Interventionsat 2nd UNCSD Preparatory Committee
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PART 1: SESSION ON OBJECTIVE OF THE CONFERENCE

I am particularly honored to address this 2nd PrepCOm meeting on behalf of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, one of the functions of which is to respond, as a competent international organization, to the requirements deriving from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), as well as other international instruments relevant to marine scientific research, ocean observations and capacity-building.

At the outset, Mr. Chair, let me point out that the world ocean - its temperature, chemistry, currents, and life - drives global systems that make the Earth habitable for humankind. Our rainwater, drinking water, weather, climate, coastlines, much of our food, and even the oxygen in the air we breathe, are all ultimately provided and regulated by the sea. Governance decisions that steer human activity to sustain these ocean resources require a strong evidence base.

I have to say that I am concerned that theimportance of oceans in its contribution to sustainable developmenthas not yet been sufficiently recognised in this preparatory process. With 71% of the planet being covered by oce ans, and global market value of marine & coastal resources & industries representing more than 5% of Global GDP, we just cannot ignore the role of oceans in the global economy, trade and food andin national security of countries.

Despite this, m arine ecosystem degradation, biodiversity loss, climate change and marine pollution continue to be major issues affecting all ocean basins and seas of the world, and these represent barriers to the establishment of sustainable livelihoods strategies for communities that depend on the marine environment. Whilst our scientific understanding of ocean functioning has increased since 2002, thanks in part to an increase of the capacity of individual nations to monitor and forecast ocean ecosystems, investments in the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) over the past decade has stagnated despite the call made by the Johannesburg plan of Implementation. Simply sustaining GOOS for the foreseeable future will be a substantial task that will in all likelihood require the same diverse elements and myriad funding arrangements that have been cobbled together over the last 20 years.

Efforts made at the international level to foster sustainable marine stewardship also need to be sustained, but these will all be for nought unless and until governments and stakeholder

groups alike rise to the occasion and address their respective national deficiencies in support of their own marine environments. That means ensuring that ocean observation, infrastructure and systems are in place and maintained and that research is adequately funded; that the infrastructure to distribute ocean information is in place; that sustainable marine management practices are fostered, including in areas beyond national jurisdiction; and that atmospheric emissions policies take account of potential impacts on the ocean, particularly in the matter of ocean acidification and warming. Internationally, those same governments and stakeholder groups must adopt as a premise that sustaining the global environment remains the ultimate priority, and that national differences must be overcome in working collectively for the future.

For our part at the IOC, we are particularly keen that there is international support to finance and assist in capacity building programs for lesser-developed nations in coastal and ocean management, ocean sciences and ocean technologies. Globally, when it comes to our oceans, we will only be as strong as our weakest link. There can be no escaping this reality of marine stewardship.

Thank you

PART 2: GREEN ECONOMY IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ERADICATION

We strongly believe that the concept of green economy can and should be legitimately applied to ocean issues, and that a first step in this process would consist in the reaffirming the importance of ecosystem services provide by oceans and how these account for in all major sectors of economy, and generally to human well fare.

The global market value of marine & coastal resources represent about $3 trillion/year while the global Non-Market Ecosystem Services (climate, water, soil, nutrients) are about $33 trillion/year, 63% of which derive from marine systems.

Major efforts need to be put forth to improve the environmental and social performance of sectors that utilize and influence the long-term sustainability of ocean and coastal ecosystems – shipping, agriculture, fishing, aquaculture, tourism, mining, water & wastewater management.

We also need to highlight that oceans should play a key role in moving towards a low-carbon green, or 'blue-green' economy in a number of ways. A recent report published by UNEP and IOC noted that 55% of atmospheric carbon captured by living organisms is captured by marine organisms. Of this between 50-71% is captured by the ocean's habitats including mangroves, salt marshes, seagrasses and seaweed, so-called blue forests, which cover less than 0.5% of the seabed. A combination of reductions in deforestation and restoration of coastal ecosystem coverage and health could deliver up to 25 percent of the emissions reductions needed to avoid the most severe impacts of climate change. International efforts are needed to address the issue of standardisation on carbon monitoring, verification and economic valuation methodologies for blue forest ecosystem services established, in an

approach similar to the one put in place by the REDD programme (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries). This could open the way for exploring the development of a carbon credit market scheme for protecting marine and coastal carbon sinks.

As the concept of a blue-green economy implies reducing environmental risks, we would like to also highlight the issue of marine-related hazards and natural disaster preparedness. Extreme events such as hurricanes and floods, which are predicted to increase in frequency and intensity due to climate change, cause damage in excess of 20% of GDP in many Small Island Developing States. A green economy requires therefore the transformation of sectors and society that are more resilient to these impacts. The need to develop and maintain global and regional multi-hazard warning systems to reduce vulnerability of coastal populations is critical. These need to be supported by increased support for developing nations, and particularly SIDS, for the development of national preparedness strategies and programmes.

PART 3: INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

On behalf of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, I would like to try to respond to the question relating to institutional challenges in promoting sustainable development and particularly from an ocean perspective.

We strongly believe that a more efficient and accountable institutional framework for sustainable development needs to address the issue of ocean governance in a comprehensive way. The oceans are the ultimate global commons, providing essential ecological services that make life possible on our planet. While the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) provides an integrated legal framework on which to build sound and effective regulations regarding the different uses of the ocean, other United Nations specialized agencies and programmes also play roles in various marine-related issues. Nevertheless, severe limitations do exist, especially in the monitoring and enforcement of regulations and in the context of a fundamental weakness of national and international institutions still being too compartmentalized on a sector-by-sector division of duties and responsibilities. This leaves little room for integrated policymaking which addresses cross-cutting issues. As such, Mr Co-Chair, we believe that the issue of ocean sustainability is not being addressed adequately at the global level, and therefore we need to be bold in proposing new global mechanisms that will ensure a holistic, cross-sectoral and participative approach to ocean governance.

We also need to highlight the importance of the UN Regular Process for assessing the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects, as the main mechanism for keeping the oceans under permanent review, and for providing an effective science -policy platform for assessing oceans sustainability. We can't manage what we don't measure. To put it in business parlance, who would try to run a business while having almost no knowledge of 70% of the assets?

The Regular Process according to the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation should have been established in 2004. The reality is that it was formally launched by the UN General

Assembly in 2010, and progress towards the development of the first ever global integrated ocean assessment is slow. It is therefore critical that UN Member States fulfill their commitments first made in 2002, and provide the Regular Process with adequate resources for it to complete its first cycle and to deliver its global assessment in 2015, in time for the CSD review of oceans.

Some of the scientific information and expertise required to build such a global marine assessment resides within the UN-Oceans' agencies and programmes, and their respective constituencies. We believe that the Regular Process provides a unique incentive for inter-agency collaboration and cooperation as so many Member States are demanding. These agencies and programmes also have the mandate and technical capacity in their respective areas to organize and sustain a broad capacity building and technology transfer effort to accompany the Regular Process, and to ensure the full participation of all UN Member States, especially developing countries.