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Statement on the ‘Partnership Dialogue themes’

**Statement by Julian Simpson
Second Secretary, Australian Permanent Mission to the United
Nations**

Thank you Mr Co-Facilitator,

Excellencies and distinguished delegates,

Australia aligns itself with the statement made by the Ambassador of the Federated States of Micronesia, on behalf of the the Pacific Island Forum.

We thank the co-facilitators for their valuable work so far in preparations for the Partnership Dialogues.

And we also thank the Secretary-General for the timely background note which illustrates the significant challenges facing the oceans and seas. Meeting Sustainable Development Goal 14 will require a transformative change in how humans view, manage and use oceans, seas and marine resources.

Australia supports the themes as proposed– they are logical, comprehensive and capture all the targets of Goal 14.

Australia is committed to action to address these themes – and use this opportunity to briefly single out two.

Theme number two, ‘managing, protecting, conserving and restoring marine coastal ecosystems’ is critically important.

Coastal blue carbon ecosystems – such as seagrasses, tidal marshes and mangroves – play a vital role in climate adaptation and mitigation through

carbon sequestration. However these ecosystems are some of the most threatened in the world. That is why Australia is a champion of the International Partnership for Blue Carbon, which aims to amplify efforts to protect and restore blue carbon ecosystems.

Australia also strongly supports theme number four, on sustainable fisheries. Sustainable fisheries are critical for economic development in our region, and for broader regional security, particularly in the Pacific. We are proud to have a robust, science-based framework for sustainably managing our own fisheries, and are pleased to continue supporting sustainable management in our region, including through our involvement in combatting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

I would also like to express Australia's view that the success of the Conference will be judged on its ability to catalyze partnerships. To succeed on this account the full and robust participation of all relevant stakeholders, in all aspects of the Conference and its preparatory process, will be critical.

We look forward to discussing these themes with distinguished delegates now and at the Conference itself in June.

Thank you.