Our ocean, our future, our responsibility

1. We, the Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives meeting in Lisbon from 27 June to 1 July 2022 at the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development "Scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation of Goal 14: stocktaking, partnerships and solutions", with the participation of civil society and other relevant stakeholders, reaffirm our strong commitment to conserve and sustainably use the ocean, seas and marine resources. Greater ambition is required at all levels to address the dire state of the ocean. As leaders and representatives of our Governments, we are determined to act decisively and urgently to improve the health, productivity, sustainable use and resilience of the ocean and its ecosystems.

2. We reaffirm the commitments made in the declaration entitled "Our ocean, our future: call for action", adopted by the high-level United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, held from 5 to 9 June 2017.

3. We recognize that the ocean is fundamental to life on our planet and to our future. The ocean is an important source of the planet's biodiversity and plays a vital role in the climate system and water cycle. The ocean supplies us with oxygen to breathe, contributes to food security, nutrition, and to decent jobs and livelihoods, acts as a sink and reservoir of greenhouse gases and protects biodiversity, provides a means for maritime transportation, including for global trade, forms an important part of our natural and cultural heritage, and plays an essential role in sustainable development, a sustainable ocean-based economy and poverty eradication. We underline the interlinkages and synergies between Goal 14 and the other Sustainable Development Goals, and recognize that the implementation of Goal 14 can contribute significantly to the realization of the 2030 Agenda, which is integrated and indivisible in its nature.

4. We are therefore deeply alarmed by the global emergency facing the ocean. Sea levels are rising, coastal erosion is worsening, and the ocean is warmer and more acidic. Marine pollution is increasing at an alarming rate, a third of fish stocks are overexploited, marine biodiversity continues to decrease and approximately half of all living coral has been lost. While progress has been made towards the achievement of some targets of Goal 14, action is not advancing at the speed or scale required to meet our goals. We deeply regret our collective failure to achieve the four targets under Goal 14 that matured in 2020, and we renew our commitment to taking urgent action to achieve all targets as soon as possible without undue delay.

5. We reaffirm that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time and we are deeply alarmed by the adverse effects of climate change on the ocean and marine life, including the rise in ocean temperatures, ocean acidification, deoxygenation, sea level rise, the decrease in polar ice coverage, shifts in the abundance and distribution of marine species, including fish, decrease in marine biodiversity, as well as coastal erosion and extreme weather events and related impacts on island and coastal communities, as highlighted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in its special report entitled *The Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate*. We emphasize

that mitigation of climate change and adaptation to its unavoidable effects represent an immediate and urgent priority for ensuring the health, productivity, sustainable use and resilience of the ocean and thus our future. We recognize, in this regard, the particular importance of the Paris Agreement adopted under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, including the commitment to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C. We emphasize the importance of implementing the commitments undertaken under the Paris Agreement and the Glasgow Climate Pact on mitigation, adaptation and the provision and mobilization of finance, technology transfer and capacity-building to developing countries and small island developing States. We welcome the decision by the Parties to recognize the importance of protecting, conserving and restoring ecosystems, including marine ecosystems, to deliver crucial services, including acting as sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases, reducing vulnerability to climate change impacts and supporting sustainable livelihoods, including for indigenous peoples and local communities. We further welcome the invitation to the Chair of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice to hold an annual dialogue to strengthen ocean-based action.

6. We are deeply concerned by the findings about cumulative human impacts on the ocean, including ecosystem degradation and species extinctions, as highlighted by the Second World Ocean Assessment and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services *Global Assessment Report*, and we recognize the need for transformative change. We are committed to halting and reversing the decline in the health of the ocean's ecosystems and biodiversity and to protecting and restoring its resilience and ecological integrity. We are encouraged by the commitments by more than 100 Member States to protect at least 30 percent of the global ocean within Marine Protected Areas and other effective area-based conservation measures by 2030. We emphasize that strong governance and adequate financing for developing countries, in particular small island developing States, is essential to effectively implement and maintain Marine Protected Areas. We also recognize the importance of the United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration and its call to support and scale up efforts to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems worldwide.

7. We welcome the decision by UNEA5.2 to convene an intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, which could include both binding and voluntary approaches, based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full lifecycle of plastic, taking into account among other things, the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, as well as national circumstances and capabilities.

8. We recognize the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the ocean-based economy and in particular the ocean-based economy of small island developing States, which have been disproportionately adversely affected by the pandemic, given their dependence on the ocean-based economy. We also recognize the threat to ocean health caused by the COVID-19 pandemic due to improper waste management, including of plastic waste, such as personal protective equipment (PPE), which has exacerbated the problem of marine plastic litter and microplastics in the ocean. We affirm that the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean and the advancement of nature-

based solutions plays a critical role in building back better, greener and bluer, namely ensuring a sustainable, inclusive and environmentally-resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

9. We affirm the need to enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of The Future We Want.

10. We urge the Parties to conclude in 2022 the work being undertaken by the intergovernmental conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

11. We also recognize the importance of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) and its vision to achieve the science we need for the ocean we want. We support the Decade's mission to generate and use knowledge for the transformational action needed to achieve a healthy, safe and resilient ocean for sustainable development by 2030 and beyond. We fully support the work of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO in implementing the Decade and commit to supporting these efforts.

