



**UN Ocean Conference
»Addressing Marine Pollution«
Interactive Dialogue**

Portugal, Lisbon, 27. June 2022

Distinguished Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen

- ⇒ We are all connected to the seas and oceans. Be it across the coast or the rivers that flow through our territories. They bind together the whole planet while providing us with food, oxygen, energy, jobs, biodiversity ... we can easily say the oceans enable the life on Earth. Yet, they are in danger as oceans are extremely vulnerable. Therefore it must be our urgent mission to prevent and eliminate any kind of pollution.
- ⇒ Marine pollution, similar to climate change, knows no borders. Pollution crisis cuts across several sectors and is strongly interconnected with the planetary crisis of climate change and biodiversity loss. Besides international, it also requires national, regional and sub-regional cooperation and knowledge sharing among diverse stakeholders. For our actions and policies to be effective on global scale, it is mandatory that we are working together on water systems and create joint solutions that will be shared and put into practice.
- ⇒ Addressing marine pollution therefore requires a systemic approach with coherent actions through the entire pollutants' lifecycle, both from land and sea. We need to foster innovation and practices that have been shown to work and achieve positive results on all levels.

- ⇒ One big step was already made this year at UN Environment Assembly with the resolution on international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution and resolution on nitrogen management. We should keep the political moment and scale up their implementation.
- ⇒ Slovenia supports all activities of the United Nations in the field of water, coast and sea. We strongly support multilateral environmental agreements that provide frameworks as well as targeted and time-bound actions, especially in terms of accelerating the processes for achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Jointly with other EU members, we have already committed to give protected status to at least 30% of land and sea areas on a global level.
- ⇒ As Slovenia's sea and the coast is an exceptionally sensitive ecosystem due to their closed position and shallowness, our priority is emphasizing the importance of cooperation between upstream river basin management and coastal protection. Thus highlighting the importance of the source-to-sea approach in relation to the reduction of marine pollution.
- ⇒ As we cannot achieve it alone, we are actively cooperating with our neighboring countries through different platforms within the EU and through international conventions, such as International Sava river basin Commission and The EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region – just to name a few.
- ⇒ In the second half of 2021 Slovenia held the EU Council Presidency at the 22nd meeting of the contracting parties of the Barcelona Convention. We invested significant efforts in the designation of the Mediterranean Sea as a whole, as an Emission controlled Area for

Sulphur Oxides, with an entry into force in 2025. We are proud to host the next meeting of the parties in Slovenia next year.

⇒ Oceans brought us all here today and I hope that the solutions we will aim for will be at scale and speed that will have concrete commitments and results which will help save our oceans and our planet.

⇒ Thank you.