



Statement by Coastal 500

Coastal Mayors urge balance of protection and sustainable use for biodiversity and 30x30 efforts
March 14, 2022

We are **Coastal 500**, a **global Network of Mayors and local government leaders**, who have all pledged to work towards thriving coastal communities and surrounding ecosystems. We have come together, recognizing that **collective action and leadership** serve as a motivating force for effective change.

We must break down the artificial barriers between protection and economic productivity. That by **combining local efforts to protect critical biodiversity with effective co-management for coastal fisheries**, we can ensure food security, support the productive economy, safeguard livelihoods, and contribute to achieving national and global biodiversity targets including 30x30. The 30x30 effort refers to the campaign to protect 30% of the global ocean by 2030, and we further support the goal of **sustainably managing 100% of the ocean**.

As mayors of coastal municipalities, we are uniquely attuned to the importance of coastal habitats for the benefit and health of our communities and families. Approximately 22 million sq. kilometers of territorial waters globally contain our most vital coastal habitats: **83% of the world's coral reefs, 100% of mangroves, and 100% of seagrass**. Biodiversity across territorial waters is 3.5 times higher than in EEZs and 6.7 times higher than in the high seas globally. Nearly 500 million people directly depend on the small- scale fisheries, most of which are found within these areas.

To balance protection with sustainable use in recognition of the importance of these biodiverse areas for local livelihoods, **Coastal 500 encourages others to implement the following principles** regarding the UN Convention of Biological Diversity's (CBD) Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, or respective 30x30 effort:

- 1) Prioritize biodiversity-rich territorial, coastal waters in determining protected areas to invest and support;
- 2) Implement networks of protected areas recognizing the value of connectivity and locally-led MPAs and OECMs,
- 3) Engage in an inclusive participation and ownership approach to ensure all voices are heard;
- 4) Instill behaviour-centered design elements for biodiversity conservation ensuring longevity of interventions; and
- 5) Promote and increase sustainable financing for local solutions like MA+R or OECMs.

Local implementation of these principles may be best suited as legally designated OECMs, or other area- based effective conservation measure. As a network, we are also committed to ensuring local communities and coastal areas remain part of the global discussions and utilizing the **2022 International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAF)** to have meaningful engagement in forums like the CBD around the need to include local communities in the decision-making process and to ensure the inclusion of OECMs in global and national commitments.

We **urge and invite other local government leaders of coastal communities** to share the above principles of an equitable and community-focused approach to global biodiversity and 30x30 and commit to finding ways to strengthen the resilience of our coastal communities, in recognition of the vital role that small scale fisheries play around the world.