



New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations

Te Māngai o Aotearoa

ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE OPEN WORKING GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

New Zealand extended views on Focus Area 13 Oceans and Sea

8 May 2014



We are very pleased to see the way Focus Area 13 on oceans and seas is developing. It stays true to our shared commitment at Rio+20 to create SDGs that: “address and incorporate **in a balanced way** all three dimensions of sustainable development and their inter-linkages”. We would not support any move to undermine the dedicated and integrated approach the Co-Chairs have taken to oceans and seas.

A standalone goal has the greatest potential to ensure we not only maintain healthy and productive oceans and seas, but that ocean resources are sustainably used for food security, for poverty eradication, and for durable livelihoods, including for women and girls. In fact, secondary industries arising from fishing are a vital source of employment for women; for example in Asia and West Africa, 60% of seafood is marketed by women.

New Zealand is strongly committed to a standalone goal on oceans.

Below we provide detailed feedback on each of the targets proposed in Focus Area 13. First however we start by suggesting an additional target.

Maintaining the balance. We think the sustainable economic development element of the Focus Area could be strengthened to ensure the three dimensions are balanced. The target should be:

“to increase the returns to fisheries, tourism and other coastal and marine-based sectors, especially in Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries, from the sustainable use of marine resources”.

Indicators that would be effective in showing measureable progress to this target could include: access to markets; increase in net Foreign Direct Investment for sustainable infrastructure; human and institutional capacity building; increased knowledge and technology transfer; and improved regulatory capacity.

Streamline Target A & B. We suggest the Co-Chairs consider joining target A and B. While we would keep the essential aspects of both targets – reducing pollution, addressing the impacts of ocean acidification, protecting marine ecosystems and associated deadlines – the consolidated target would be pared back. The details such as specific reference to marine debris and tailings could be included in a future indicator.

In the new streamlined target we would recommend that it refer to the more precautionary measure of “protecting marine ecosystems from significant adverse effects” rather than “from destruction”. The proposal below also reformulates the consideration of ocean acidification to addressing the impacts. This formulation is more in line with what was agreed in the UNGA resolution 68/70 regarding ocean acidification, and is achievable given the 2030 timeframe. Measurable indicators could be around effective monitoring and adaptation. Our proposed amendment is as follows:

“By 2030, prevent, control and reduce by x% marine pollution, including from land-based activities, address the impacts of ocean acidification, restore marine ecosystems and protect them from significant adverse impacts”

Support Target C on fisheries We strongly support the intent of Target C, however we would like to see a greater focus on **eliminating overfishing**. Ending overfishing is essential to restoring fish stocks at least to levels that can produce the maximum sustainable yield, which is a commitment from Rio+20 and from many fora before. With sufficient political will we could end overfishing in a short timeframe. If we are serious about achieving healthy fish stocks, we must galvanise the political will. Target C should call for eliminating overfishing by **2020**.

We recommend the following amendment to the target:

“Regulate harvesting to eliminate overfishing by 2020, restore depleted stocks to at least levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield by 2030, and support sustainable small-scale fisheries”

Target D: We strongly support this target as recognition of existing regimes and commitments. We would however suggest one minor adjustment from “governing” to “for managing” to accurately reflect what these regimes do.

“Develop and ensure the full implementation of existing regional and international regimes ~~governing~~ for managing oceans and seas, including for resources in areas beyond national jurisdictions”

Support E on IUU and destructive fishing practises: New Zealand is a strong supporter of efforts to end IUU fishing. We fully endorse the co-chairs target E and we consider that adherence with agreed international commitments on IUU fishing should form the basis for indicators. New Zealand considers the adoption of a timeframe to eliminate IUU and destructive fishing in an SDG could serve to invigorate State action toward adoption of/adherence to international standards (e.g. FAO Code of Conduct, IPOA-IUU, Port State Measures), which should form the basis of indicators. It will be important to clarify what destructive fishing practises are in the elaboration of the target.

Broaden target F on marine protected areas: We support the intent of Target F, but consistent with paragraph 177 of Rio+20, we suggest that the wording is broadened to refer to “area based conservation measures, including MPAs”. This formulation provides States flexibility in the way they go about achieving marine conservation objectives. We also think it would be desirable to integrate the existing Aichi Commitment. Also, they should be not only consistent with international law but based on best available scientific information.

There is an existing internationally agreed deadline of 2020 in this area arising from Aichi Target 11. We do not want to lose or revise this deadline and we would encourage the 2020 deadline be included as an indicator for this target.

Our suggested amendment to Target F would be:

“establish area based conservation measures, including marine protected areas, covering at least 10% of coastal and marine areas by 2020, consistent with international law and based on best available scientific information”.

We also consider that to truly deliver on marine conservation objectives, area based conservation measures, including marine protected areas, need to be effective, ecologically representative, and well-connected. We hope to see these principles elaborated on in the development of indicators for this target.

Enhance Target G: This is a crucially important paragraph to New Zealand. Subsidies of this sort continue to wreak havoc throughout the world’s fisheries. We know too well that subsidies do not just undermine efforts to rebuild stocks and protect the environment, but also undercut legal fisheries and the livelihoods of fishing communities. On this target, we encourage the Co-Chairs to amend the language to better reflect paragraph 173 of Rio+20 outcome (notably: refer to “subsidies” not “fishing subsidies”, and incorporate the elimination of IUU fishing and the need to refrain from introducing new subsidies). Given the significant negative effects of subsidies, we think the target should have a more ambitious 10 year timeframe of 2025.

“by ~~2025~~30, eliminate fishing subsidies that which contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, overcapacity and overfishing, and refrain from introducing new subsidies”

Indicators that would be effective in showing measureable progress to this target could include: transparency and monitoring of existing fisheries subsidies programmes through the WTO; refrain from introducing new subsidies and from extending or enhancing existing subsidies; incentivise elimination of subsidy provisions in bilateral/plurilateral agreements.