



Permanent Mission of Iceland
to the United Nations

**Statement by Mr. Jón Erlingur Jónasson, Director-General, Directorate
for Bilateral and Regional Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs**

Preparatory Meeting for the 2020 UN Ocean Conference
New York, 4 February 2020

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen

My delegation supports the themes suggested for the interactive dialogues, as they address adequately the targets under the SDG 14 and present a good balance between conservation and sustainable use. We especially want to recognize number eight (8) - Leveraging interlinkages between SDG 14 and other Goals towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The linkages to climate change have been frequently mentioned today as well as with biodiversity. Both highest on the global agenda this year, also called the super year for action.

It is imperative for all of us, individually and collectively, to keep our oceans clean and the marine environment healthy. By harnessing the potentials of the oceans and seas, we provide great potentials for innovation and green growth in many sectors and contribute to poverty eradication and sustained economic growth.

The linkages to other SDGs cannot be overstated for planetary survival and to human wellbeing, here I like to highlight the importance in terms of food security and poverty eradication.

The only way to build up resilience in ocean management is to increase our understanding of how the ocean ecosystem works and interacts with other systems. Where other systems can be environment, social or economic.

Every ocean management system that is based on science and our best available knowledge is going into the right direction and increasing resilience will in the long run secure sustainable management, food security and economic development.

Finally allow me to inform you that during Iceland's chairmanship of the Arctic Council, the Arctic marine environment will be one of three main priority themes. In April 2020 we will be organizing an international symposium on the threat of plastics to Arctic marine ecosystems and we hope to agree on a regional action plan on marine litter during our chairmanship. We are also planning a Ministerial meeting on the Arctic Ocean and will be running numerous oceans related projects, for example on the Blue BioEconomy and Arctic Marine Tourism.

In closing, we look forward an active and constructive participation throughout this process.