funding /Investment	Collect & Recycle or Repurpose	Policy/Regulations	Research & Monitoring	
	Action Plan	Emergency Response	Recollect & Reuse			
LOCATION	Land-Based	All	Rivers	Coastal Areas	Only Oceans	Only Islands

Facts: These four criteria define and describe the commitment: who is the primary stakeholder; what is the primary intervention focus; what is the type of initiative; and where does it occur/who does it impact.

Primary Stakeholder	The stakeholder is responsible for setting and executing a commitment—the key player taking action (the initiative) and achieving results
Primary Intervention Focus	<p>There are, broadly speaking, 6 types of interventions that can be the focus of the commitment. Choices take into consideration if the type of intervention is either ACTION-ORIENTED with the aim to change the status quo or KNOWLEDGE-ORIENTED with the aim to add to the knowledge base.</p> <p>Interventions can be further classified based on where they occur in the plastics value chain from initial creation to end of life:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) For the “production and use” of plastics (P&U)—a focus upstream in the plastic value chain that aim to reduce and/or eliminate plastic end-of-life flows through changes in consumer behavior (i.e. avoid use, use alternatives) and developing new products, materials and business models that use less virgin plastics and more recycled plastic. 2) For post-use plastics that can “enter the ocean” (EO)—a focus on managing plastic end-of-flows to divert it from ending up in the ocean, such as waste management initiatives, anti-littering public measures, and increased recycling 3) For plastic already “in the ocean” (IO)—a focus on the cleanup and/or mitigate impacts of plastics already in the ocean or research impacting plastic in ocean

	<p>Here are the intervention types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action-Oriented Commitments that focus on the production and use of plastics • Action-Oriented Commitments that focus on post-use plastic that can enter the ocean. • Action-Oriented Commitments that focus on cleaning up the plastic in the ocean • Knowledge-Oriented Commitments that focus on the production and use of plastics • Knowledge-Oriented Commitments that focus on post-use plastic that can enter the ocean. • Knowledge-Oriented Commitments that focus on cleaning up the plastic in the ocean
Type of Initiative	<p>What is the focused high-level action that the commitment declares to take?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Plan/Doing the Work—Taking a project from Point A to Point B • Collect, and then Recycle or Repurpose at end-use • Commercialization—Using more recycled plastic and/or alternatives in products or packaging • Donor Funding/Investment—Providing financial support for commitments • Education/Awareness Programs—About plastics and recycling • Emergency Response • Facilitation/Coordination Role—Making programs and projects happen • Policy/Regulations—Such as bans, levies • Product Redesign – less virgin plastic used; more recycled plastic used • Recollect and Reuse at end-use • Reduce or Eliminate uses of plastic • Research & Monitoring—Projects at many stages of marine pollution • Waste Management—Involving solutions for final disposal treatment • Other
Location	<p>In what targeted geographical area related to water, land, or both does the commitment impact?</p>

MAGNITUDE/POTENTIAL IMPACT

SCALABILITY	Multi-Stakeholder, Replicable	One Stakeholder, Replicable	Pilot	Policy/Regulatory Impact	Unique/ One-Off
OUTCOME/ TIME-EFFORT	High Outcome/ Low Effort &Time	High Outcome/ High Effort &Time	Low Outcome/ Low Effort &Time	Low Outcome/ High Effort &Time	
INTENT	Sustainable Long-term Program	Policy/Regulations to Spur Change	Specific Project or Action	To Inform/ Educate/ Research	None

The Magnitude of the commitment is the potential scaled long-term impact and difference it can make for its intended purpose, and also globally.

Ideally, each commitment should be highly scalable with multiple stakeholders and local participants, have high outcome potential, and are designed with long-term sustainability in mind.

Scalability	Replicable commitments that involve multiple participants should have a higher likelihood of success, given shared resources and efforts, than ones with one responsible entity. Unique one-off projects are not scalable. Pilot programs are encouraged that have potential to be replicable, taking into account that context specific circumstances may require some adjustments.
Outcome versus Effort/Time	The trade-off between time, effort, and outcome to recognize what it will take to complete and/or implement the commitment. There are four choices. The optimal option is to expect a high outcome with only a low effort to be made that will take less time to achieve the outcome.
Intent	The targeted intention of a commitment is important. Is it a policy or program expected to make a long-term sustainable outcome happen? Or a specific project tailored only for the stakeholder and not replicable? Or an effort to inform or educate or to do research about plastic pollution?

