



Statement delivered by

Italy

Preparatory meeting

Wednesday 15 February

Conference Room 4 United Nations

Theme: “Our Oceans our future: partnering for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14”

Discussion on the themes for the Partnership Dialogues

Excellencies, Co-Facilitators,

Let us join in thanking you for your hard work and wise guidance. As we align with the declaration by the distinguished delegate of the European Union, we note that worldwide oceans provide an interconnected physical system and eco-system, whereby problems are never totally local, nor solutions can be; likewise they cannot be only sectoral and need to be multi-stakeholder oriented. In this perspective, partnership emerges as more than a possible option, and a path that Italy has opened more than 15 years ago.

Yet, this description of oceans’ nature reflects the logics of the 2030 Agenda, which needs to remain our guiding framework. Not only, since SDG 14 has to be coordinated with the other 16 SDGs we underline how practical it is to use as much as possible the agreed language and categories of the Agenda in order to integrate the outcomes of the Conference in the general challenge of sustainable development.

SDG 14 contains quantitative targets and we would like to see them reflected in the proposed titles: wording such as “prevent and significantly reduce” (14.1), “avoid impacts” (14.2) or “end overfishing” (14.4) should be retained.

Partnerships represent a great opportunity to bring together donor and recipient countries along with different kind of stakeholders and provide the appropriate space and momentum for SDG implementation. However, they have to be effective for concrete SDG 14 implementation, non duplicative and measurable, building on those that have proved to be useful within the Agenda 2030 framework.

Allow me to submit a recent, concrete example regarding SDG 14 target 5 that is the **10X20 Initiative**, launched in October 2015 by the Government of Italy and the Ocean Sanctuary Alliance. The Initiative works through a **Steering Committee** as a means for generating support for the **voluntary creation of MPAs** and a forum for exchanging knowledge and best practices. The Steering Committee brings together governments, international organizations, NGOs, foundations and private companies and is open to all Member States. The Initiative proved successful in organizing, together with UNEP, an International Conference producing two outcomes the *Rome Call to Action* and the *Scientific Consensus Statement*. While the Scientific Consensus summarizes the state of the art on ways and means to establish successful MPAs, the Rome Call to Action is a roadmap that, built upon the Scientists' Consensus, is intended to help national governments, UN agencies and development investors over the next 15 years to promote MPAs that are designated and designed on the basis of the best available science, and that are effective, equitable and financially sustainable.

We are currently working with partners to ensure that appropriate follow up are ensured and in this context we are prepared to finance an **analysis of existing maps** to highlight where MPAs could be established and progress towards the 10% target supported.