

Ocean Conference – Informal Consultations on the Draft Political Declaration 1 February 2022

Statement – Norway

Thank you to the Secretariat and the co-chairs for the preparations for this meeting. We are happy that we finally resume our preparations for the UN Ocean Conference.

2022 is a crucial year for the oceans and we believe this is the year when we can stop the decline in the ocean's health. We now have the opportunity to use the raft of upcoming ocean related meetings to scale up ocean action for sustainable development. This is our chance to make 2022 and the UN Ocean Conference a watershed year for the oceans

A sustainable ocean economy is critical to achieve the Agenda 2030. Production, protection, and prosperity can go hand in hand if we sustainably manage and protect the ocean. The world is not there today. We are failing on the targets of SDG14 - the ocean is in crisis due to climate change, marine pollution, loss of biodiversity and overfishing. But the oceans also hold many of the solutions to these challenges.

We should keep in mind that ocean action is crucial to achieve not only SDG 14, but most of the other SDGs as well. The importance of fisheries to combat poverty and hunger is just one example to show that the UN Ocean Conference must mobilize ocean action to secure clean, healthy, and productive oceans for future generations.

Sustainable ocean management is key to achieve this. The members of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, co-chaired by Palau and Norway, therefore, have committed to 100% sustainable management of their national waters by 2025 and are encouraging other coastal and ocean states to the same by 2030.

Norway contributed substantial input to the draft political declaration two years ago and we are generally happy with the draft as it has now been presented. We find that the actions mentioned in the draft declaration are still relevant, and some are more acutely relevant than before. Obviously, it will have to be revised and updated in light of developments during the last couple of years and the year ahead of us.

We are happy to provide written input to the Secretariat based on these comments.