VELOCITY/ACCELERATION

Timeline to Completion	Completed	Continuous	By 2020	By 2021	Policy/Regulation Enforced	By 2023	By 2025	By 2030	Unknown
Resources Announced	Significant to Meet Scope		Broad Level to Meet Scope		Reasonable Level to Meet Scope	Reasonable Level, No Funding Needed		Not Provided/ Not Disclosed	
Resources Deployed	Completed		Work Being Done With Resources		Policy/Regulations Enforced	Resources Secured	Announced/ In Planning		Not Provided/ Not Disclosed
Data Capture	Data in Place and Sharing				Data Being Measured and in Place		Not Provided/Not Disclosed		

These are the criteria that are directly controllable by the stakeholder and can determine the speed in which results are recorded and impact happens.

Velocity is the “acceleration/momentum” that a commitment accrues. Ideally, each commitment should have a shorter/defined timeline to completion, appropriate & secured resources to deploy, and be set to capture and measure its data. A commitment with high velocity can have a measurable impact on the Magnitude, the impact, of the commitment.

Timeline to Completion	A smart targeted timeline provides a specific goal to manage towards. Commitments with shorter timelines are preferred as all interested parties have to be more engaged.
Resources Announced	<p>A stakeholder can create a volunteer commitment that creates a lot of positive publicity and has large goals to achieve. One key determinant should be to capture the pledged and actual committed resources (financial, staff, volunteers, partners, etc.) both initially secured at announcement, and, over time, delivered to meet the commitment.</p> <p>A stakeholder who updates a commitment as it progresses from announcement to action, by providing details of the resources committed, is engaged. Plus, an updated current status can show a higher likelihood of the commitment being completed and successful.</p>
Resources Deployed	The high-level disclosure, as time progresses, of the status of actual resources deployed (financial, staff, volunteer, partners, etc.) is an important gauge to assess a stakeholder’s ability to meet a commitment’s milestones and scope. The faster and greater the resources are secured and deployed after announcement, the greater the opportunity for the stakeholder involved in completing the commitment on time and to meet or exceed its scope of work and expected outcome versus effort/time.
Data Capture	The monitoring, measuring, and sharing of data and results of a commitment for the purposes of improving commitments and replicating and scaling the proven successful ones.

THE COMMITMENT TEMPLATE

WITH A STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS, TO CREATE NEW VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS

Armed with guiding principles and key criteria, a stakeholder can deploy this plan of action in order to craft new commitments. The **Commitment Template** is a step-by-step process, which allows each stakeholder to look at potential options, find similar programs that others in the world might have already created, and find the right one(s) which fits their commitment goals, objectives and aspirations. If no similar commitments exist, they can use this template to guide their planning in creating effective new ones.

COMMITMENT TEMPLATE

<p>Select an Initiative and Primary Intervention Focus you'd like to consider (after viewing PCC Codes).</p> <p>1</p>	<p>Locate other similar and replicable voluntary commitments (programs/ projects) in the world.</p> <p>2</p>	<p>What are the specific targets/milestones to achieve and by what date?</p> <p>5</p>	<p>What are the specific barriers to overcome? Do you need to change your target/ milestone due to these barriers?</p> <p>6</p>
<p>Describe at high level the voluntary commitment you would make. Describe the outcome you would hope to achieve.</p> <p>3</p>	<p>List the stakeholders who would be potential collaboration partners for this commitment.</p> <p>4</p>	<p>Will you have high enough Velocity/Acceleration to pull this off – at the right Magnitude/ Potential Impact?</p> <p>7</p>	<p>List all that needs to happen for this commitment to be successful and meet its timeline for completion.</p> <p>8</p>
<p>Is the Outcome worth the Effort & Time?</p> <p>9</p>		<p>How and who is collecting the data?</p> <p>10</p>	<p>What is your Voluntary Commitment Score?</p> <p>11</p>

Borrowing from the Business Model Canvas that is now used by startups throughout the world, this one-page template can easily be done by an individual, but would be far more powerful if done as a collaborative team effort.

The template has 11 steps and takes the stakeholder through a process of discovery, analysis and decision making.

