



A L L I A N C E O F S M A L L I S L A N D S T A T E S

## **Statement during the**

### **2022 High level political Forum**

*SDG 14 and interlinkages with other SDGs – Life below water*

*Building on the Ocean Conference, what actions and partnerships can build synergies among COVID- 19 recovery, economic development and ocean health? How best can we use the momentum from the Ocean Conference to strengthen the science - policy interface to support sustainable ocean management?*

**Delivered by H.E. Walton Aubrey Webson**

**Thursday, 7 July 2022, 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM, Conference Room 4**

- For Small Island Developing states, the decline in ocean health is a primary concern, as our identity, culture and livelihoods are closely tied to the ocean. We are fully aware of how the deterioration of coastal and marine ecosystems and biodiversity is threatening human well-being, economic prosperity and the survival of our planet.
- This deterioration has been further highlighted during the covid-19 pandemic with new challenges through increased ocean pollution from single-use PPE. At the same time the strategies for post-coronavirus economic recovery have amplified calls for increased investments in sustainable fisheries, offshore renewables and ecosystem restoration among other ocean-based economic activities. We must ensure that sustainable ocean economic activities are aligned with SDG 14 as we explore the prospects that are presented in the sustainable blue economy.
- We must remember that accelerated actions across all 10 targets of SDG 14 are required to mitigate and reduce these negative anthropogenic impacts, including through strengthening ocean governance, and enhancing enabling environments. Taking into account the interconnected and indivisible nature of the SDGs, we must take a holistic approach that reaps maximum co-benefits across the 2030 Agenda.
- It is clear that if we fail to achieve SDG14, it will have a domino effect, compromising sustainable development, and our collective future. In this context, I wish to highlight that four targets under SDG 14 have already expired in 2020,

and efforts need to be enhanced to realize these targets through harnessing existing synergies.

- Regarding synergies and partnerships, last week at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ocean Conference in Lisbon, the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) launched a “Declaration for the enhancement of marine scientific knowledge, research capacity and transfer of marine technology to SIDS.”
- It sets out principles of engagement, one based on SIDS determining their needs, shifting away from one-way initiatives and approaches and moving to best practices to develop, implement and sustain capacity development partnerships. These principles are not unique to just SDG 14, and can also be useful to guide more meaningful and effective partnerships across other interlinked SDGs as well. I invite all partners, countries, and organizations to sign on to this Declaration, acknowledge its principles, review existing initiatives in light of these, and use it to guide future partnerships.
- Before I conclude, I want to reiterate the importance of capitalizing on the synergistic nature of SDG14. Achieving the targets under this Goal will also advance progress across others, through harmonizing numerous efforts and limited resources.