



**Statement on behalf of The Foundation for Environmental Education
Preparatory Meeting on the UN Ocean Conference
UN Headquarters, New York
February 15 – 16, 2017**

First, the Foundation for Environmental Education would like to commend the Secretariat for the well-prepared background notes and a thank you to the co-facilitators for the work in preparation for the Partnership dialogues.

The vision of the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) is to engage and empower people through education in collaboration with our members and partners worldwide. We believe in the power of change and the most valuable legacy we can leave behind us is a world of educated and environmentally conscious people equipped with the sustainable attitude, which is so sorely lacking in today's society.

One of our most important programs related to the SDG 14 and this preparatory meeting is Blue Flag known as the leading program that promotes sound environmental education and sustainable management of beaches, marinas and eco-tourism boats worldwide. Our mission is to promote and participate in environmental education program for the users of beaches, marinas and eco-tourism boats in order to reduce the environmental footprint and commits to partnerships and collaborative action to promote the sustainable development of tourism. Indirectly, Blue Flag also campaigns against disparity, inequality, unemployment, health threats, depletion of natural resources, environmental threats, and pollution and general environmental degradation.

The Blue Flag program promotes sustainable development in freshwater and marine areas. It challenges local authorities; beach operators and sustainable boating tourism operators to achieve high standards in water

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quality, environmental management, environmental education and information, safety and services. Several of its initiatives concern monitoring of bathing water quality, conservation of biodiversity and coastal ecosystem, safeguarding swim.

The program prevents and reduces marine pollution, minimizing the impacts of ocean acidification and promoting the minimum release of softeners in the aquatic environment. It encompasses to increase water-use efficiency through capturing and using rainwater. Through several criteria set, Blue Flag spreads the voice to save water and keep it clean, minimizing the environmental footprint and promoting good practices that raise awareness for cleaning beaches and marinas and for increasing recycling. Moreover, Blue Flag supports green fishing communities, the protection of fishery nursery habitat as well as sea turtles and other endangered species.

FEE is totally committed to the SDG's and supports the themes proposed as they address all targets of Goal 14. We are eager to support and seek ways of collaboration in the efforts the Ocean Conference pursues in benefit of the health of our oceans and enhance the role of marine biodiversity. Blue Flag we will keep working hard in preventing and reducing marine pollution of all kinds as part of our criteria. We will continue actions towards dune restoration, educating on sensitive and marine protected areas; and also continue working with United Nation Environment Protection (UNEP), UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), World Cetacean Alliance (WCA) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)