

Intervention by Environmental Defense Fund commenting on the Secretary-General's background note for the preparatory meeting of the 2025 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14

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On behalf of Environmental Defense Fund, I would like to thank the organizers for the opportunity to express our view in relation to the themes of the Ocean Action Panels at the upcoming United Nations Ocean Conference.

In general terms, EDF urges all members of the Oceans community, particularly UN member states, to focus on obtaining concrete, tangible results next year in France. Ambition, yes, but ambition reflected not in high-level, general statements but in timetables, indicators and measurable results.

We believe that next year in France, the Ocean Panels should prioritize three topics for their discussion:

- 1) **Aquatic Blue Foods**. We believe it should be a priority for the conference to find and promote policies that will increase the ocean's ability to not only produce nutritious, sustainable and low-carbon sources of protein, but also to connect that production to national food systems in a way that increases food security and combats poverty and malnutrition.
- 2) **Coastal resiliency**. The conference should identify policies that can be put in place at a national level which will enhance resiliency for coastal populations, who are more vulnerable than ever to the worst impacts of climate change. This should include measures like innovative insurance schemes, nature-based solutions and marine spatial planning, among others.
- 3) **Marine Carbon Dioxide Removal**. As the secretary general aptly put it a short while back, the urgency of climate change is such that we need to try "everything, everywhere, all at once". This includes large scale solutions for harnessing the ocean's ability to remove and store large amounts of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere. Next year's meeting in Nice should help lay the policy and science foundations to do so ambitiously and safely.

Thank you again.