



MALDIVES

Eleventh Session of the General Assembly
 Open Working-Group on Sustainable Development Goals
Conservation and sustainable use of marine resources, oceans and seas/ Ecosystems and biodiversity

Intervention by:

His Excellency Mr Ahmed Sareer, Permanent Representative to the United Nations,
New York, 8 May 2014

Thank you Mr. Co-Chair,

Maldives aligns itself with the statement made by Bolivia on behalf of G77 and China and the statement delivered by Nauru on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

Maldives joins others who call for the need of a stand-alone Goal on Oceans in the Sustainable Development Goals.

We are in general supportive of the targets listed under Focus area 13 and would like to thank the Co-chairs for prominently reflecting oceans and seas in the thematic goal.

With regard to the current targets listed we believe that targets (b), (c) and (e) should be strengthened by implementing these targets immediately without waiting till 2030. Therefore, Maldives proposes the replacement of the time frame in (b) and (c), and in € with the phrase “Take immediate action to.” We cannot afford to wait, according to FAO, even the most conservative estimates show that over 30% of the World's fish stocks are overexploited and another 50% are fully exploited.

With regards to target (f) we propose strengthening the target by adding a time frame and a percentage of the oceans areas to be established as marine protected areas, consistent with international law. There has to be an end to perverse subsidies that promote overfishing as soon as possible and in this regard we support target (g) but are of the view that the timeframe needs to be “by 2020” rather than 2030.

Today we have also heard proposals for a target in support towards sustainable tourism activities which my delegation believes would give value addition to the current set of targets. My delegation fully supports the idea of a target on sustainable tourism under focus area 13.

Focus area 14. Ecosystems and biodiversity

With regards to focus area 14 on ecosystems and biodiversity, we already have the agreed Aichi targets for biodiversity and as such do not see the rationale or merit for additional targets. From the targets listed on these aspects, does this mean that countries would need to follow two sets of targets? This does not seem the best strategy, so we would suggest maintaining the Aichi targets and integrate them into SDGs and then address the means of implementation in this regard.

Thank you.