



## **UNOC- 2<sup>nd</sup> informal consultations 24 March 2022**

### **Statement – Norway**

Thank you to the Secretariat and the co-chairs for the preparations for this meeting. In our opinion the zero draft declaration has been updated in a good way and, as for the former draft, we are generally happy with it. We will be happy to provide some written input to the Secretariat with suggestions for some minor adjustments.

At our previous consultation meeting on 1 February, I mentioned the importance of the UN Ocean Conference to promote SDG 14 and to stop the decline in the ocean's health. The UN Ocean Conference should be the main event to make 2022 a watershed year for the oceans.

We have started well, agreeing at the UN Environment Assembly to start negotiations on an international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution. This agreement will have substantial positive impact on ocean health. My hope is that upcoming meetings under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Our Ocean Conference, the negotiations on a new UN Agreement on conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, the Framework Convention on Climate Change and other events will provide similar ocean momentum. All these positive developments will take place within the framework of the Law of the Sea Convention, within which all activities in oceans and seas must take place.

I will also reiterate that creating a sustainable ocean economy is critical to achieving both SDG 14 specifically, but importantly also most of the other SDGs. The oceans hold many of the solutions to achieve Agenda 2030. Sustainable ocean management is key to achieve a sustainable ocean economy. 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.

To achieve this, we need to recognize aquatic food as a key source for global food security. A healthy ocean supports healthy people. Hence, a healthy ocean is vital for sustainable aquatic food systems to generate sufficient, safe, and nutritious food which meets the populations' dietary needs. This will make sure that no one is left behind.

The United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development will provide the scientific basis for identifying concrete solutions, and I am happy that my Prime Minister has agreed to be patron for the Ocean Decade Alliance to support the decade.