



**High Seas Alliance Statement
United Nations Ocean Conference
July 1, 2022**

Since its founding in 2011, the High Seas Alliance (HSA) with its 50 members has been working towards protecting the 50% of the planet that is the high seas. As the region of the global ocean that is beyond national jurisdiction, the high seas includes some of the most biologically important, least protected, and most critically threatened ecosystems in the world.

The greatest opportunity in a generation to conserve ocean life and diversity on a global scale and safeguard 2/3 of the world's ocean is happening right now. After almost 20 years of discussions, world governments will gather for the 5th and final negotiating conference (IGC5), 15-26 August 2022, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, to finalize a landmark new treaty under the United Nations Law of the Sea Convention (UNCLOS). This will be the first ever treaty to focus on conserving and ensuring sustainable use of biodiversity of the ocean areas beyond national jurisdiction ("ABNJ"), which includes the water column or "the high seas" and the seabed below.

Comprising nearly half the planet, the high seas are a true global common.

Political momentum for a stronger High Seas treaty is high. A number of states, including small island states, have been leading the way with their positions. In February, a 'High Ambition Coalition' of 47 countries was launched, committing to adopt an ambitious treaty in 2022. In May, G7 foreign affairs and climate, energy and environment ministers committed to strive for a future-proofed treaty that protects the oceans, including via highly and fully protected areas on the high seas.

The UN Ocean Conference (UNOC) provided a major political opportunity, at a critical moment in the road to IGC5, to highlight the importance of protecting the high seas for the planet and people and to further strengthen the momentum to successfully conclude an ambitious high seas treaty in 2022.

The HSA calls on all governments in these final weeks before IGC5 to raise their ambition and arrive at IGC5 prepared to conclude a transformative High Seas Treaty which goes well beyond the status quo and is worthy of the decades of effort to improve ocean governance for future generations. An ambitious Treaty must:

- deliver a representative network of MPAs, including highly and fully protected areas in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ), essential to achieving the target of conserving at least 30% of the ocean and seas by 2030;
- dramatically strengthen assessment and management of human activities that impact on marine biodiversity in ABNJ;
- ensure adequate and significant funding that support the core functions of the High Seas Treaty, and the provision of financial, scientific and technical support for States that require it, including on Capacity Building and Transfer of Marine Technology (CBTMT); and
- include a fair and equitable mechanism for Marine Genetic Resources (MGRs) and benefit sharing.

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