



# MAPPING THE WORLD

## PUBLIC POLICY DIALOGUE

### FACTS & RESOURCES FOR THE FORUM ON **OUR CHANGING PLANET** OCEAN CONSERVATION

The ongoing Mapping the World Public Policy Forum Series will create a dialogue and space where facts can be discussed and solutions developed. Below are a few resources to facilitate today's dialogue.

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- A marine reserve is an area that is permanently protected from activities that remove animals or plants, or those that alter habitats, except as needed for scientific monitoring. Compared to other areas nearby, when a marine reserve is created, on average:
  - The number of species increases 21 percent;
  - The organisms are nearly 30 percent larger;
  - The abundance (number of fish per square meter) increases over 170 percent; and
  - The biomass (the mass of living biological organisms in an area) is 4.5 times greater.

This population growth is not limited to the reserve areas — fishing yield also increases in the surrounding areas. Despite the evidence supporting marine reserves, only 3 percent of the ocean is protected.

- Every year, up to 8 million metric tons of plastic enters our ocean on top of the estimated 150 million metric tons that currently circulate in our marine environments.
  - Up to 80% of marine debris comes from land-based sources.
  - Plastic has been found in nearly two-thirds of seabird species and every single turtle species, which often mistake plastic in the ocean for food.
- Oceans and coastal ecosystems provide a significant benefit to the U.S. economy.
  - They support more than 28 million jobs.
  - U.S. consumers alone spend over \$55 billion on fishery products.
  - Coastal areas account for 85 percent of U.S. tourism revenue.
- Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing includes all fishing that breaks fisheries laws or occurs outside the reach of fisheries laws and regulations. IUU fishing:
  - Costs the global economy an estimated \$23 billion annually;
  - Threatens the food security of almost 3 billion people who depend upon fish for food and nutrition;
  - Undercuts prices for law-abiding fishermen;
  - Impacts the ocean ecosystem by removing key species; and
  - Is connected with transnational crime such as drug, arms and human trafficking.