

UNEP's statement

Prep Com of the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

Excellencies,

Delegates and representatives from the major groups and stakeholders:

It is an honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the United Nations Environment Programme,

We are thankful for the opportunity to contribute to the development of the new 10-Year programme of action for SIDS.

UNEP is committed to supporting SIDS in implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals along with the objectives of the SAMOA Pathway and the Mauritius Strategy, in coordination with other UN entities and global platforms including the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, the multilateral environmental agreements, and our knowledge centres. Furthermore, UNEP is ready to support member states to improve data collection and analytics in support of fast and strategic vital decision making.

Despite progress made by many SIDS in advancing the environmental dimension of the SAMOA Pathway, more needs to be done through a comprehensive and collaborative approach. Priority shall be given to aligning of SIDS' efforts on economic growth, environmental sustainability, social well-being, and climate resilience with commitments made in relevant global and regional multilateral environmental agreements, including on the marine environment.

The new programme of action provides an opportunity to focus efforts and cooperation, in advancing the environmental dimension by identifying alternative and innovative solutions, appropriate policy measures and concrete action-oriented recommendations to be implemented at different levels, to address the triple environmental planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution and waste.

An important priority action area for consideration is to support SIDS in addressing the impacts of sea level rise on coastlines. This includes enabling more ecosystem resiliency to help mitigate the impacts of more extreme and frequent storm events and other environmental disasters, in addition to supporting SIDS transition to a more sustainable blue economy, thereby unlocking multiple environmental, social and economic benefits to help achieve sustainable development. Additionally, application of Integrated Coastal Management approaches from Source to Sea will bring more cohesion to transboundary governance and institutional mechanisms all along the continuum of water, from upland to downstream, out to the high sea.

A whole-of-government and whole-of -society approach is required to enable sustainable use of human interactions across ocean, coastal and inland water systems that facilitates equitable sharing of economic and social benefits, while protecting ecosystems from degradation and regenerating those that have already been degraded.

UNEP stands ready to support SIDS in the development and implementation of the new programme of action.

Thanks