

*International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification  
Comments and Interventions*

*Zero Draft of the 2020 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14  
"Declaration"*

March 17, 2020

Honorable Ms. Ngedikes Olai Uludong  
Permanent Representative of Palau to the UN

Honorable Mr. Martin Bille Hermann  
Permanent Representative of Denmark to the UN

Dear Honorable Co-Chairs,

Please accept the following edits, comments and feedback regarding the [zero draft](#) of the 2020 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 Declaration.

These edits, comments and feedback are submitted by the Secretariat for the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification. This submission reflects views of the Secretariat of the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification, and does not necessarily represent the views of all government or non-government members that have joined the OA Alliance.

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The [International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification](#) (OA Alliance) was launched by the four North American West Coast governments of California, Oregon, Washington and British Columbia, Canada in direct response to the observed impacts of ocean acidification on oyster hatchery production across the North American West Coast during the mid-2000s.

Today, the OA Alliance is comprised of over 100 members, including 13 national governments, 9 states, 2 provinces, 6 tribal and sovereign nations, and 4 cities, along with local research institutions, monitoring networks, businesses, affected industry partners and NGO (see full list, Appendix A.)

Under the leadership of its diverse members, the OA Alliance is harnessing growing scientific knowledge about impacts of ocean acidification and transforming it into increased urgency for climate change mitigation and for outlining tangible and innovative actions that will help communities and industries adapt.

**Edits, comments and feedback are as follows:**

**Paragraph #1—**

- Please insist that “greater ambition” also includes greater ambition to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, the number one cause of ocean acidification which is changing the chemical balance of seawater that marine life depends on for survival.

**Original text:**

Greater ambition is required at all levels to address the dire state of the ocean. As leaders and representatives of our Governments, we are determined to act decisively and urgently to improve the health and productivity of the ocean.

**Proposed change:**

Greater ambition is required at all levels to address the dire state of the ocean. **This includes greater ambition to reduce carbon dioxide and greenhouse gas emissions, as the ocean has already absorbed 93% of the excess heat resulting from increased greenhouse gas emissions since the 1970s and absorbed 28% of carbon dioxide generated by human activities since the 1750s.** As leaders and representatives of our Governments, we are determined to act decisively and urgently to improve the health and productivity of the ocean.

- Please ensure that the Declaration calls all governments—including national, regional, subnational and tribal—to action.

**Original text:**

We, the Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives meeting in Lisbon from 2 to 6 June 2020 at the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of SustainableDevelopmentGoal14 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, “Scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation of Goal 14: stocktaking, partnerships and solutions”, with the participation of civil society and other relevant stakeholders, reaffirm our strong commitment to conserve and sustainably use our oceans, seas and marine resources. Greater ambition is required at all levels to address the dire state of the ocean. As leaders and representatives of our Governments, we are determined to act decisively and urgently to improve the health and productivity of the ocean.

**Proposed text:**

We, the Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives meeting in Lisbon from 2 to 6 June 2020 at the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of SustainableDevelopmentGoal14 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, “Scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation of Goal 14: stocktaking, partnerships and solutions”, with the participation of civil society and other relevant stakeholders—**including regional and subnational governments--** reaffirm our strong commitment to conserve and

sustainably use our oceans, seas and marine resources. Greater ambition is required at all levels to address the dire state of the ocean. As leaders and representatives of our Governments, we are determined to act decisively and urgently to improve the health and productivity of the ocean.

### **Paragraph #3**

- Please include reference to the threat that ocean changes pose to many cultural identities and traditions.

#### **Original text:**

We recognize that the ocean is fundamental to life on our planet and our future. The ocean is an important source of our planet's biodiversity and plays a vital role in the climate system and water cycle. The ocean supplies us with oxygen to breathe, contributes to food security and to decent jobs and livelihoods and plays an essential role in sustainable development, a sustainable ocean-based economy and poverty eradication.

#### **Proposed Change:**

We recognize that the ocean is fundamental to life on our planet and our future. The ocean is an important source of our planet's biodiversity and plays a vital role in the climate system and water cycle. The ocean supplies us with oxygen to breathe, contributes to food security, to decent jobs and livelihoods, **sustains cultural identify and traditions**, and plays an essential role in sustainable development, a sustainable ocean-based economy and poverty eradication.

### **Paragraph #5**

- Please make clear the linkages between carbon dioxide emissions and ocean acidification, and therefore help to underscore the urgent need to drastically reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

#### **Original text:**

We reaffirm that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time and are alarmed by the adverse effects of climate change on the ocean, including the rise in ocean temperatures, ocean acidification, deoxygenation, sea level rise, shifts in fish distribution and decrease in fish stocks, coastal erosion, and extreme weather events, as established by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in its special report entitled The Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate.

#### **Proposed Change:**

We reaffirm that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time and are alarmed by the adverse effects of climate change **and carbon dioxide emissions** on the ocean, including

the rise in ocean temperatures, ocean acidification, deoxygenation, sea level rise, shifts in fish distribution and decrease in fish stocks, coastal erosion, and extreme weather events, as established by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in its special report entitled The Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate.

**Paragraph #9**

- Ensure it is clear that we must continuously strive to connect emerging science to decision makers and policy makers.

**Original text:**

We also recognize the importance of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) and its vision aimed at achieving the science we need for the ocean we want. We support the Decade’s mission to generate and use knowledge for the transformational action needed to achieve a healthy, safe and resilient ocean for sustainable development by 2030 and beyond.

**Proposed text:**

We also recognize the importance of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) and its vision aimed at achieving the science we need for the ocean we want. We support the Decade’s mission to generate and use knowledge for the transformational action needed to achieve a healthy, safe and resilient ocean for sustainable development by 2030 and beyond—**connecting emergent science directly to decision makers.**

Very grateful for your consideration of these proposed changes to the zero draft.

Edits, comments and feedback were submitted to naiara.costa@Un.org, copying Ellery.wong@un.org on March 17, 2020.