

THE OCEAN-OUR CLIMATE REGULATOR

WATER AND OCEAN REFLECTION SERIES

Photo: Kristin McDermott

MESSAGE FROM

POPE FRANCIS

'The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all. At the global level, it is a complex system linked to many of the essential conditions for human life. A very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system. In recent decades this warming has been accompanied by a constant rise in the sea level and, it would appear, by an increase of extreme weather events, ... Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat this warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it.'

Pope Francis, Laudato Si #23

CONNECTIONS AT THE UN

Sustainable Development Goal 14 emphasizes 'Life Below Water'. This goal focuses on 'the world's oceans – their temperature, chemistry, currents and life – drive global systems that make the Earth habitable for humankind.

Our rainwater, drinking water, weather, climate, coastlines, much of our food, and even the oxygen in the air we breathe, are all ultimately provided and regulated by the sea. Throughout history, oceans and seas have been vital conduits for trade and transportation.'

The United Nations makes a commitment to promoting 'careful management of this essential global resource is a key feature of a sustainable future.'

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/oceans/>

TAKE ACTION

- RESEARCH THE TARGET GOALS DETAILED WITHIN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 14. IN WHAT WAYS CAN YOU ASSIST IN OCEAN CONSERVATION?
- STUDY THE PROCESSES OF RUBBISH AND RECYCLING DISPOSAL IN YOUR OWN COMMUNITY. WHERE DOES IT GO? DOES THIS SURPRISE YOU?



Reflection



Take a walk along a drain, stream, river, estuary or beach....notice pollution and pick up rubbish.

Study the rubbish....where does it come from? How did it get there?
How much of it is there?

Try and backtrack sources of pollution....what caused it?

From your walk, draw or take pictures. Write a poem, short story or reflection on what you discover on your journey



Prayer

Thank you God for water...in all its forms.
Clouds, mist and rolling thunderheads....
Hail, sleet, snow, ice cubes and ice bergs...
Clear water, clean water, salt water, fresh water.
Thank you God for life. Life that needs water.
God, remind us to never take water for granted.
Teach us to respect water in all its forms – all
water, all life.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Ocean helps stabilize and regulate our climate by the absorbing and storing of carbon dioxide. Some of the carbon dioxide is used by micro-organisms and other ocean creatures for food (via photosynthesis) and shell formation. However, a sizeable proportion of carbon dioxide is stored in the cooler regions of the oceans. If the oceans warm up...this stored carbon dioxide can easily escape into the atmosphere and contribute to more frequent and violent weather events like hurricanes and cyclones.