



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**SDG 14 Preparatory Conference**

**Statement by H.E. Dr. Caleb Otto, Permanent Representative of Palau to the UN  
Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference to Support  
Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14  
Elements for Call to Action  
15 February 2017**

Co-facilitators,

Let me join others in congratulating you on your appointment and on the able manner in which you are guiding our work. Palau pledges its full support to you throughout the preparatory process.

We align ourselves with the statements delivered by Maldives on behalf of AOSIS, by Micronesia on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum Countries, and by Nauru on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States.

We acknowledge that many worthy proposals for the Call of Action are being put forth. And so, in the interest of time, we focus on two issues that are special priorities for us. These are marine protected areas and oceans financing.

Co-facilitators,

Palau's sustainable livelihood is largely dependent on our ocean. This being our reality, over the past decade we have taken numerous actions to protect our ocean and marine life, including:

- Establishing the Palau Protected Area Network and companion regional initiative, The Micronesia Challenge;
- Establishing the world's first shark sanctuary;
- Imposing the first ban on deep sea bottom trawling in our Exclusive Economic Zone; and
- Establishing the Palau National Marine Sanctuary that protects 80% of our marine environment.

Co-facilitators,

Issues of the Planet, such as climate change and oceans degradation, among others, are global in nature. Therefore, no member of the world community should be excluded as we address these issues together. For us, the most important fact is, Palau, its regional partners and small island developing states should be empowered to protect the ocean through establishment with funding assistance of marine protected areas, both within national jurisdictions and in areas beyond national jurisdictions. We therefore call for accelerated action to fully implement Target 14.5 to conserve at least 10% of coastal and marine areas by 2020 and to this end, we call for full support to the "10x20" initiative. We further call for increased global ambition to conserve at least 30% of coastal and marine areas by 2030.

Co-facilitators,

As we consider elements for inclusion in the Call to Action, we further recommend that the conference:

- (1) **Recognize** that an inordinate burden has and will continue to be placed upon SIDS to conserve and restore the Planet's Oceans and that these actions benefit not only the peoples of SIDS but the whole of humankind;
- (2) **Acknowledge** that for SIDS to meet their domestic targets for healthy and resilient Oceans, financing is the critical issue and reiterate that there are very real limitations in current international financing capacities and arrangements;
- (3) **Reassert** the urgency of addressing financing issues related to conservation of Oceans;
- (4) **Emphasize in the Call for Action** the linkages between the green economy and the blue economy through the restructuring of the Global Environmental Facility to include both green and blue applications and usage.

I thank you for your attention.