



Permanent Mission of Iceland
to the United Nations

Statement by Counsellor Anna Pála Sverrisdóttir
24 March 2022

**Intergovernmental consultations on the political declaration for the 2022
United Nations Conference to support the implementation of SDG 14**

Co-facilitators, colleagues.

- It gives me great pleasure to be here today, to discuss how we can further improve a well written draft.
- Iceland sees paragraphs 1-10 as setting the stage for the paragraphs which come after. The text is now quite balanced and even if some updates may improve it, we would think that this is not the place to renegotiate other processes or make any fundamental changes to it.
- I will start by expressing the heavy emphasis that Iceland places on UNCLOS and that its importance gets properly reflected in the text. To this end, our strong preference is to keep the language in para 8, as it now is - and we point to the fact that this language is based on the latest oceans and law of the sea resolution of the General Assembly.
- Regarding other specific paragraphs, let us start with para 4. Iceland is pleased to see a clear reference to the four targets under SDG14 and that it is regrettable that we did not meet them on time. We ask for

such a clear reference to stay in the text, coupled with an emphasis on taking urgent action to achieve these targets. Further on para 4, it might be good to refer to all kinds of pollution, instead of only plastic pollution.

- In para 5 on climate change, Iceland supports the language additions on ocean-based action.
- In para 7, a reference to the impact of covid on communities and the human dimension might fit nicely in the context of the ocean-based economy.
- In para 9, on BBNJ, we think it might be a positive addition to include something on the importance of delegations engaging with each other, in order to build the bridges needed to close this process and as a result get a new international agreement of good quality.
- Furthermore, as a general point, Iceland is supportive of language on nature-based solutions and ecosystem restoration.
- Lastly, co-facilitators, another general point which is dear to the hearts of Icelanders, who through the ages have depended on fisheries: The so-called blue or aquatic food, a climate-friendly source of nutrition that is important for 3 billion people, including some of the most food insecure people in this world. We would like to see the importance of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture reflected more clearly in the document, but will revert on this tomorrow, during discussions on paras 11-15.
- I thank you.



Statement by Counsellor Anna Pála Sverrisdóttir
25 March 2022

**Intergovernmental consultations on the political declaration for the 2022
United Nations Conference to support the implementation of SDG 14**

Co-facilitators, colleagues.

- After hearing many constructive statements yesterday, we are confident that the political declaration of the UN Ocean conference in Lisbon, will be a good document and that it will add to the success of what is shaping up to be an important conference, hosted by Kenya and Portugal. As for the declaration, we are in good hands with Denmark and Grenada.
- As for individual paragraphs, allow me first to present Iceland's ideas on ways of strengthening para 11.
- We are in favour of a reference to the language on 1.5 degrees of the Paris Agreement, although it could also be placed elsewhere in the document.
- In sub-paragraph 11b, we suggest to start the paragraph with the words „Restoring AND MAINTAINING fish stocks AT levels...“. The reason is that while a third of fish stocks are overexploited, two thirds are not and

we think it is important to give a sense of hope and that some good practice exists.

- Co-facilitators, eliminating IUU fishing is pro-poor, pro-nutrition and pro-environment. Iceland emphasizes keeping the text as is, in sub-paragraph 11b and to add to it „ending harmful subsidies“, as that is a major factor for eliminating IUU.
- Further on fisheries, as we mentioned yesterday, it is the position of Iceland that an already good draft can be further enhanced by highlighting better the importance and potential of so-called blue or aquatic food. Around the Food Systems Summit last year, we discovered that blue food was largely being left out of the discussion. This is how the Blue/Aquatic Food Coalition came into existence and for the time being, it continues its work and has a membership of close to 30 actors, including around 20 member states.
- We propose a new sub-paragraph under paragraph 11 and will submit a language proposal, which will focus on the importance that actions for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture as well as a healthy ocean, have for sustainable and resilient food systems.
- In paragraph 11.e, we would like a reference to „other effective area-based conservation measures“.
- In paragraph 12, we like the addition of „capacity building“ to sub-paragraph c.
- Our last point may be the last thing we comment on in the document, but to Iceland is incredibly important; this is sub-paragraph 12f which we believe could be further strengthened, for instance with a reference to

the „full, equal and meaningful participation of women and girls,“ for which there is a number of examples in agreed UN texts.

- I thank you.

ICELAND TEXT PROPOSALS:

Sup-paragraph 11.b, add to the beginning:

„Restoring **and maintaining** fish stocks ~~to~~ **at** levels...”

Sub-paragraph 11.b, add:

„... , through combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing including through the use of communication tools and other technological tools for monitoring, control and surveillance **and ending harmful subsidies**,...”

Sub-paragraph 11.e, add:

Effectively planning and implementing area-based management tools, including marine protected areas **and other effective area-based conservation measures**, integrated coastal zone management and marine spatial planning, through, inter alia, assessing their ecological, social and cultural value and applying the precautionary and ecosystem-based approach, in accordance with national legislation and international law, [\[New language\]](#)

Sub-paragraph 12.f, add:

Empower women and girls, as their **full**, equal **and meaningful** participation is key in progressing towards a sustainable ocean-based economy and to achieving Goal 14, and mainstream a gender perspective in our work to conserve and sustainably use the ocean and its resources, [\[New language\]](#)