Letter: Ocean action offers 'blue boost' for recovery

From Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of Norway, and Tommy Remengesau Jr, President of Palau

A man teaches a child how to plant mangrove trees in Pekan Bada, Aceh province, Indonesia © AFP via Getty Images

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The FT's online Special Report on Investing in Nature (FT.com, July 28) was quite correct that ecosystems can play a critical role in the fight against climate change. Your readers should know that the ocean in particular has the potential to play a larger role as the world seeks ways to recover from the Covid-19 crisis and ensure our future sustainability, resilience and prosperity.

The numbers back this up: new research commissioned by the Ocean Panel shows that every dollar invested in key ocean actions — like increasing sustainable seafood production from fisheries and aquaculture, decarbonising international shipping, scaling up offshore wind power and conserving and restoring mangroves — yields $5 in return, often more.

A blue boost to our global recovery efforts will benefit all oceanic nations regardless of size or wealth and can make a substantial contribution to meeting carbon-reduction targets. A sustainable ocean economy brings health and social benefits, as well as economic and environmental ones. It means enhanced food security and better diets, improved air quality, greater resilience in the face of storm surges and natural disasters, and the development of more sustainable jobs in tourism and fisheries.

Our own countries, Palau and Norway, have long looked to the ocean for our prosperity. Now, in the face of the impact of the Covid-19 crisis, we encourage others to see the ocean as a solution to many challenges facing humanity rather than simply a victim of human activity.

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