



PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

United Nations Member States

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Nauru to the United Nations
801 Second Avenue, Third Floor
New York, N.Y. 10017

Phone: +1 (212) 937 - 0074
Fax: +1 (212) 937 - 0079
E-mail: psids.ny@gmail.com

Statement delivered by Ms. Margo Debye Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Nauru to the United Nations On behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States

Informal Consultations on the Zero-Draft of the Call for Action Monday, 20 March 2017, New York

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Co-facilitators,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 12 Pacific Small Island Developing States with representation at the United Nations. At the outset, we associate with the statement delivered by the distinguished delegate of Ecuador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and with the statement delivered by Maldives on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States.

Co-facilitators,

2. We thank you for the timely provision of this zero-draft of the call for action, in accordance with the mandates established by resolution 70/303. The task before us, to produce a concise and action oriented political declaration, is a challenging one, and we think that the zero-draft you have provided is a very good basis for us to commence our negotiations.

Co-facilitators,

3. PSIDS championed a standalone Sustainable Development Goal on the conservation and sustainable use of our ocean because it is critical to Pacific lives and livelihoods. The steps that the Call for Action will set out are critical to the sustainable development of PSIDS, as an element of an integrated and indivisible sustainable development agenda. The call for action should reflect the critical interlinkages between SDG-14 and all of the other goals and targets, and the essential role it will play in achieving the core objectives of the 2030 Agenda
4. Given the important role of the ocean as a carbon sink and climate regulator, as well as the adverse impacts of carbon emissions on marine ecosystems, including ocean acidification, warming, and deoxygenation, as well as sea level rise, the Call for Action should explicitly highlight the relationship between SDG-14 and Climate Change.

Co-facilitators,

5. We are pleased to see many PSIDS priorities highlighted in this zero-draft, but we feel there are some areas which could be further strengthened:
 - a. Some of the key challenges facing PSIDS in accessing the economic benefits provided by the sustainable use of marine resources are a result of the disproportionate burden of conservation which falls on our members. The Call for Action should include the need to develop approaches and mechanisms to ensure that the burden of conservation and management of ocean resources is not disproportionately transferred to SIDS.
 - b. Core to implementation of SDG-14 is the need to develop and implement mechanisms that maximize the benefits to SIDS, as resource owners, in the harvesting and processing of their fish and marine products, and exploration and exploitation of seabed minerals, in global markets. This also should be reflected.
 - c. The zero-draft recognizes the threat posed by marine pollution of all kinds, but could also focus attention on the damage caused by toxic materials and explosive ordinances from war relics and other undersea wreckage.
 - d. While there are a number of elements focused on addressing IUU fishing and other destructive fishing practices, we feel the zero-draft could also address the need to manage bycatch, discards and other adverse ecosystem impacts from fisheries, including through eliminating ghost gear, as well as building the capacity of developing countries and in particular SIDS to conduct monitoring, control, surveillance, compliance and enforcement. Moreover, the Call for Action could call for assessment on a regular basis the progress and performance of RFMOs under their respective treaties in order to hold all relevant actors accountable.
 - e. When we consider strengthening the access of small scale and artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets, particularly in SIDS and LDCs, often the high levels of existing pressures on fisheries are the very barriers to access that need to be overcome. The call for action should reflect that the need to reduce pressure on existing fisheries should not fall on those small-scale and artisanal fisheries as they seek to gain increased access, as captured in target 14.b.
 - f. We are pleased to see the call for action recognizing the important work to ensure that there is a regime to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. The call for action should reflect the same urgency expressed by our Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives at Rio+20.
 - g. The development of baselines is a critical step in supporting scientific research and better understanding our marine environment, especially in light of climate change. The call for action should support the development of

baseline data, as well as encourage capacity building efforts in this regard, especially for LDCs and SIDS in light of the unique challenges we face with respect to data.

- h. While we are encouraged by the zero-draft's call to complete the ongoing negotiations at the WTO to strengthen disciplines on the fisheries sector, we also feel that the call for action could also encourage States to voluntarily commit to decrease or eliminate harmful subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and IUU fishing within a given time-period, taking into account special and differentiated treatment of SIDS.
- i. As we accelerate work on the full traceability of fish products, we must also ensure that coastal States are included in any process for certifying the legality of traded products resulting from fishing in their waters.
- j. Finally, we strongly support the use of management and conservation measures that are based on the best available science, but we must not overlook the critically important role of traditional knowledge in such a context, and would like this to also be reflected in the revised draft.

Co-facilitators,

- 6. Just last week, from 15-17 March in Suva, Fiji the PSIDS participated in a Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the UN Oceans Conference. The meeting was attended by many of our Heads of State and Government, Ministers, and other high-level representatives, signaling the strong commitment of the Pacific to the importance of this Conference for our Ocean and our Region. The outcome of our preparatory meeting was a Pacific Regional Platform for Partnerships and Action on Sustainable Development Goal 14, which PSIDS will use in crafting Voluntary Commitments and Partnerships to support a successful UN Oceans Conference.

Thank you, Co-facilitators.