

**Japanese Government Statement on the Political Declaration of the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14,
1 February 2022**

Japan values conservation of the ocean in harmony with its sustainable use. This perspective is reflected in SDG14, and we need to continue our efforts for its achievement. Japan joins the call for action by various stakeholders as in the draft declaration.

With regard to specific issues, Japan has contributed to building and maintaining international momentum on marine plastic litter. At the G20 Osaka Summit in 2019, Japan proposed the Osaka Blue Ocean Vision, which calls upon countries to reduce additional pollution by marine plastic litter to zero by 2050. This vision has now been shared with 87 countries and regions. We also compiled reports on countries' measures to tackle this issue. Building on such international initiatives, Japan supports the declaration text in alignment with this vision.

As an effort to strengthen foundation for science, with the aim of comparing each country's research data, Japan publicized "Guidelines for Harmonizing Ocean Surface Microplastic Monitoring Methods" in 2019. Moreover, we are developing a database to integrate information on ocean surface microplastic gained through monitoring across the world with an ambition to contribute to international policy initiatives.

As a new step forward to step up global efforts, Japan submitted a draft resolution for the upcoming UNEA 5.2 to establish the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) which will discuss a new international legally binding instrument incorporating elements of research and innovation. Japan will actively engage in discussions at the INC, to build a globally effective international instrument by enabling the participation of as many countries as possible including major plastic consuming and emitting countries. The United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC) needs to reflect such momentum and goals.

Another issue is Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. It is a crucial diplomatic agenda ranging from sustainable use of marine resources,

maritime security, to economic development in regions. To combat IUU fishing, it is essential to understand actual circumstances and call for actions, while presenting our clear determination against IUU fishing in cooperation with every country. As an important tool for countermeasures, the Agreement on Port State Measures under the framework of FAO should be noted in the declaration.

To answer co-facilitators' question, in addressing some SDG14 targets that matured in 2020, it would be effective in making progress to facilitate specification of how to achieve them and how each country works on them domestically, rather than establishing new SDG targets with a new deadline. Therefore, based on shared sense of urgency about these issues, each country needs to accelerate its own effort while specifying goals and means by formulating and implementing relevant international frameworks such as the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and an international legally binding instrument on marine plastic pollution, for instance.

With regard to upcoming conferences and negotiations such as on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, the UNOC declaration should focus on providing support to their negotiations rather than prejudging their outcomes.

Finally, as a specific comment, Japan would like to request some modification of the text in paragraph 4. Para 4 reads "half of all living coral has been lost," but this may cause misunderstanding about its timeframe, or since when it has been lost. Accordingly, it should be "approximately half of the live coral cover on coral reefs has been lost since 1870."

Thank you.