

Philippines Intervention

Ocean Action Panel 1. Conserving, sustainably managing, and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems, including deep-sea ecosystems

Thank you Co-Chairs.

The Philippines, an archipelagic nation that is 88% ocean, recognizes the conservation and restoration of marine and coastal ecosystems, including deep-sea ecosystems, as integral to achieving global goals on our shared ocean. First and foremost, we strive to maximize the synergies and co-benefits between our multilateral environmental agreements on ocean, climate and biodiversity, and enhance regional and global cooperation.

In this regard, we are proud to announce that we have just completed updating our National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, our roadmap till 2040, to align with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. In working to achieve our commitment to the 30x30 target, we started with the science-based updating of our Key Biodiversity Areas, leaning on up-to-date data, standards and methodologies, to ensure that the proper areas that require conservation are identified, and creating a Registry of Protected Areas, and Other Effective, Area-based Conservation Measures – of over 16% of our maritime domain. Towards further maximizing synergies between Protected Areas, OECMs or other Area-Based Management Tools for marine ecosystems, we are also establishing MPA Networks between individual PAs and OECMs, in support of the Philippines' Great Blue Wall Initiative.

Further, achieving global ocean conservation targets includes our biodiversity and ecosystems in areas beyond national jurisdiction. Alongside ensuring enforceable guidelines for the sustainable utilization of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction are in place, establishing area-based management tools is of equal importance for the conservation of our ocean that we must all pursue. With this, early operationalization and effective implementation of the BBNJ Agreement is critical, in this regard, including giving effect to provisions on ensuring cooperation and coordination with relevant instruments, frameworks and bodies.

The Philippines is likewise implementing national enhancements for marine scientific research, and its role in governance, through our establishment of 10 Marine Scientific Research Stations across the country, under our Department of Environment and Natural Resources, to work hand-in-hand with the newly created Ocean Environments Task Force, towards creating the country's first ever National Ocean Environments Policy, enhancing the role of science in the conservation and management of ocean environments, and to supervise all projects and programs for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ocean ecosystems.