

## National statement on goals and targets, Iceland

- Co-facilitators. I'd like to begin by aligning with the statement of a number of states on the importance of oceans and seas for sustainable development, and with the statement made by Namibia yesterday on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought.
- We've made a lot of progress on defining the package to be agreed upon in September. The SDGs proposal presents a rather well balanced, common vision that goes past conventional North-South dynamics, which is a good thing. We're all in this together. In implementing the SDGs we must never lose sight of the fundamental importance of ending poverty and hunger.
- Iceland agrees with those who have pointed out this morning that the following is a matter of credibility for our leaders, as well as the international community: We must ensure that the targets do not fall behind internationally agreed standards, and that they are internally consistent.
- Regarding the 19 targets, Iceland will need more time to go through them, but we support your effort. At this stage we would like to support the changes made for target 3.6 and 15.3 as both were mistakenly drafted to be achieved in five years time. Furthermore, we think it is obvious that we can not ask our leaders to accept targets with Xs in them.
- Co-facilitators, Iceland would like to bring up two further targets that as currently phrased fall below internationally agreed standards.
- An imprecision that needs to be addressed, is target 14c. As currently phrased, the target does not reflect the wide recognition of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea as codification of international customary law among both States parties to the Convention and States non-parties. In this regard we bear in mind agreed language from paragraph 158 **from Rio +20** (A/RES/66/288) and subsequently included in paragraph 55 of **the SAMOA Pathway** (A/RES/69/15) and in preambular paragraph 7 of A/RES/69/245 on Oceans and the law of the sea.
- We also want, once more, to raise our concerns regarding language in targets 5.4 and 5.a. The language proposed is well below our existing commitments for women's economic empowerment, be that in the Rio Declaration, the Beijing platform for action or numerous General Assembly and other inter-governmentally agreed texts. In particular target 5.a concerns us as it creates internal inconsistency with target 1.4: While 1.4 states that we will provide these rights and services to both men and women; in 5.a there is a qualifier added "in accordance with national laws" to apply to women's rights and access to these services. Qualifying women's economic empowerment in this way is unacceptable and Iceland would consider earlier, more ambitious commitments to apply.

- Lastly, Co-facilitator.
- Overall, Iceland is of the opinion that we're about to agree on an agenda that is both balanced and truly transformational. What remains is to communicate it to the widest audience possible. Speaking of that - Iceland is concerned that gender equality was not included in the six elements of the SG's synthesis report. Keeping in mind that the history of women is that of being kept in the shadows, this would not sufficiently reflect the fact that gender equality and women's empowerment is mainstreamed throughout the goals and targets. We trust that the UN and its agencies will be able to find ways of packaging and presenting the 17 goals and its targets, in a way which reflects the fundamental role of gender equality, human rights and the rule of law in our agenda.