

U.S. Comments
UN Oceans Conference Prep Meeting
Interactive Dialogues

- Thank you, Madam/Mister Ambassador.
- As we all know, the ocean and its resources play a vital role in global security and prosperity. But our ocean and its resources are under tremendous pressure from a variety of threats, including illegal fishing, marine pollution, and ocean acidification.
- The United States remains a strong supporter of Sustainable Development Goal 14 and we view the UN Conference for the Implementation for Sustainable Development Goal 14 as one part of the overall global movement to promote the conservation and sustainable management of our ocean on the foreign policy agenda.
- We are pleased to see the broad and growing interest in prioritizing concrete actions to protect and conserve our ocean, and I would like to thank our co-hosts, Portugal and Kenya, for bringing this conference together.
- While we support the upcoming conference, we think it is important to avoid duplicative work and to instead focus on utilizing existing frameworks and conferences, both within and outside the UN system, to leverage synergies among SDG 14 focus areas.
- The theme for the conference this year, “Scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation for the implementation of Goal 14: stocktaking, partnerships and solutions” is an action-oriented theme around which we encourage delegates to focus on identifying tools, partnerships, and specific initiatives.
- We also highlight the relevance of this theme to the upcoming UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, and note the timing of this conference in the lead up to the Decade’s 2021 launch.
- The “interactive dialogues” provide a crucial opportunity for these action-oriented conversations around the theme and to fill a gap at the technical level to support Member State efforts in support of Goal 14, while also ensuring the Conference does not duplicate the efforts of other fora, meetings, and conferences.
- The interactive dialogues are well positioned to leverage the expertise of stakeholders in sharing best practices and success stories, finding partners, and socializing ways to expand and apply those lessons.
- Regarding the proposed themes, we note that the eight themes cover all of the various targets under SDG 14 and see them as natural focus areas to encompass all of the components of the Goal.
- There have been a number of proposed modifications or additions this morning, and we

will need additional time to consider these suggestions.

- We do want to note topic area eight – “Leveraging interlinkages between Sustainable Development Goal 14 and other Goals” – as we find that this highlights an important issue, the interlinkages of the SDGs.
 - Generally, we believe that the high level political forum is the proper place for all SDG follow up and review, but we acknowledge that this theme can help to ensure that any work done by this conference is done within the overall framework of the Agenda.
 - In light of this, we recommend ending the title of the theme after “and other Goals.”
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- In terms of logistics, we envision the interactive dialogues as a series of panels in which expert speakers from governments, academic institutions, NGOs, international organizations, and the private sector can share methods, scientific insight and technological advances as well as pilot programs and case studies that can help Member States identify which approaches best meet their needs.
 - Like the first conference, we recommend again using a panelist nomination process for the interactive dialogues similar to that used for the expert speaker nominations for the Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea.
 - In closing, we note that discussions of SDG 14 take place in a wide range of bodies, both within and outside of the UN system, and that these discussions require the robust engagement of all relevant stakeholders, including NGOs, foundations, academia, the scientific community, the private sector, and others.
 - As such, the success of the conference, and in particular the partnership dialogues, is dependent upon it being a model for openness, inclusion, and transparency in the UN system.
 - The United States remains committed to working with all stakeholders, within and outside the UN system, to protect our ocean and promote development through its sustainable use.
 - We urge Member States to embrace the energy, skill, and knowledge that all stakeholders can bring to the conference.