



PHILIPPINES

NATIONAL STATEMENT
2nd United Nations Ocean Conference
Altice Arena, 27 June - 01 July 2022

Our co-hosts Portugal and Kenya, Excellencies,

It is fitting that we hold this 2nd UN Ocean Conference on the 40th Anniversary of UNCLOS. The deterioration of the health of the oceans should serve as a reminder to uphold UNCLOS as the constitution of the oceans, particularly in addressing the drivers that apply pressure on it, including disputes over access to resources and maritime boundaries.

The Philippines associates with the statement delivered by Pakistan on behalf of the G77 and China at the Plenary of the 2022 UN Ocean Conference.

The Philippines joins the consensus calling for collective decisions on the basis of science and innovation, to scale up Ocean Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14.

Our objective at this 2nd Conference on the Ocean is to see if there remains a way for us to restore critical ecosystem services such as carbon storage and oxygen generation, and habitats for marine life and coastal protection, in an integrated and sustained manner.

As an archipelagic and maritime State, the Philippines has no choice but to be seized of the issues involved in Ocean Action - the seas define our way of life, and our destiny as a nation lies in its fate. Not to say that our burden is heavier than others, although at times, it does seem that way. The Philippines is faced with at least a dozen destructive typhoons a year, with climate change making their impacts more pronounced. But the oceans are oblivious to the boundaries we have traced over our maps. The oceans are and will always be a shared global commons and marine resources will often have to be managed collectively.

When we adopted the 2030 Agenda in 2015, we accepted that the Sustainable Development Goals are interlinked - the success or failure of one would impact the whole. The pandemic has demonstrated this most clearly.

As we near 2030 Agenda let us take this opportunity to recommit, energize and build momentum towards closing the gaps in our implementation.

Marine litter and plastics pollution is a global problem that requires a multidisciplinary and comprehensive approach. To address this, we adopted in 2021, a National Plan of Action for the prevention, reduction, and management of Marine Litter (NPOA-ML). The plan aims to achieve “zero waste to Philippine waters by 2040”. We have an Ecological Solid Waste Management law which targeted national waste diversion rate of 80% and an

Action Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production (PAP4SCP) to improve waste management and plastic circularity.

In ASEAN we have the Regional Action Plan for Combating Marine Debris. As a member of the Group of Friends (GOF) on Marine Plastic Pollution, we joined in the decision of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) to initiate negotiations on a global agreement to end plastic pollution.

As a party to the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement, the Philippines supports an ecosystem-based approach in fisheries management to better contribute to sustainable fish production for human nutrition and livelihood of rural communities.

We have established Fisheries Management Areas (FMA), implemented Vessel Monitoring Measures (VMM) and electronic reporting system for commercial Philippine flagged fishing vessels and enacted rules on landing and transshipping of fish and fishery products. We have also developed management plans for tuna, sardines, blue swimming crab and octopus.

IUU fishing undermines efforts to manage fisheries in a sustainable manner and threatens food security and the livelihood of coastal communities.

We are guided by responsive legislation and strategic interventions. We also have a National Plan of Action against IUU fishing and a Comprehensive National Fisheries Industry

Development Plan that addresses IUU fishing through a whole-of-government, all stakeholder approach.

In 2017, the Philippines made Voluntary Commitments, and we are glad to report progress on the following:

- *First - the National Search for Outstanding Coastal Community Malinis at Masaganang Karagatan (MMK) (CLEAN AND PLENTIFUL OCEAN)* aimed to promote fisheries protection and conservation, centers on the significance of sustainably managing fisheries and aquatic resources, and to promote stakeholder-engagement to the cause of resource protection and conservation. Today, we have awarded a total of 348 coastal municipalities in the form of livelihood packages.**
- *Second - National Stock Assessment Program (NSAP)* the NSAP assessed major pelagic and demersal species in major fishing grounds of the county through establishment of standardized time series and biological data by fishing ground (bays/gulfs/seas), which are fundamental to science-based fisheries management, formulation of policies, plans and strategies. This Program was able to establish reference points and recommended harvest control rules for 42 species representing 47 stocks distributed across 11 Fisheries Management Areas.**
- *Third - Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program (CMEMP).* This program aimed to comprehensively manage,**

address and effectively reduce the drivers and threats of degradation of the coastal and marine ecosystems in order to achieve and promote sustainability of ecosystem services, food security, and climate change resiliency. It covers all our marine protected areas (MPA), marine key biodiversity areas and adjacent municipal waters. Currently, our approach to reef and reef associated habitats management is being strengthened and scaled up into networks of marine protected areas. We have maintained and protected a total of 35 MPAs. We also established 21 and strengthened 8 MPA networks. We have also updated our monitoring and assessment indicators to obtain more accurate monitoring data for science-based actions and management interventions.

We aspire for the completion of an ambitious and effective Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement by August 2022 this year.

As the international community works together to end the pandemic and recover better, addressing the drivers that exert pressure on the world's oceans should remain paramount. As a maritime country, attaching great importance to the sustainable use of the oceans, we look forward to the 2022 Ocean Conference and its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 14.

Thank you.