12. We recognize that the absence of adequate scientific information should not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take required conservation or management measures, in line with the precautionary and ecosystem-based approach. We stress that science-based and innovative actions and international cooperation and partnerships based in science, technology and innovation, can contribute to the solutions necessary to overcome challenges in achieving Goal 14 in the following ways:

    a. Informing integrated ocean management, planning and decision-making, through improving our understanding of the impact of cumulative human activities on the ocean and anticipating the impacts of planned activities and eliminating or minimizing their negative effects, as well as the effectiveness of adopted measures,

    b. Restoring fish stocks to levels that produce at least maximum sustainable yield in the shortest time feasible and minimizing waste, unwanted by-catch and discards, 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 in line with target 14.6, as well as through the use of an ecosystem approach to fisheries that protect essential habitats and promote collaborative processes for decision-making that include all stakeholders, including small-scale and artisanal fisheries, recognizing the importance of the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture,

c. Mobilizing actions for sustainable fisheries and sustainable aquaculture for sufficient, safe and nutritious food, recognizing the central role of healthy oceans in resilient food systems and for achieving the 2030 Agenda,

d. Preventing, reducing and controlling marine pollution of all kinds, from both land-and sea-based-activities, including nutrient pollution, untreated wastewater, solid waste discharges, hazardous substances, emissions from the maritime sector, including shipping, pollution from ship wrecks and anthropogenic underwater noise, through improving our understanding of their sources, pathways and impacts on marine ecosystems, and through contributing to comprehensive life-cycle approaches that include improved waste management,

e. Preventing, reducing, controlling and ultimately eliminating long-term discharges of marine plastic litter and microplastics into the ocean, including through contributing to comprehensive life-cycle approaches, encouraging resource efficiency and recycling, developing viable alternatives for consumer and industrial uses that can fully and effectively biodegrade in order to reduce inputs of marine plastic litter, taking into account the full environmental impacts, innovation in product design and remediation of marine plastic litter that is already in the ocean, recognizing the establishment by UNEA 5.2 of an intergovernmental negotiating committee towards an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution,

f. Effectively planning and implementing area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, integrated coastal zone management and marine spatial planning, through, *inter alia*, assessing their multiple ecological, social and cultural value and applying the precautionary and ecosystem-based approach, in accordance with national legislation and international law**,**

g. Developing and implementing measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change, in line with the Glasgow Climate Pact commitment to pursue efforts to limit global warming to 1.5 °C, reducing disaster risk and enhancing resilience, including through increasing the use of renewable energy technologies, especially ocean-based technologies, reducing the risk of and preparing for ocean-related extreme weather events, including the development of multi-hazard early warning systems and integrating ecosystems-based approaches for disaster risk reduction at all levels and across all phases of disaster risk reduction and management, and the impacts of sea level rise, reducing emissions from maritime transportation, including shipping, and implementing nature-based solutions for, inter alia, carbon sequestration and the prevention of coastal erosion,

13. We commit to taking the following science-based and innovative actions on an urgent basis, recognizing that all developing countries, in particular small island developing States and least developed countries, face capacity challenges that need to be addressed:

a. Strengthen international, regional, sub-regional and national scientific observation and data collection efforts, including of environmental and socio-economic data, and

improve the timely sharing and dissemination of data and knowledge, including by making data widely accessible through open access databases, investing in national statistical systems, standardizing data, ensuring interoperability between databases, and synthesizing data into information for policy- and decision-makers, and support capacity building in developing countries to improve data collection and analysis,

b. Recognize the important role of indigenous, traditional and local knowledge, innovation and practices held by indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as the role of social science in planning, decision-making and implementation,

c. Enhance cooperation at the global, regional, sub-regional, national and local level in order to strengthen mechanisms for collaboration, knowledge-sharing and exchange of best practices within marine scientific research, and to support developing countries in addressing their constraints in access to technology, including through strengthening science, technology and innovation infrastructure, domestic innovation capabilities, absorptive capacities and the capacity of national statistical systems, in particular in the most vulnerable countries, which face the greatest challenges in collecting, analyzing and using reliable data and statistics,

d. Establish effective partnerships, including multi-stakeholder, public-private, cross-sectoral, interdisciplinary and scientific partnerships, including by incentivizing the sharing of good practices, giving visibility to well-performing partnerships and creating space for meaningful interaction and networking and capacity building,

e. Explore, develop and promote innovative financing solutions to drive the transformation to sustainable ocean-based economies, and the scaling up of nature-based solutions to support the resilience, restoration and conservation of coastal ecosystems, including through public-private sector partnerships and capital market instruments, provide technical assistance to enhance the bankability and feasibility of projects, as well as mainstream the values of marine natural capital into decision-making and address barriers to accessing financing, recognizing that further support is needed from developed countries, especially regarding capacity building, financing and technology transfer,

f. 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 to mainstream a gender perspective in our work to conserve and sustainably use the ocean and its resources,

g. Ensure that people, especially children and youth, are empowered with relevant knowledge and skills that enable them to understand the importance of and the need to contribute to the health of the ocean, including in decision-making, through promoting and supporting quality education and life-long learning for ocean literacy,

h. Strengthen the science-policy interface for implementing Goal 14 and its targets, to ensure that policy is informed by the best-available science and relevant indigenous, traditional and local knowledge, and to highlight policies and actions that may be scalable, through processes such as the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects,

i. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from international maritime transportation, especially shipping, as soon as possible in line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement while setting clear interim goals and ensuring that investments in new infrastructure such as ports and ships increase resilience in the face of climate impacts and that no one is left behind.

14. We commit to implementing our respective voluntary commitments made in the context of the Conference and urge those who have made voluntary commitments at the 2017 Conference to ensure appropriate review and follow-up of their progress.

15. We strongly call upon the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to support the implementation of Goal 14 in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in particular by enhancing inter-agency coordination and coherence throughout the United Nations system on ocean issues, through the work of UN-Oceans.

16. We know that a healthy, productive, sustainable and resilient ocean is critical for our planet, our lives and our future. We call upon all stakeholders to urgently take ambitious and concerted action to accelerate implementation to achieve Goal 14 as soon as possible without undue delay.