

**Statement of Canada for Ocean Conference – June 8 Plenary**  
**World Oceans Day**

**Statement**

Thank you Mr. President.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, colleagues and friends,

I am honoured to stand here today, on World Oceans Day, to speak on behalf of Canada and mark the first ever UN Ocean Conference.

Let me start by thanking Fiji and Sweden for their leadership in convening this conference.

I will focus on three main issues: Canada's progress in achieving the SDG 14 targets, the new investments Canada is making in ocean protection and we will offer some ideas on how we should continue to work towards meeting our goals.

Canada is developing a comprehensive approach to implementing the 2030 Agenda at home and abroad. The 2030 Agenda has been woven into Canada's international assistance program, and our domestic sustainable development plan.

The Canadian Federal Sustainable Development Strategy forms the foundation of our response to implement the global sustainable development goals domestically. It sets out our sustainable development priorities, establishes goals and targets, and identifies actions to achieve them.

Canada is committed to protecting our coasts and oceans and keeping them healthy for future generations. Our government has announced a number of funding commitments recently including \$123.7 million over five years to support marine conservation activities, \$197.1 million over five years to increase oceans and freshwater science, and a \$1.5 billion national Oceans Protection Plan that improves marine safety and responsible shipping and protects Canada's marine environment. These funding commitments will be fundamental to our domestic implementation of SDG 14.

Canada is undertaking a number of activities which help us work towards the targets of SDG14:

- Working to prevent and reduce marine pollution to keep our oceans healthy and Canada is partnering domestically and internationally to tackle this, including by joining the UN Clean Seas Campaign aimed at reducing pollution, and in particular, plastics, in our oceans.
- Investing in research on climate change to understand the changes in our oceans. In our view, addressing climate change is key to achieving the ecological, economic and social aspirations of the SDGs, and I am happy to reconfirm Canada's unwavering commitment to tackling climate change and implementing the Paris Agreement.
- We are taking part in a negotiation process for an agreement to prevent IUU fishing in the Central Arctic Ocean.

- Canada is on track to achieve our interim target of 5% marine and coastal protection by 2017 and the CBD Aichi Target 11 or SDG 14.5 target of 10% by 2020, and assisting the development of international guidance for how states can credibly report their progress.
- And, today, on World Oceans Day, I am happy to announce the creation of a new marine protected area, the St. Anns Bank Canadian Oceans Act Marine Protected Area, adding over four thousand square kilometers of protection to Canada's oceans. Located to the east of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, St. Anns Bank contains ecologically and biologically significant features including unique habitats, areas of high biodiversity, and areas of high biological productivity.

Fully implementing the SDGs in Canada and world-wide requires action by Canadians, across all of government and with our partners. We will continue to work in partnership with all levels of government in Canada, nation-to-nation with our indigenous communities, with civil society and with the private sector to ensure we have the knowledge, including Indigenous traditional knowledge, the innovation and the capacity to sustain our oceans, which in turn sustain us.

As we go forward with this ambitious ocean agenda, it is important not to lose sight of the inter connectedness of the SDGs. Better stewardship of our oceans, will also address other social and economic development issues, including poverty and food security.

Collectively, we need to be ambitious, transparent, and credible in tackling these targets, striving to ensure conservation and sustainable use.

Thank you.