



## **SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS**

### **National Statement**

**delivered by Ms. Asha DeSuza, Head of Delegation**

2022 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of SDG 14:

Conserve and sustainable use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.

**“Scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation for the implementation of Goal 14: Stocktaking, Partnerships and Solutions”.**

29<sup>th</sup> June 2022

Lisbon, Portugal

Please check against delivery

**Mr. President,**

1. At the outset, allow me to thank the Governments of Kenya and Portugal for hosting us here at the 2022 United Nations Conference to support the implementation of SDG 14.
2. Saint Kitts and Nevis underscores the significance of scaling up ocean-based science and innovation for Goal 14 and the added importance of stocktaking and assessing our progress, building and maintaining partnerships and achieving real and lasting solutions.
3. As a small island developing state, Saint Kitts and Nevis experiences first-hand the importance of the ocean to our economies, our societies, our cultural identities, our health, our food and nutrition security, and ultimately our lives. In pursuit of sustainable development, we acknowledge that all SDGs are inextricably linked, but many of which are dependent on the health of our Oceans.
4. Yet, we continue to see the alarming global reports that indicate that our oceans, seas and marine resources are in danger. With those troubling statistics, it is regrettable that some of the targets that were set out in Goal 14 have not been met.
5. Saint Kitts and Nevis is extremely vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change, particularly manifested through the current state of our oceans and marine life. Sea level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification destroys the marine ecosystems that we so heavily rely on.
6. It is against this reality that Saint Kitts and Nevis has taken several steps to prioritize ocean governance and marine resource management and set them at the core of our sustainable development efforts.

Mr President,

7. St. Kitts and Nevis enacted the Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Resources Act in 2016. This legislation, and its more recent policy outputs represent the overarching framework which provide for the conservation, management, development and sustainable use of fisheries, aquaculture and marine resources in the Federation.
8. The Saint Kitts and Nevis Marine Management Area was designated, as an effective implementation of an area-based management mechanism that was selected after an extensive national stakeholder and environmental impact assessment. The area integrates coastal zone management and allows us to maintain a dual focus on conservation and sustainable use, while upholding the national commitment to food and nutrition security, employment, economic growth and sustainable development.
9. The Government continues to focus on strengthening institutional capacity and policies to promote oceanic sustainability, sustainable fisheries, and overall ecosystem health with a focus on habitat monitoring.
10. In fact, we have applied a multistakeholder approach to combatting marine pollution particularly marine plastic pollution. The Government, in collaboration with local environmental groups, have coordinated several coastal clean-up exercises and awareness

verifications and provided technical guidance to stakeholders including the private sector and other relevant ministries such as tourism, environment, trade and maritime affairs.

Mr. President,

11. Furthermore, we are happy to report that just four days ago, we validated our national strategy and action plan to implement the provisions of the Agreement on Port State Measures to Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing. The plan outlines the processes and procedures by which we uphold our port, flag and coastal state responsibilities to combat IUU.
12. Moreover, the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis acknowledges the importance of ocean literacy and has embarked on a number of multistakeholder programmes to ensure that all stakeholders, including children, are aware of our marine species, resources and general marine ecology and the need for us all to be responsible in our interactions with them.
13. For us to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources and truly realize SDG 14, Saint Kitts and Nevis continues to advocate for financial and technical assistance as well as the transfer of marine technology, urgently.
14. Finally, Saint Kitts and Nevis wishes to use this opportunity to thank Ambassador Keisha McGuire of Grenada and Ambassador Martin Hermann of Denmark for their valued leadership and persistence in stewarding us to a consensual, strong and action-oriented document.
15. We are pleased that it reinforces that science-based solutions, more meaningful partnerships and international cooperation particularly for small island developing states are essential for the transformation of our world and especially our collective efforts to conserve and sustainably use the ocean.
16. We have the ambition! What we need is decisive and realistic action, because we need to save our oceans!

I thank you.