

## **STATEMENT BY SPAIN TO THE PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE 2020 UN OCEAN CONFERENCE, NEW YORK 4-5 FEBRUARY 2020**

Co chairs,

Spain aligns itself with the statements presented by the European Union and its Member States and wishes to express a few complementary points.

Most recent scientific reports have well reflected that the balance of the oceans is currently under serious threat. The declaration should reflect the need to tackle this concern urgently.

Science and innovation promotion constitutes the best way to scale up action for a better ocean use and conservation, given the existing knowledge gaps. In this regard, governments, institutions and relevant stakeholders should be encouraged to further engage in order to have a successful Decade of Ocean Science. Furthermore, we should also promote coordination with other ocean ongoing processes, namely the World Ocean Assessment. The latter should be fully in line with the conclusions in Lisbon and the Decade Goals.

Likewise, we suggest a call to implement holistic approach, which connects, based on science, the SDG 14 with the whole 2030 Agenda. Several SDGs will benefit from an adequate conservation and sustainable use of oceans. At the same time, this can only be accomplished by proper water resources management (SDG 6), sustainable consumption and production patterns against plastic pollution (SDG 12) or an ambition climate action (SDG 13), among others. These are just mere examples.

To that end, science-based planning and decision processes need to be informed by an ecosystem approach, improving and scaling up new technologies, data collection and monitoring systems implementation. Additionally, the implementation of the precautionary principle implies the adoption of all required protection measures, even when there is a lack of full scientific knowledge. In these cases, scientific information from other related processes, such as IPCC, IPBES, regional seas conventions, etc., should inform the actions to be adopted.

Fisheries are an iconic herald of what has been said so far. Sustainable fisheries are essential in the 2030 Agenda implementation when it's about ending poverty in all its forms (SDG 1), eradicating hunger and achieving food security (SDG 2), promoting economic growth and employment (SDG 8), fighting climate change (SDG 13) or combatting biodiversity loss (SDG 15)... In order to meet these goals, all States should fight IUU fishing and combat overfishing. Social conditions of workers should also be enhanced, in particular through the empowerment of women workers in fisheries. Spain has developed several successful initiatives in this regard.

Regional fisheries management organizations (RFMO) constitute an effective tool to promote innovative science-based actions for the SDGs implementation. In this regard, we should focus on the regulation and governance of sustainable fisheries and the conservation of resources and marine biodiversity.

Spain is ready to share expertise and good practices. Spain is fully committed to a successful Lisbon Ocean Conference.