

Statement by the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)

Intergovernmental consultations on the political declaration for the 2022 United Nations Conference to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14

19 and 22 April 2022

Introduction

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) in alignment with the statement delivered by the Group of 77 and China.

Let me begin by thanking the co-facilitators for their tireless efforts in guiding us towards the finish line for the outcome of the Second UN Ocean Conference. We believe the revised draft balances comprehensiveness with brevity, while encompassing the key global issues on scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation.

In this context, our comments on each of the sections will be brief, and aimed at bringing a closer focus to some of the priority issues for SIDS:

Paragraphs 1 through 11

- AOSIS has concerns regarding the reference to the ocean “**acting as a sink and reservoir of greenhouse gases**” in OP 3 and OP 5, as over-reliance on the ocean as a sink and reservoir will in turn detrimentally affect ocean biodiversity that we are seeking to protect. Furthermore, there is an imbalance in mentioning only the mitigation contribution of the ocean without reference to its role in adaptation. In this context, in order to maintain brevity, our preference would be to delete this language. Alternatively, the language could be modified to refer to sea grass meadows, mangroves etc acting as reservoirs in the ocean, and not the ocean itself.
- As highlighted by the G77 and China, we see great value in **having the expired targets clearly elaborated** in OP 4 to bring stronger visibility to areas where global actions are lacking.
- We also support the language proposed by the G77 on OP 5, and emphasize the point made on the inclusion of the language on **loss and damage** in alignment with the Glasgow Pact.
- We are pleased to see the inclusion of the language on **adequate financing for** developing countries, in particular **small island developing states** to effectively implement and maintain Marine Protected Areas in OP 6, and wish to see this language maintained in the upcoming iteration.

- Similarly, we strongly support OP 7 **welcoming the recent decision by UNEA5.2** on an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, and **retaining the specific language** in close alignment with the consensus resolution at UNEA.
- AOSIS also wishes to highlight the importance of emphasizing the need to **conclude the BBNJ process in 2022** in OP 10, while **linking the outcomes** of the Instrument to the **advancement of SDG14**.

Paragraphs 12 through 16

- We welcome the new paragraph on mobilizing actions for **sustainable fisheries and aquaculture** in 12 (c), and would be favorable to considering proposals to strengthen this language.
- As we believe it is important to draw interlinkages in the Call for Action with relevant ongoing processes, the recognition of the **establishment of the intergovernmental negotiating committee on a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution** is a useful addition in 12 (e).
- Similarly, we support the language on alignment of climate actions with **the Glasgow Climate Pact** in 12 (g).
- AOSIS strongly welcomes 13 (b) recognizing the **role of indigenous, traditional and local knowledge**, and could be open to proposals strengthening this language.
- Finally, we support the strengthened language on **appropriate review and follow-up** of the voluntary commitments from the 2017 Conference in OP 14.

Conclusion

With some minor tweaks and adjustments, AOSIS is of the view that we have a robust and strong outcome document before us. We encourage all delegations to engage constructively to ensure a smooth adoption by consensus at the conclusion of this process.

Before concluding, AOSIS once again expresses full confidence and support for the co-facilitators as we move forward.