



New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations

Te Māngai o Aotearoa

Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction: first session

Agenda item 6: General Exchange of Views

New Zealand Statement

Delivered by Ms Alice Revell,
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Madam President, I would like to start by congratulating you on your election as President of the Conference.

New Zealand has long been a supporter of these negotiations and we are pleased to reach the first substantive session of the Intergovernmental Conference. We would again like to thank delegations for their support last year during the negotiation and adoption of Resolution 72/249.

New Zealand's overall aim is to adopt a treaty that helps us to improve global management and conservation of the high seas and thereby halt marine biodiversity loss. The treaty should facilitate developing country participation, particularly by Small Island Developing States, in the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction. In our view, the most effective way to achieve these aims is to develop an improved international framework by harnessing the mandates and work of existing organisations and adding clearer rules and mechanisms for increased coordination. We are committed to working constructively with others in the Conference to identify viable, practical and useful outcomes to fill the gaps and enhance the international legal framework.

In terms of the four elements of package, New Zealand's objective is to develop an agreement that implements the UN Convention on the Law of the sea by:

- Creating a clear legal regime for marine genetic resources that facilitates further research into these resources and the equitable sharing of benefits arising from their use, while managing effectively associated environmental impacts;
- Facilitating the establishment of multi-sector area-based management tools and of marine protected areas in areas beyond national jurisdiction that ensure effective protection and restoration of marine biodiversity;
- Operationalising existing provisions on environmental impact assessments by establishing process, thresholds and guidelines for all

activities in areas beyond national jurisdiction, tailored to their likely impact; and

- Facilitating the participation of all states, including developing countries, in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, taking into account the specific needs of Small Island Developing States.

New Zealand will approach these negotiations in a spirit of openness. We look forward to working with all delegations and supporting the President in putting the Conference on a path to a zero draft text.

Thank you.