In addition, when crafting new voluntary commitments, it is also important to understand the possible categories or options for stakeholders which exist in focusing on the prevention and reduction of plastic pollution. This list is not exhaustive, but encapsulates the majority of interventions claimed in the commitments studied:

PRIMARY STAKEHOLDERS

- Multi-National Governments
- National Government
- Plastic and Waste Industries
- Regional/Local Governments
- Business or Industry
- NGOs/PPPs/Academics
- Individuals/People

INITIATIVES

- Reduce or Eliminate Uses of Plastic
- Product Redesign
- Action Plan/Doing the Work
- Commercialization
- Donor Funding/Investment
- Emergency Response
- Waste Management
- Recollect and Reuse at End-use
- Collect, and then Recycle or Repurpose at End-use
- Facilitation/Coordination Role
- Research and Monitoring
- Policy/Regulations
- Education/Awareness Programs
- Other

EVALUATING VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS WITH THE COMMITMENT SCORECARD

Once a voluntary commitment has been formulated for consideration by using the **Commitment Template**, the stakeholder can use the **Commitment Scorecard** for further constructive evaluation purposes. Specifically, the resulting score is used internally to evaluate the commitment's structure and potential for success relative to other voluntary commitment options.

It is important to note that each commitment is scored from 0 to 100. Scores are determined using the following formula after selections are made for each of the 11 criterion that reflect the current commitment being evaluated:

- 1) Each criterion's choice is assigned a point value (using a 0-5 Likert Scale).
- 2) This point value is then multiplied by its criteria's assigned weighted value based on its importance (sum of all 11 equally 100%).
- 3) The total points from the 11 criteria are then added together to create the final commitment's score.

A fully structured commitment will have one selected choice in each of the columns. The stakeholder uses the 11 criteria as a straightforward and clear guide in crafting a commitment. A commitment that best addresses each criterion will score highly.

Note: Additional samples are provided in the full report and annex.

In the two examples overleaf, we illustrate the criteria selections that would generate a high score, and a commitment, with selections, that would command a low score. The rest of the choices in these two samples were intentionally left blank for better viewing purposes.

4

TWO SCORECARD SAMPLES

HIGH-SCORE COMMITMENT (sample)

This is an example of a multi-national commitment, with an action-oriented intervention focus on both product design improvements to lower the amount of plastics produced (P&U) and waste management (EO) efforts to capture all of it at disposal time. It is an Action Plan where work is already being done with committed resources. Data is being captured and measured. It is also a long-term sustainable, multi-stakeholder program that will require high effort and time, but yield expected high outcome results.

Note:

The high-scoring choices are all located closest to the left—with scores decreasing from left-to-right for each criterion.

Commitment Name

Score

FACTS

PRIMARY STAKEHOLDER	Multi-National Governments	National Government	Plastic/Waste Industries	Industry or Business	ACADEMICS	Individuals/People
		Regional/Local Government		NGO'S/PPPs		
INTERVENTION FOCUS	(Action-Oriented) Both P&U and EO	(Action-Oriented) Either P&U and EO; plus a KO purpose	(Action-Oriented) IO	(Knowledge - Oriented) Both P&U and EO	(Knowledge - Oriented) Either P&U and EO	(Knowledge-Oriented) IO
TYPE OF INITIATIVE	Reduce/Eliminate Uses of Plastic	Commercialization	Collect & Treat Waste	Facilitate/ Coordinate Role	Education/ Awareness	Other
	Product Redesign	Donor Funding /Investment	Collect & Recycle or Repurpose	Policy/Regulations	Research & Monitoring	
	Action Plan	Emergency Response	Recollect & Reuse			
LOCATION	Land-Based	All	Rivers	Coastal Areas	Only Oceans	Only Islands

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SCALABILITY	Multi-Stakeholder, Replicable	One Stakeholder, Replicable	Pilot	Policy/Regulatory Impact	Unique/ One-Off
OUTCOME/ TIME-EFFORT	High Outcome/ Low Effort &Time	High Outcome/ High Effort &Time	Low Outcome/ Low Effort &Time	Low Outcome/ High Effort &Time	
INTENT	Sustainable Long-term Program	Policy/Regulations to Spur Change	Specific Project or Action	To Inform/ Educate/ Research	None

VELOCITY/ACCELERATION

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DATA CAPTURE	Data in Place and Sharing	Data Being Measured and in Place	Not Provided/Not Disclosed						

LOW-SCORE COMMITMENT (sample)

By looking at the choices selected: In contrast, a Regional/Local Government has developed a one-week outdoor informational education program for a coastal city with the topic of keeping plastic waste from entering the ocean during a one-time festival week (specific project). There is no mention of data being captured, the resources announced, nor the actual status of the project (resources deployed). By following the **Commitments 2.0** methodology, the Regional/Local Government would make sure to have provisions to capture the data and announce timely updates about the project and funding/resources deployed status. That way, other coastal communities can see what's being accomplished and can possibly collaborate with them.

