

Distinguished Co-facilitators,

At the outset, we commend your efforts in putting together this draft, that builds on the last draft of April 2020 and on the exchange of views we had during the first round of consultations held on February 1<sup>st</sup>.

My Delegation aligns itself with the intervention delivered by Pakistan on behalf of G77 and China. In addition, we would like to make the following remarks on our national capacity.

As regards the content of the draft before us today, we observe that the reference to the 2030 Agenda has been weakened compared to the 2017 Declaration "Our Ocean, Our Future". We would like to reinforce the language of current paragraph 3 with language taken from paragraph 6 of the 2017 Declaration. In this regard, we suggest adding at the end of current paragraph 3 the following: "*We reiterate the critical importance of being guided in our work by the 2030 Agenda, including the principles reaffirmed therein*".

In paragraph 5, we propose the following reformulation: "We reaffirm that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time ~~and are alarmed by~~ WITH adverse effects ~~of climate change~~ on the ocean ... We emphasize that mitigation of climate change and adaptation to its unavoidable effects, AS WELL AS THE PROVISION TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES OF MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION (FINANCE, TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFER AND CAPACITY BUILDING) NEEDED TO TAKE ACTION TO ADDRESS IT, represent an immediate and urgent priority for ensuring ...".

We strongly support paragraph 8 in its current formulation. It is important that the declaration reaffirms that UNCLOS is the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans must be carried out.

Also, we support paragraph 9 recognizing the importance of concluding the BBNJ negotiations.

We would like to point out that the use of concepts upon which there is no agreement or which do not have an agreed multilateral definition should be avoided, such as "greener", "bluer", "transformative change", "transformational action" and "nature-based solutions". In this regard, we suggest the following changes:

- In paragraph 6: "*We are deeply concerned by the findings about cumulative human impacts on the ocean, including ecosystem degradation and species extinctions ~~and we recognize the need for transformative change~~, as IDENTIFIED by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Global Assessment Report...*"
- In paragraph 10: "*...We support the Decade's mission to generate and use knowledge ~~for the transformational actions needed~~ IN ORDER to achieve a healthy, safe and resilient ocean for sustainable development by 2030 and beyond...*"
- In paragraph 11 f): "*...and implementing ~~nature-based solutions~~ ECOSYSTEM-BASED APPROACHES for, inter alia, carbon sequestration and the prevention of coastal erosion*".

In paragraph 11, we would like to propose the following changes:

- *“(e) ... assessing their ecological, social and cultural value RELEVANCE”* . The word “value” should be replaced as it may be interpreted as a tendency to monetize natural resources.
- *“(f) Developing and implementing measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and enhancing resilience, including, AMONG OTHERS, through increasing the use of renewable energy technologies...”*

In paragraph 12 there is a slight reference to capacity challenges faced by developing countries. We believe that such language should be reinforced by recognizing, at the same time, that developed countries have to guarantee financing, transfer of technology and official development assistance to developing countries, in order to bridge the existing capacity gaps. In the same vein, it is fundamental that the text makes reference to the documents containing such commitments for financing, such as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which is not currently mentioned in any part of the text.

In paragraph 12 (d) there are terms such as “capital market instruments”, “bankability” and “values of marine natural capital”. We believe that such references should be avoided as they could be interpreted as a tendency to monetize natural resources.

We observe with concern that the current draft text does not make any reference to the damage that harmful subsidies cause to fish stocks and the marine environment. The elimination of certain fisheries subsidies is paramount for advancing the implementation of SDG 14. In this regard, we suggest adding a new paragraph along similar lines as in the 2017 Declaration: *“Act decisively to prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, including through accelerating work to conclude negotiations and adopt an agreement at the World Trade Organization on this issue, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of those negotiations”*.

I thank you.