



EUROPEAN UNION

DELEGATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Acting Head of Delegation

New York, 7 July 2011
DELUSANYC/2011/D/00400

Excellency,

With reference to the letter of 8 June 2011 regarding General Assembly resolution 65/150 of 16 February 2011 on the protection of coral reefs for sustainable livelihoods and development, the European Union and its Member States would like to reaffirm our commitment to protect coral reefs and related ecosystems for sustainable livelihoods and development, including through immediate and concerted action to respond to the challenges and to address the adverse impact of climate change, as well as of ocean acidification, on coral reefs and related ecosystems. We are pleased to see that the UN Member States committed themselves to formulate, adopt and implement integrated and comprehensive approaches for the management of coral reefs and related ecosystems under their jurisdiction.

We strongly believe that the Secretary-General's report, in line with paragraph 3 of GA 65/150 resolution, will highlight the importance of protecting coral reefs and related ecosystems for sustainable livelihoods and development, including an in-depth analysis of the economic, social and development benefits of protecting coral reefs, in the context of the themes and objectives of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD/Rio+20) in 2012.

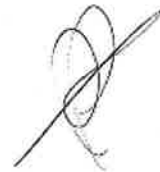
In this regard the EU and its Member States wish to highlight the importance of the marine environment for sustainable development in preparation of the Rio+20 Conference. We would like to recall the close link between sustainable development and the environment, including seas and oceans and remind that sustainable development should take into consideration the environmental, economic as well as the social or human aspects. We would like to stress the importance of restoring the health of ocean ecosystems as a priority for realizing sustainable development, food security, poverty eradication and the establishment of a Green Economy – which must also be a sustainable blue economy.

Mr. Tariq Banuri
Director, Division for Sustainable Development
DESA
United Nations
c/o Ms. Kathleen Abdalla

Furthermore, the EU and its Member States reiterate our commitment to integrate further the value of ecosystem services, including the cost of degradation, in decision making processes, including through market-based mechanisms, as a key instrument for promoting a Green Economy. We also would like to reconfirm also commitments made at other crucial processes, notably from the recent Conference of the Parties to the CBD on marine biodiversity, including in relation to fisheries management, marine protected areas and prior environmental impact assessments.

The EU and its Member States look forward to the Secretary-General's report on the importance of protecting coral reefs and related ecosystems for sustainable livelihoods and development. We remain convinced that the report to be prepared in consultation with the views of UN Member States, the agencies and programmes of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme, and relevant international organizations, including the International Coral Reef Initiative and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, will significantly contribute to Rio+20 Conference.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Pedro Serrano
Ambassador