

Comments of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the zero draft of the declaration of UN Ocean Conference 2020.

First, the kingdom of Saudi Arabia welcomes the opportunity to address the 2020 Ocean Conference's declaration zero draft and looks forward to identifying incentive opportunities and coordinated actions we can take collectively to strengthen our work on oceans issues.

KSA underscores its continued efforts in support of regional and international guidelines that are designed for protection and sustainable management of marine and coastal ecosystems. The guidelines also seek to reduce sources of marine pollution; address the impact of increasing ocean acidification, as well as treatment of pollution, particularly that generated by plastics, along with curtailment of overfishing, and control and regulation of fishing practices.

Driven by deep awareness of the importance of environmental conservation in general, and maintenance of oceans and seas in particular, and based on the 17 sustainable development goals, coupled with relevant regional and international guidelines, Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 attaches great importance to protection and sustainability of the environment and natural resources, including coasts, islands and nature reserves. This also includes improving marine environment in view of its crucial role in development and in promoting food security, as well as ensuring sustainable utilization of water resources, and control of all forms of pollution.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is committed to achieving the 17 sustainable development goals, and to ensuring a sustainable future for its next generation of men and women, as well as for the country's high value resources. Saudi Arabia is equally committed to expand its efforts in protection of oceans and in strengthening of global procedures for conservation of oceans. The Kingdom is further committed to pursue an earnest quest to develop science-based innovative and sustainable solutions that are bound to contribute to the realization of Goal 14 of Sustainable Development Goals on conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

There is no doubt that there are considerable interlinkages across all the sustainable development goals, both directly and indirectly. Achieving some of the goals enables realization of other goals and targets. SDG goal 14 may not have a direct impact on achieving other SDG goals. However, harnessing the other goals can contribute to conserving the oceans; seas, and can ensure sustainable use for marine resources. For instance, SDG goal 9 plays a key role towards achievement of goal 14, by way of enhancing scientific research in areas

of the environment and marine life, in order to arrive at a better understanding of the different factors that affect marine life. This in turn leads to innovation of new technologies and tools to manage, protect and enhance resilience of marine ecosystems.

On the other hand, regulating harvesting and ending overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices, will enhance a sustainable economic growth without compromising marine resources. Achievement of this target will promote investment opportunities and will support human capacities in aquaculture industry. This target can be achieved by integrating regulation with awareness campaigns and financial support for the small-scale artisanal fishers, which will contribute in achieving an inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Analyzing the interlinkages will help to understand the trade-offs and synergies between goals and targets, which is crucial to shape robust policies to conserve the environment, promote the economy and leave no one behind. Emphasis should also be placed on promoting public awareness as to the importance of conservation of marine ecology through research centers and academia, as well as portmanteau entertainment.