

Thank you to the co-chairs for the preparations of the zero draft statement from the UN Ocean Conference.

Overall, Norway is very pleased with the draft, which we see a good reflection of our preparatory meetings in New York 4-5 February. The Norwegian delegation made two statements at the time (copies of which were made available to the co-chairs and the Secretariat), underlining what we see as important points to focus on in Lisbon and which we would like to be reflected in the Declaration. Building on this, our comments here will focus more concretely on the circulated zero draft Declaration.

A sustainable ocean economy is critical to achieve the Agenda 2030. Production, protection and prosperity can go hand in hand if we sustainably manage and protect the ocean. The vital role of the oceans for the climate, biodiversity, poverty eradication and food security must be recognized. We suggest that this point is strengthened in the draft Declaration by introducing the following language as a new last phrase in para 3:

- **Scaling up ocean action under Goal 14 can contribute significantly to the realization of the broader 2030 Agenda.**

In Lisbon, we need to address both progress, or lack thereof, in implementing the SDG 14. This is of particular urgency when it comes to the maturing sub-targets on eliminating IUU fishing and fisheries subsidies and ocean and coastal zone management. *We support the way that this is reflected in the proposed para 4 of the zero draft.*

The declaration should also reflect developments since the last UN Ocean Conference, in particular regarding climate change, including the latest findings of the IPCC and its special report on the Ocean and Cryosphere. *We are thus pleased with and strongly support the proposed wording in para 5 of the zero draft.*

The Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. This needs to be duly reflected in our Declaration. *Norway thus support the proposed text in para 7 to this effect. Furthermore, we support the proposed para 8 and the reference to the important BBNJ process,*

The UN Decade of Ocean Science is a unique opportunity for the global community, and highlights the need for strengthened ocean research and a science-based ocean management. *Norway welcomes the references to the Decade of Ocean Science in the zero draft Declaration, and supports the text as proposed in para 9, in particular its reference to the mission of the Decade and its link to the implementation of Agenda 2030.*

The ocean has become a sink for pollutants including plastic, chemicals, nutrients and wastewater. Urgent action is needed to target the sources of pollution. Through UNEA, governments have endorsed a long-term vision of eliminating the discharge of marine litter and microplastics into the ocean. Norway is consistently advocating for a more coordinated approach for action to combat marine litter and microplastics, as a key measure to protect our oceans and the marine environment. *To this effect we suggest the following language as an alternative to the proposed para 10c:*

- **10 c) Taking urgent action to reduce marine pollution, including marine plastic litter and nutrient pollution by strengthening the evidence base for policy-making, improving our**

understanding of the sources, pathways and impacts on marine ecosystems and promoting comprehensive life-cycle approaches and assess the impact of our actions.

We need to recognize that international cooperation and support is important for developing countries, in particular small island developing states and least developed countries. There is a need to focus on capacity building in order to put states in a better position to educate, build capacity and utilize the new technology. *Norway is pleased with the way that this is reflected in the zero draft Declaration, in particular in the chapeau of para 11. We have two concrete suggestions for new and alternative bullets:*

Innovation in a broad sense, including in governance, finance and technologies should be included in the Declaration as these innovations offer unprecedented potential to improve stewardship of ocean resources and ensure resilient and productive ecosystems. *Norway therefore proposes to include the following language in the draft Declaration as new para 11b:*

- 11 b) Explore, consider and undertake innovations in governance with a view to scaling up ocean action in the areas identified in paragraph 10 above; [New language]

The declaration should highlight the need to strengthen partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society. These partners can play a significant role in ensuring that ocean resources are used in a sustainable manner for our common good. *To this effect we are pleased with the proposed para 11b (new para 11c).*

To follow up the proposed language in para 10, we suggest to substitute existing para 11c with the following:

- 11 c) Stronger global governance mechanisms in support of all countries in their efforts to address the growing challenge of marine litter and microplastics, with the view to eliminate all discharge of plastic litter into the ocean in the long-term

Finally, we are happy with the last paragraphs in the draft Declaration, as they underline the urgency of the state of the ocean and the importance of our task implementing our commitments. But we have a question pertaining to para 14, and the reference to “We know the ocean we want...”. It seems to us that a more established phrase/concept is “The ocean we need for the future we want” which also works better as a slogan. We therefore suggest substituting the proposed language, with this alternative.