‘Healthy Oceans – Healthy Coasts’
Are we Prepared for the Future Ocean?

Professor Larry Hildebrand
World Maritime University • Malmö, Sweden
International Ocean Institute • Board of Governors

International Leadership Seminar
Hong Kong • April 25, 2017
Thinking a lot about the Future

- WMU MSc. Students – upcoming ocean leaders

- Greater cooperation and collaboration (MoU)

- Paying attention to the trends
Developments in Ocean Governance

• We’re learning a lot from practice

• What works, what doesn’t and increasingly, WHY

• We are applying the lessons learned as we can

• But, still many barriers/shortcomings to implementation
WHY?

• Are there prevailing trends, attitudes, and dynamics that are overwhelming us and defeating our best efforts?

• Are these factors beyond our capacity (and will) to respond?
Colliding Trends and Overwhelming Odds
Population & Development vs. Coastal degradation

Population growth & migration to coasts
(9.7 billion by 2050)
(44% within coastal zone)

Urbanization
(66% by 2030)
(most Africa and Asia)

Coastal development
(accommodating everybody/everything)

Coasts becoming more:
• Polluted
• Degraded
• Higher energy
• Inundating
• Less resilient

Diminished capacity to accommodate growth
Blue economy vs. Sick Ocean

Blue economy
- Food security
- Energy security
- Health security
- More ocean uses
- Exploiting new frontiers (deep sea/Arctic)

Diminished natural capital
- Overharvesting
- Space/Use conflicts
- Declining ocean health
Science, technology & innovation

Advances in science, technology & innovation
- Biotechnology
- New access
- Enhanced exploitive capacity

Science, technology and innovation will save us from ourselves
Relieves us of motivation and responsibility to act today?
Shifting marine species & population distribution, abundance and productivity

Static planning
Plan to fish where we fish now
Artisanal communities’ local dependency on today’s conditions
Sectoral vs. Integrated Approaches

Recognized need for more integrated and coordinated ocean management

Entrenched sectoral interests and institutions
Defence of status quo
Why should I change?
What’s in it for me?

• **Nations**: how will this advance our economic and social priorities?

• **Government Ministries**: how will this advance my mandated objectives?

• **Ocean industries**: will ICOM bring more predictable governance and ensure access rights?
What do we need to do **Today** to Prepare for the Future Ocean?

- Acknowledge these trends and consider their serious social, economic and political implications

- Ask what are the policy, planning, management and governance steps that we must be taking **now** to prepare and adapt?

- Think beyond the 2030 Agenda and SDGs – 2050 ...

- How do we ‘future-proof’ ocean governance?