

KEY OPTIONS:

In order to implement a process and manage the necessary funds for the protection, management and restoration of these crucial ocean carbon sinks, the following options are proposed:

1 Establish a global blue carbon fund for protection and management of coastal and marine ecosystems and ocean carbon sequestration.

- a. Within international climate change policy instruments, create mechanisms to allow the future use of carbon credits for marine and coastal ecosystem carbon capture and effective storage as acceptable metrics become available. Blue carbon could be traded and handled in a similar way to green carbon – such as rainforests – and entered into emission and climate mitigation protocols along with other carbon-binding ecosystems;
- b. Establish baselines and metrics for future environmentally sound ocean carbon capture and sequestration;
- c. Consider the establishment of enhanced coordination and funding mechanisms;
- d. Upscale and prioritize sustainable, integrated and ecosystem-based coastal zone planning and management, especially in hotspots within the vicinity of blue carbon sinks to increase the resilience of these natural systems and maintain food and livelihood security from the oceans.

2 Immediately and urgently protect at least 80% of remaining seagrass meadows, salt marshes and mangrove forests, through effective management.

Future funds for carbon sequestration can contribute to maintaining management and enforcement.

3 Initiate management practices that reduce and remove threats, and which support the robust recovery potential inherent in blue carbon sink communities.

4 Maintain food and livelihood security from the oceans by implementing comprehensive and integrated ecosystem approaches aiming to increase the resilience of human and natural systems to change.

5 Implement win-win mitigation strategies in the ocean-based sectors, including to:

- a. Improve energy efficiency in marine transport, fishing and aquaculture sectors as well as marine-based tourism;
- b. Encourage sustainable, environmentally sound ocean based energy production, including algae and seaweed;
- c. Curtail activities that negatively impact the ocean's ability to absorb carbon;
- d. Ensure that investment for restoring and protecting the capacity of ocean's blue carbon sinks to bind carbon and provide food and incomes is prioritized in a manner that also promotes business, jobs and coastal development opportunities;
- e. Catalyze the natural capacity of blue carbon sinks to regenerate by managing coastal ecosystems for conditions conducive to rapid growth and expansion of seagrass, mangroves, and salt marshes.