



Statement delivered by Helen Ågren, Ambassador for the Ocean, Sweden
2020 UN Ocean Conference-Preparatory Meeting
4-5 February 2020, UN HQ

Mme. /Mr. Co-chair

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

Let me begin by expressing Sweden's sincere appreciation to the governments of Kenya and Portugal for hosting the UN Ocean conference this year. We look forward to working with you, with Secretary-General of the conference Mr Liu Zhenmin, with the UN SG special envoy for the Ocean Mr Peter Thomson and with all member states and stakeholders engaging in making the conference a success by increasing ambitions and actions to reach SDG 14 and Agenda 2030. We also thank the UN Secretary-General for the background note and proposed themes for the Interactive Dialogues.

I would like to highlight three issues with regard to the themes of the interactive dialogues

First, we note that some very significant scientific reports were presented last year, involving thousands of researchers around the world, such as the IPCC special report on the oceans and cryosphere, the IPBES Global Assessment on biodiversity and ecosystems and the IUCN report on ocean deoxygenation. These reports have improved our understanding of the severe effects of greenhouse gas emissions and global warming in the lethal combination with nutrient runoff and other pollutants. **We think that dialogue 3 should consider the relevant interlinkages between the ocean, the climate and the biodiversity including the driving forces behind the negative effects as well as co-benefits in policy design and actions.**

Second, in a changing climate the need to increase resilience in marine ecosystems becomes more urgent. Accelerated measures to reduce pollution from different sources, improve fisheries governance on global, regional and national levels and management of coastal habitats including blue carbon habitats and adaptation measures are urgent. **Sweden would like to stress the importance of experience sharing on implementation and raising ambitions regarding regionally coordinated measures. The dialogues could incentivize action and invite regions to present joint commitments in particular regarding SDG 14.1, 14.2 and 14.4.**

Third, Sweden remains fully committed to maintaining the political momentum around SDG 14 and encourages strong involvement in the dialogues by all countries and other critical stakeholders, such as business, civil society, and academia. We would like to stress the importance of supporting and empowering the youth. **To move from science to policy making we need public awareness and engagement. Youth movements, civil society and informed media play a pivotal role in this regard.**

Co-chairs, friends of the oceanAs we turn to the ocean for increased growth, new business opportunities and food supply, let's do so with a collaborative spirit. Let's not make the ocean the next battlefield of grabbing and reckless exploitation. Let the ocean be a unifying force that spurs cooperation and new transformative partnerships towards a sustainable future to the benefit of all humankind.

I thank you!