



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE
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OCEAN ACTION PANELS OF THE THIRD UN OCEAN CONFERENCE – SUGGESTION FOR A THEME SUBMITTED BY SINGAPORE

Singapore is of the view that one of the themes of the Ocean Action Panels at the Third UN Ocean Conference should, having regard to SDG 14.c, be “Enhancing the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea”. We provide three reasons for this.

- (a) First, the implementation of international law as reflected in United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which the General Assembly continues to recognise (most recently in resolution 78/69 of 5 December 2023) as setting out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out and being of strategic importance as the basis for national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine sector, remains critical for the achievement of SDG 14. Existing and emerging challenges to the conservation and sustainable use of ocean resources can only be fully and effectively addressed by actions that are grounded on international law as reflected in UNCLOS.

- (b) Second, since the Second UN Ocean Conference in 2022, the legal framework for the ocean that is founded upon UNCLOS has seen major developments that may contribute significantly to efforts to achieve SDG 14. The adoption of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (the BBNJ Agreement) on 19 June 2023 would be an example.

- (c) Third, while progress has been made in the strengthening of the legal framework for the ocean, the effective implementation of UNCLOS and its implementing agreements continues to merit further discussion and concrete action, due, amongst other things, to capacity gaps, and the need for greater coherence, consistency and coordination across different sectors and regions.

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