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-Essay-

**SDGs 14 (Life below water) and 17 (Partnerships for the goals)
and why they matter.**

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are the successor to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). They officially came into force on 1 January 2016. The SDGs were built on the success of the MDGs, but they are broader in scope and go further than their predecessor – they also deal with human-induced climate change.

Goal 14 – Life below water – calls upon people all over the world to conserve and sustainably use the world's oceans, seas and marine resources.

Water covers about 71% of the planet's surface. This means that it's not only home to much of life on earth, but also closely involved in many functions that provide a stable environment for life to thrive.

First, oceans are an integral part of our weather and climate patterns, it plays a critical role in maintaining stable climates.

Second, oceans absorb about one quarter of all CO₂ produced by human activities. In addition, ocean-dwelling microscopic plants, called phytoplankton, produce between half to 70% of all oxygen.

Third, ocean is an important source of food. Considering the world population growing by 1.5 billion people every week, we are relying on the ocean more and more for survival.

Fourth, oceans are a source of renewable energy from the action of wind and waves.

Fifth, marine waters are also a potential goldmine for the pharmaceutical industry with some bacteria, sponges and algae – currently, scientists are developing treatments for diseases like cancer using them.

The problem is that oceans are facing critical threats, such as:

- ♦ Ocean acidification
- ♦ Ocean pollution and eutrophication
- ♦ Marine debris
- ♦ Ocean warming
- ♦ Overfishing and destruction of marine ecosystem (e.g. coral reefs)

So, what measures can we take?

This is where Goal 17 – Partnerships for the goals – comes in. It calls upon the global society to revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

All SDGs are interrelated and in order to achieve Goal 14, we need to achieve Goal 17. For open ocean and deep-sea areas, sustainability can be achieved only through increased international cooperation. We need to encourage global society to use eco-friendly products, eliminate plastic usage as much as possible and organize beach clean-ups.

The world is more interconnected than ever. It is crucial to improve access to technology and knowledge. SDGs deal with global problems that threaten humanity. So, as Goal 17 calls on, we need to take on more responsibilities and mobilize all sectors — governments, civil society, scientists, academia and the private sector – to achieve the sustainable development goals.