

Intervention WWF Interactive Dialogue 7

300 words

- Excellencies. Distinguished delegates,
- I have two topics relevant to this dialogue that WWF wishes to raise.
- First, Deep Seabed Mining has risen as a major topic of discussion and concern at this Ocean Conference. This is a necessary debate. The ocean is under pressure and we must work to remove existing pressures to enable its restoration and functioning, not adding another pressure.
- Leaders have repeatedly stated the need to protect and preserve the marine environment, including in the Leaders Pledge for Nature and People, in the High Ambition Coalition launched in Brest, and in the SDGs.
- Mining the deep sea would cause biodiversity loss, increase marine pollution, cause adverse impacts to deep-sea and open ocean ecosystems, degrade the resilience of deep-sea ecosystems and cause damage from which these ecosystems may never recover.
- It is fundamentally inconsistent with the global political commitments leaders and governments have made to each other.
- This is why forward-looking states are now joining up with civil society, communities and scientists, as well as companies, across the planet, to call for a moratorium, or a precautionary pause to make sure independent science can guide any decision about whether the deep sea is opened up to a destructive activity we may not even need.
- Second, the BBNJ Ocean Treaty negotiations must be concluded, and with the necessary ambition enshrined in the text. The legal gaps need to be filled so that it can help us respond to the cumulative pressures facing our shared ocean.
- It needs to enable cooperation across sectors and across treaties, and it needs to establish a process to designate networks of marine protected areas based upon science, and to enable integration of other effective conservation measures to give rise to the holistic ocean management we need.
- The opportunity to make the change the ocean and humanity needs is before us. The time to act is now.