Commitment Name

Score

FACTS

PRIMARY STAKEHOLDER	Multi-National Governments	National Government	Plastic/Waste Industries	Industry or Business	ACADEMICS	Individuals/People
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ABOUT OCEAN RECOVERY ALLIANCE

Ocean Recovery Alliance is an international NGO whose mission is to reduce plastic pollution on land and water. It works alongside individuals, businesses and governments worldwide to raise awareness and create long-term solutions to plastic waste. As a 501c3 registered non-profit in California, and a registered charitable organization in Hong Kong, it is one of the first NGOs to have worked with both the United Nations Environment (UNEP) and the World Bank on global plastic pollution solutions. It is the founder and organizer of the global Plasticity Forum events, one of the few conferences which is solely focused on solutions for plastic in its second life, without waste footprint.

The founder of the **Ocean Recovery Alliance**, Doug Woodring, was recently awarded the Prince's Prize for Innovative Philanthropy for his work in environmental protection.

Rob Steir, the main author, has worked with Ocean Recovery Alliance as a consultant since 2018. When not working with Doug, Rob is a co-founder of OceanCurrency.com, a startup offering direct impact solutions for islands and the Blue Economy, and is a founding partner at FrontlineWaste.com, a waste management firm offering community-scale waste-to-energy solutions for islands and developing countries.

Berna Tural is focused on ocean conservation, and raising awareness about the impact of our decisions in big cities on the ocean and environment. She works with cities, NGOs, and businesses, to create collaborations, secure investments, develop strategies to visibly reduce their plastic and waste footprints, organize corporate and community events, as well as influence policy decisions.



Our Full Report Summary

Evaluation of 580 Marine-Litter Voluntary Commitments

An evaluation of 580 voluntary commitments to reduce marine plastic pollution between 2014 and 2018 was performed to assess their potential effectiveness. These commitments and related information about them were taken from public lists announced at various Our Ocean conferences, the 2016 UN Ocean Conference and by the World Plastics Council. The evaluation specifically focused on the types of prevention interventions, initiatives, and expected impact declared in the voluntary commitments.

- **Section 1**

Presents the key takeaways of this report and recommended actions, especially in light of **Section 2's** macro factors that will affect the projected exponential use of plastic by society.

- **Sections 3 and 4**

Describe the considerable efforts to date made by various stakeholders, yet shows why these efforts are not overly impactful at scale.

- **Section 5**

Presents a new way to engage stakeholders – **Commitments 2.0**.

It includes a set of guiding principle which can be used for future commitments: among them are the need to better collaborate, the importance of collecting, measuring data and setting baselines, and the absolute need to replicate and scale-up successful programs. In addition, this section introduces 11 criteria for crafting more impactful voluntary commitments, as well as two new analytical tools (scorecard and step-by-step template) for stakeholders to use that are designed to help each stakeholder create the most impactful commitments.

- **Section 6**

Steps back to individually analyze the publicly listed voluntary commitments made between 2014 and 2018 by using the new scorecard. This provides insights into effective voluntary commitments for each type of stakeholder by intervention and initiative, and which ones that consistently score poorly and can be improved.

- **Sections 7 and 8**

Present a number of recommendations to design more impactful voluntary commitments and showcase what is possible if the world decides to craft high-scoring, high-impact voluntary commitments to effectively slow, and one day stop, the flow of marine litter and microplastics.

The purpose of this report is to answer these questions:

- Is the current mix of voluntary commitments making enough of an impact to slow the flow of plastic into the world's ocean?
- Are the current voluntary commitments constructed to maximize impact? If not, how could they be structured to enhance impact?
- How effective are current commitments by each type of stakeholder? What are the optimal types of commitments that each stakeholder group could be undertaking?
- If the “next 1,000” voluntary commitments were similar to these current commitments, will the global community succeed in reducing marine litter, and if not, what needs to change to be successful?

KEY MESSAGES:

- 1) A Wake-Up Call to those engaged on the topic: The report clearly shows that “Business as Usual” is not working at the scale which is necessary for large positive impact, and that the current mix of prevention interventions - where stakeholders have placed their money and efforts – should be redirected or refined for greater high-impact actions.
- 2) Stakeholders can adopt and use the new **Commitments 2.0** methodology to create high-impact, high-scoring voluntary commitments.
- 3) With the adoption of the **Commitments 2.0 Guide** and **Scorecard**, stakeholders should put into place a way to identify, and hopefully eventually replicate and scale these new high-scoring, high-impact proven commitments.
- 4) Stakeholders can be part of creating the “next 1,000” voluntary commitments which are crafted for high-impact results to prevent and reduce marine litter.

To view full report and annex, please visit:

<http://bit.ly/PlasticCommitments2020>