



**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY OASIS – THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA  
AT THE 2<sup>nd</sup> UNITED NATIONS OCEAN CONFERENCE**

**July 01<sup>st</sup>, 2022**

*Distinguished Delegates from the United Nations, the Republic of Kenya and the Portuguese Republic, and the international community,*

*Dear Colleagues and Friends,*

*On behalf of Oasis from Serbia, civil society organization with special accreditation for the UN Ocean Conference 2022, I am honored to deliver a statement for the Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development held in Lisbon from June 27<sup>th</sup> – July 01<sup>st</sup> 2022.*

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More than 3 billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods. United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (Ocean Decade, 2021–2030) addressed three (3) key drivers that affect ocean quality: acidification, warming and deoxygenation of the ocean.

Oceans play a vital role in the global carbon cycle and biogeochemical process. There are strong interactions in changes of the ocean quality and changes in the global climate and atmospheric chemistry.

Undertaking actions to reduce global greenhouse gases emissions and climate change impacts is an imperative for protecting the ocean and communities depending on them. Understanding about the

interaction of climate change issues and the change of the ocean quality along with public awareness raising activities are primary and important steps to make collective and adequate response on it.

Almost half of the CO<sub>2</sub> produced in the past 200 years by fossil fuels has been absorbed by the oceans. This has already resulted in a change to ocean chemistry, reducing surface seawater pH by about 0.1 units. If the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions into the atmosphere continue on the current trends, this could result in decrease of pH by additional 0.5 units by the end of this century.

Setting targets for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to the atmosphere appears to be the only efficient way to minimize the risk of affecting the oceans.

Nature 'prescribed' the limit for CO<sub>2</sub> absorbing by the ocean, and these limits have already been exceeded.

Serbia is one of 45 land-locked states out of 193 UN member states. Both, landlocked countries and coastal countries, have climate related impacts on the oceans. For that reason, all country parties to UNFCCC have to take into account the ocean protection, preservation and restoration while identify nationally determined contributions (NDC) to cut their GHG emissions to keep global temperature rise below 1.5 °C.

Anthropogenic activities caused the increasing amounts of pollution. There are various polluting substances (Nutrient run - off, oils, heavy metals, pesticides, radioactive waste, plastics etc.) that decline oxygen levels in the ocean, which jeopardize more than 800 animal species.

In 2020, 2.2 billion tons of municipal solid waste was generated on the global scale. COVID-19 pandemic made additional waste disposal of billions of health masks, personal protective equipment and other health-care tools. There are estimations to be increased up to 3.88 billion tons by 2050.

The oceans and their marginal seas cover nearly 71 percent of Earth's surface. Some land-locked countries, like Serbia, are connected with the ocean marginal seas along their wide transboundary river networks. This is a pathway for micro and nano-plastic movements to the oceans.

Oasis is committed to support all actions to protect, preserve and restore oceans for the future generation, that are focused to significantly reduce global emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> from human activities to the atmosphere by 2050, to prevent plastics from being generated in the first place and to ensure controlling transboundary movements of plastic waste, and to internationally coordinated scientific research related to monitoring and observation of the ocean.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Gordana Grujic, M.Sc in geochemistry

Director, Oasis