

**Materials for the Concept Paper on eight interactive dialogue topics
from China**
(February 2022)

The oceans and seas are the source for life. They connect the world and promote human society development. Our blue planet is not divided into islands by the oceans, but connected by the oceans as a community with a shared future. Oceans and Seas, as the important carrier and support, are of crucial importance to the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially SDG 14. China attaches great importance to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Through promoting the marine ecological civilization, it is committed to accelerating marine science and technology innovation, realizing the orderly development and utilization of marine resources, promoting maritime connectivity and practical cooperation in all areas. China is actively participating in global ocean governance through the development of the "Blue Partnership", to call on the joint efforts with all countries and international organizations for contributing to the implementation of 2030 Agenda and SDG 14.

Theme 1: Addressing Marine Pollution

Marine pollution harms to marine biodiversity and marine ecological environment, threatens the sustainable development of biological resources and human society. Preventing marine pollution and protecting marine ecological environment is the fundamental requirement and basic guarantee for the realizing the harmony between human and ocean. Therefore, we would like to propose the following:

- i.
Continue to improve the environmental quality of coastal waters with a land and sea coordinated way. Comprehensively carry out the renovation of sewage outlets into the sea, and promote the continuous improvement of the water quality by treating river runoff.
- ii. Protect and restore the quality and stability of marine ecosystems simultaneously. Strengthen the protection of marine ecosystems and marine biodiversity, improve the network of marine natural reserves, and restore marine ecosystems.
- iii. Strengthen marine pollution control. Strengthen the prevention and

- control of offshore oil exploration and development, marine vessel pollution, etc., and strengthen the risk prevention of marine oil spills.
- iv. Building the "Maritime Community with a Shared Future". Actively participate in the international process of global ocean governance, implement regional sea action plans, and strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation to deal with the emerging marine environmental problems including marine litter.

Theme 2: Managing, protecting, conserving, and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems

Marine and coastal ecosystems' health are not only the basis for sustainability of the ocean, but also contribute to the marine economic development and poverty eradication. We would like to propose:

- i. Implement the ecosystem-based integrated ocean and coastal management. Improve the understanding of marine ecosystem. Strengthen land and sea integration, and prioritize the integrity of ocean and coastal ecosystem. Remove the boundaries among departments, industries and regions, establish an holistic and coordinated management mechanism following the law of nature, respecting ecosystem characteristics, and embodying the rationale of "ecology +" in all aspects of coastal management.
- ii. Implement marine ecological protection and restoration. Bear in mind the concept of "respecting nature, conforming to nature, and protecting nature", to strengthen the protection of important ecosystems such as mangroves, salt marshes, seagrass beds, coral reefs, and oyster reefs, restore degraded ecosystems, maintain the integrity of marine ecosystems, and improve blue carbon ecosystem.
- iii. Adopt nature-based disaster prevention and mitigation approach. Build Eco-seawalls to give full play to the role of ecosystem in guarding against tide, waves and protecting dykes and banks, Contributing to the enhanced response to marine hazards like typhoons and surge storms, and climate change. Local realities should be given consideration in building dykes and the bank protection projects. Eco-dykes is consisting of wetlands, eco-wall-body and buffer zone. Artificial coastline features better Eco-functions. All these reinforce the efforts in preserving the Eco-system and mitigating disasters in coastal areas and pave the way for building the nature-based and more resilient integrated coastal protection system.
- iv. Strengthen research and cooperation on ocean and coastal ecosystem, establish the cooperation mechanism in various field of ocean and

coastal ecosystem protection, jointly put forward relevant technical methods on coastal ecosystem disaster reduction, quantitative assessment of ecological benefits of restoration projects and seawall ecological transformation, etc., develop international recommended standards/practices to effectively promote the protection of ocean and coastal ecosystem.

Theme 3: Minimizing and addressing ocean acidification, deoxygenation, and ocean warming

Ocean acidification, deoxygenation, and ocean warming are global problems, endangering the global marine ecosystem. We would like to propose the following:

- i. Work with regional and global parties to carry out long-term monitoring, prediction and important assessment of hypoxia, ocean acidification and sea level rise, with the priority on the impact on coastal and marine ecosystem and development trends.
- ii. Redouble our efforts, together with all countries to work and for the solutions to issues like **deoxygenation**, ocean acidification and sea-level rise by drawing on the experience and best practices of other countries and control unreasonable human activities, and enhance the natural resilience of marine and coastal ecosystems.
- iii. The cryosphere is the most sensitive layer in the climate system. The impact of climate change on the polar regions are more profound and extensive. Therefore, to strengthen the monitoring and study of the evolution of the polar ecosystem itself and its service functions in the cryosphere carry scientific significance in the efforts to respond to ocean acidification, hypoxia and ocean warming.

Theme 4: Making fisheries sustainable and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets

China is a big producer, trader and consumer in aquatic products. Fishery is important in national economy. Chinese government attaches great importance to sustainable development of fisheries, and rolls out concrete measures to promote high-quality fishery development. Firstly, to prioritize resource conservation. By putting in place the ten-year ban on fishing activities in the Yangtze River, 111,000 fishing vessels and 231,000 fishermen have been kept away from the no-fishing waters in the Yangtze River. The quantity control management system of fishing resources including enforcing fishing ban, has covered the seven basins

and four water areas in China. More than 40,000 marine fishing vessels with capacity about 1.5 million kilowatts are phased out. 153 national fishing farm demonstration areas are designated and over 150 billion units of fries are released. Secondly, to advance green development in aquaculture. The output of aquatic products has been stabilized at around 65 million tons, with the proportion of breeding to fishing increasing from 74: 26 at the end of the "Twelfth Five-Year Plan" (the year of 2015) to 80: 20. Zoning system for aquaculture water areas and tidal flats has been established. New and innovative breeding space is expanding. Major fishery projects such as national marine fishing living resources bank and large offshore breeding facility are launched. Thirdly, fishery is embedded in the entire value chain, with its output value in the second and tertiary industries exceeding 50%. The net per-capita income for fisherman registers increase over 40%.

