



Statement on behalf of CARICOM

By

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of Foreign Affairs, Trinidad and Tobago**

At the

10th Session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals

on

**Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Resources, Oceans and Seas; Ecosystems and
Biodiversity**

United Nations Headquarters

3 April, 2014

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the fourteen (14) Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). CARICOM aligns itself with the statements delivered by Bolivia on behalf of the G77 and China and Nauru on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

For CARICOM Member States, as Small Island Developing States (SIDS) surrounded by the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, our viability and our very survival are closely interlinked with these vast expanses of water. Oceans, seas, rivers and lakes also provide food and nutrition directly through fishing and marine aquaculture.

Accordingly, we believe that target areas to be considered for a possible goal on the issue should address:

- Reducing marine pollution and debris including from land-based activities
- Halting destruction and improving the health and resilience of marine habitats including coral reefs
- Addressing ocean acidification
- Strengthening the resilience of coastal communities
- Encouraging sustainable small-scale fisheries
- Regulating harvesting of straddling and other shared fish stocks and strengthen regional cooperation for their conservation and management;
- Ensuring full implementation of regional and international regimes governing oceans and seas
- Eliminating harmful subsidies that promote fishing over capacity
- Establishing Marine Protected Areas and strengthening management of such areas;
- Address illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices; and strengthening monitoring, control and surveillance capability of States
- Encouraging sustainable aquaculture including mariculture to promote food security and employment
- Conservation and use of sustainable marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction

Means of implementation on this issue could include:

- Improving quality assurance systems and reducing post-harvest losses
- Promoting value chain approach to fish and seafood harvesting, handling, processing and marketing
- Capacity building and technology transfer to enable developing countries, in particular SIDS, to realise the full economic benefit of the sustainable exploration and exploitation of resources within EEZs.

Ecosystems and Biodiversity

CARICOM is open to a goal on Ecosystems and Biodiversity. It should be noted that this proposed goal is, with the exception of a proposed goal on Climate, the only one that focuses solely on the environment. We believe it is imperative that any SDG is considered within the broader framework of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

Target areas to be considered should include the following:

- Protecting threatened species and halting loss of biodiversity;
- Stopping poaching and trafficking of endangered species;
- Maintaining the genetic diversity of both farmed species and their wild relatives;
- Ensuring fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from the utilization of genetic resources;
- Promoting sustainable forest management;
- Slowing, halting and reversing deforestation and conversion of forests to crop lands
- Supporting measures to protect mountain ecosystems;
- Achieving a land-degradation-neutral world;
- Ensuring inclusion of indigenous and local communities in decision-making and in sharing of benefits derived from conservation and sustainable use of forests and other cultural and natural assets;
- Ensuring full implementation of regional and international regimes governing the conservation and sustainable utilisation of biological resources

I thank you.