

Intervention by Israel on Item 4 - Area Based Management Tools

Thank you Madame Facilitator,

As this is the first time Israel is taking the floor at this meeting, so my delegation would first like to thank you and all the facilitators as well as IGC President Rena Lee, who have been guiding us through this important and complex process in a professional and efficient manner.

Israel is a coastal country with shorelines on both the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea, and this is one of the reasons why the State of Israel considers the conservation of the marine environment to be of great importance.

In addition, Israel views the high seas and the rich biodiversity therein as treasures that belong to everyone and that they should be conserved and sustainably managed for the good of all, under the guiding principle of the common heritage of mankind.

Israel, therefore, views positively the efforts to draft a new, international legally-binding instrument in order to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

With regard to the subject of Area-Based Management Tools:

Regarding cluster 4.1 on Objectives, my delegation believes that Area Based Management Tools wishes to echo those who have voiced the view that they should be based primarily on the designation of areas that are large and representative, and should be monitored to ensure that they fulfill their role of keeping the marine ecosystems in these specific areas at a favorable conservation status. Such MPA's should support the long-term strategy of a creating a global network of MPA's for climate change resilience, and conservation of important ecosystems. Various options exist: marine protected areas (MPAs) could be designated as large no-take reserves, or, alternatively, they could be managed in a more complex and advanced manner such as with marine spatial planning. For example, MPA's could include areas for controlled exploitation using a system based on based on scientific information to create a mosaic of dynamic closures on a spatial or a temporal basis. The MPA could designate closed areas, such as protected sensitive nursery areas, or there could be areas designated on a seasonal basis to be fully closed marine protected areas that would operate as a no-take zone only during important migratory seasons or spawning periods.

Management tools could also include using protected areas as a place where native ecosystems and endemic species are protected in order to offset the damaging effect of non-native and invasive marine species, especially by countering the effects

of the construction or enlargement of man-made pathways that connect different water-bodies that oftentimes have a detrimental effect on the marine environment.

Regarding clusters 4.2 and 4.6 on the Relationship to other measures, my delegation wishes to reiterate the concerns voiced by many other delegation over these past days and to stress the importance of synergy between the new BBNJ and existing instruments, especially those that are active in the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in the Mediterranean Sea, where Israel has great interest, such as the Barcelona Convention and its Mediterranean Action Plan, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), the Agreement on Conservation of Cetaceans of the Mediterranean and Black Seas (ACCOBAMS), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), and others. We expect that the new BBNJ instrument will strengthen these instruments without undermining their important work. Hence, it is important to avoid possible conflicts and to reduce any overlap or redundancy.

Regarding cluster 4.3 on the Process for designating ABMT including Marine Protected Areas, my delegation wishes to echo the States that have voiced support for the designation of MPA's based on the best available scientific information, standards and criteria, especially those identified by PrepCom and listed in paragraph 4.3.1. of the 4th PrepCom report.

Regarding cluster 4.5 on Monitoring, Israel would encourage the voluntary sharing of data obtained from monitoring and scientific reviews in keeping with the principal of open access to scientific data. However we would not support mandatory measures for ensuring implementation of monitoring, and we would encourage the establishment of such initiatives on a voluntary basis, as has been suggested by a number of other delegations.

In closing, let me say that Israel stands ready to use its great technological and intellectual resources for collaboration with all countries in their efforts to conserve and promote sustainable management of the world's biodiversity.