John Virdin Abstract – Spring 2013

Recovering the Sunken Billions: A Global Estimate of the Costs of Rebuilding Ocean Fish Stocks Overview of Planned Research and Methodology

This presentation aims to provide an overview of planned research into the global transition costs of moving from the current level of fishing effort to one that allows targeted fish stocks to rebuild to levels that would meet the targets set by the international community.

The international community has made a number of commitments to restore fish stocks targeted commercially to levels capable of generating the maximum sustainable yield, beginning with the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation agreed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002. The most recent assessments from FAO suggest that the world is far away from reaching this target, while other reports have estimated tremendous benefits to the global economy from reversing course and achieving the target – on the order of \$50 billion more per year. New efforts are underway at the United Nations and the World Bank to try to generate the investments and reforms needed to achieve this target, all leading to the question: what level of new investment will be needed? How much will it cost? This presentation summarizes proposed research to answer these questions, based on four steps: (i) globally categorizing marine fisheries by type, region and status (based on literature review); (ii) categorizing the types of exclusive and non-overlapping interventions needed to rebuild marine fisheries; (iii) for each of the types of fisheries, select representative case studies of reform, introducing the interventions categorized previously and estimating the costs of each; and (iv) summarizing the results in a global cost-effectiveness analysis. A first case study will be introduced, for the purse seine tuna fishery in the waters of the 8 member countries of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement in the Pacific Islands region.