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Submission by the International Coalition of Fisheries Associations (ICFA)

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The 2022 UN Ocean Conference is a crucial opportunity to take stock of progress made towards the implementation of SDG 14, while finding transformative, yet practical solutions for current and future challenges through partnerships and innovation. Further, it is a moment of reflection, where the Agenda 2030 is considered holistically and silos are broken to identify synergies between different SDGs. In this context, the International Coalition of Fisheries Associations (ICFA), stands ready to contribute to the sustainability of ocean resources through effective management, while feeding a rising world population.

KEY MESSAGES

- **Fishers are an enabling factor for the conservation and sustainable use of marine ecosystems.** Without coastal communities involved, no policy can be effective. In this regard, ICFA welcomes the Interactive Dialogue *Making fisheries sustainable and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets*. ICFA would like to stress that the whole fisheries sector can provide positive economic, social, and environmental outcomes, as long as effective fisheries management is ensured. In this regard, industrial fisheries are at the forefront of enforcement, as compliance and control are easier in larger vessels. A key priority remains a balanced approach to fisheries management that can work for both small-scale and industrial fisheries, incentivizing synergies and avoiding conflicts between the two parts of the fleet, which in fact have a common vision of feeding the world through the sustainable use of marine resources.
- **Interlinkages between SDG 14 Life Below Water, SDG 1 No Poverty and SDG 2 Zero Hunger need to be reconsidered.** Currently, 3.3 billion people rely on aquatic foods for 20% of their protein intake and 60 million people are engaged in primary seafood production worldwide. Aquatic foods provide essential vitamins, minerals, omega-3 fatty acids and other nutrients not found in plant-source foods or other proteins. At the same time, fisheries have been contributing significantly to sustainability objectives, as 65.8% of fish stocks today are within biologically sustainable levels (78,7% of landings come from biologically sustainable stocks). The High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy concluded the ocean could sustainably supply over six times more food than it does today. It also concluded that every \$1 invested in increasing production of sustainably sourced ocean-based protein is estimated to yield \$10 in health, environmental and economic benefits. Against this background, ICFA calls for the recognition of effective fisheries management as the strongest tool to simultaneously protect ocean health while fostering human development.



- **Climate change is one of today's biggest challenges and fisheries are part of the solution.** ICFA supports the promotion of sustainable, resilient and low-carbon sources of food from the oceans, as outlined in the concept paper for the *Interactive Dialogue 3: Minimizing and addressing ocean acidification, deoxygenation and ocean warming*. In this context, ICFA would like to underscore the need to mainstream fisheries considerations in climate discussions, in order to ensure healthy and sustainable seafood for current and future generations under changing climatic conditions.