

National statement of H.E. Mr. Borislav Sandov, Deputy Prime Minister for
Climate Policies and Minister of Environment and Water of the Republic of
Bulgaria

Plenary meeting

30 June 2022

Distinguished Heads of States and Governments,

Distinguished Ministers,

Excellences,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my privilege to be with you today to discuss and propose solutions to support the implementation of SDG14.

Let me thank the host country Portugal, as well as Kenya, for their leadership.

The progress on SDG 14 implementation will benefit all SDGs and vice versa. The way towards successful implementation requires cross-sectoral integration and policy coherence. Today more than ever, we have to work together and to build the partnerships needed to overcome the triple planetary crises and recover greener and bluer.

The sustainable coastal development is amongst the main priorities of the Bulgarian Government as a country in the Black Sea region. A special attention is paid to the blue economic development, focusing on sectors dependent on the quality of marine water and ecosystems as fisheries, aquaculture and tourism, which were seriously affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Bulgarian Resilience and Recovery Plan provides for measures to ensure the collection and treatment of wastewater from settlements. This will improve the condition of surface and groundwater and will have a positive impact on the protection of transboundary water basins, incl. the Danube catchment area and the Black Sea catchment area.

In order to achieve SDG 14 and its targets 2, 3, 4 and 5 we plan to improve the conservation status of marine natural habitat types and species by increasing marine protected areas. Therefore, the Resilience and Recovery Plan sets up investment measures and reforms in the field of biodiversity protection, that amount to approximately 54 million EUR.

We also envisage the introduction of reforms and investment measures aimed at reducing plastic packaging and disposable plastic products and to implement new technological solutions, improving the quality and sustainability of products and reducing the use of raw materials. To support the transition to a circular economy through the introduction of circular production and consumption models, environmental standardization and the promotion of technologies related to recycling and reuse of waste, repair and use of bio-based products 92 million EUR are provided.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We must not forget that achieving a good marine status and preserving marine ecosystems and biodiversity represents a significant potential for employment and sustainable economic growth and well-being.

In this context research, technology and innovation are fundamental to providing answers to some of the most pressing sustainability issues of the 21st century. They will help us to ensure evidence-based decision-making and policies based on knowledge and best practices to turn the challenges into opportunities.

Beyond all the political and legal agreements that are essential to prepare for the future, change involves a shift in mindset. Oceans, seas and marine resources are fundamental for economic and social prosperity. It is our responsibility to sustain them and to this end to pursue maximum progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The time to act is now!

Thank you for your attention.