According to the *National 14th Five-Year Plan on Fishery Development*. During the "14th Five-Year Plan" period (year during 2021-2025), China will further adjust and optimize fishery production structure. Efforts are intensified in conserving aquatic living resources, improving environment in water areas and ensuring green development in aquaculture industry. With the view to achieve SDG 2030, China stands ready to engage all countries, especially developing countries in fishery cooperation, including implement the "*Shanghai Declaration*" adopted during the 4th Global Aquaculture Conference in 2021, and sharing experience in upgrading aquaculture industry, and conserving fishing resources, promoting mature technology models such as integrated rice-fish farming and pond ecological farming, and jointly promote the global fishery development in the post-epidemic period to a higher level.

Theme 5: Increasing sustainable ocean economic benefits of SIDS and LDCs

Small island developing States (SIDS) and coastal least developed countries (LDCs) face the issues like utilization and conservation of marine resources, global climate change, and how to ensure the people's livelihood. Sustainable development of ocean economy is one of the important path to meet the above challenges. We would like to propose the following:

- i. Strengthen the cooperation among regions, organizations and countries, provide planning and policy-making support of marine economy to SIDS and LDCs by conduct cooperative projects and technical assistance, help

- them to utilize the desalinated seawater and clean ocean energy, building industrial parks by cooperation. These activities will be helpful to improve the living environment, sustainable development and stable growth of ocean economy.
- ii. Support the establishment of a marine spatial planning system. Based on the marine environmental bearing capacity and global assessment of climate change, ocean resources could be rational developed and utilized, marine ecological environment could be effectively conserved by setting limits and providing guidance.
 - iii. Promote the development of ocean observation of SIDS and LDCs, tackle the risk of sea-level rise together and mitigate the losses from marine disasters, guarantee the safety and property of the people living in coastal areas.
 - iv. Promote the conservation of island ecological environment, carry out the monitoring and evaluation for the island ecological environment and typical ecosystem, especially SIDS. Conduct survey on coastline, vegetation, soil, beach and water resources of the islands, especially joint research and evaluation of typical ecosystems, such as coral reefs, identify the biodiversity and species which need to be protected, and preserve the health of island ecosystem.
 - v. Actively carry out capacity building, and provide the technology of aquaculture, seawater desalination and comprehensive utilization and marine energy application and personnel training for developing countries, especially SIDS and LDCs, via South-South cooperation, and further enhance the island sustainable development and utilization of marine resources by SIDS and LDCs.

Theme 6: Increasing scientific knowledge, and developing research capacity and transfer of marine technology

The development and operation of the global ocean observation system is crucial to the development and dissemination of marine science and technology. The deployment of observation equipment by ships is an important means of building an ocean observation system. With the resurging COVID-19, the voyage arrangement and route supply have been greatly affected by the national epidemic prevention policies along the route. We would like to propose the following:

- i. Support the development and operation of the Global Ocean Observing System, with special emphasis on the ecosystem-based comprehensive observation of physical oceanography, geo-biology, chemistry and marine geology.

- ii. Deepen marine cooperation, jointly initiate and promote marine scientific research, acquire global marine environment information and improve the marine scientific knowledge system via the sharing of data, information and scientific knowledge.
- iii. Adopt more active and pragmatic cooperative research, work together with local governments and enterprises for more flexible policies for voyage application management and port replenishment, and jointly face the challenges caused by the COVID-19 on scientific voyage observations.

Theme 7: Promote the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources through the implementation of international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

International laws including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources. We would like to propose the following:

- i. Effectively implement the institutional framework of the UNCLOS on the protection and sustainable use of oceans and its resources, actively promote the negotiation of international instruments on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, balance the conservation and sustainable use, safeguard the common interests of international community, and promote the maritime community with a shared future.
- ii. Continue to enhance the prevention and control of marine environmental pollution, conserve and restore marine ecosystems, deepen global and regional cooperation, accomodating the needs of developing countries, making progress in various fields related to SDG14.

Theme 8: Implementing 2030 Agenda with the interconnection between Goal 14 and other Goals

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a framework document for global development and cooperation. All parties should follow the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities", respect national conditions and development policies, and jointly promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We would like to propose the following:

- i. Deepen the Global Partnership for development, consolidate the international development and cooperation pattern that South–North

cooperation as the main channel, and South-South Cooperation as the supplement. Help developing countries, including SIDS and LDCs, to improve their capabilities in ocean conservation and sustainable management. Encourage the cooperation in the Special Marine Economic Zones Planning, marine disaster prevention and mitigation, fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, seawater desalination, etc., to promote global ecological civilization.

- ii. Accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, support the implementation of Global Development Initiatives and international cooperation in the field of climate change and green development, and jointly support the United Nations in its role of coordinating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and ocean conservation. Work together towards the innovative, coordinated, green, open and sharing development, and make our own contributions to the worldwide implementation of the 2030 Agenda.