

Draft Statement – Oceans Conference Preparatory meeting – Call to Action

Dear Co-facilitators, distinguished delegates,

This statement is made on behalf of the Global Ghost Gear Initiative, a global multi-stakeholder public-private partnership that was launched in September 2015 and dedicated to contributing to the achievement of SDG 14, with a particular focus on the issue of abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear – also often referred to as ghost fishing gear.

With regard to the discussion on the ‘Call to Action’, we have two suggestions that we would like to share with you for your consideration:

First, while the Global Ghost Gear Initiative welcomes the strong support shown for organising a series of dedicated Ocean conferences to stimulate the implementation of SDG 14, we encourage Member States to ensure that the Call to Action reflects the interlinkages that exist between the sustainability of our ocean and the wider prospects for sustainable development. In our view, policy coherence for sustainable development is the key for Agenda 2030 to truly be transformative and deliver on the ambitions of all the goals, including goal 14.

And second, related to this, we would like you to consider that abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded gear is an increasingly pervasive and destructive form of marine debris, which directly impacts on fish stock levels and therefore people’s livelihoods – SDG 1 – as well as our food security – SDG 2. Ghost fishing gear is also a significant source of marine plastic and therefore affects our food quality and food safety and consequently our health – SDG 3. The solutions to ghost fishing gear include an emphasis on recycling and re-use – SDG 12 and directly link to addressing IUU fishing – several targets in SDG 14.

The Global Ghost Gear Initiative believes that a specific reference to abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear in the Call to Action will assist in galvanizing both public and private sector support for real action and as such help us to contribute to the integrated implementation of SDG 14 as well as the broader Agenda 2030. And finally, the Global Ghost Gear Initiative invites all of you who have not yet done so to join us to strengthen our collective effort to eliminate ghost gear from our ocean.

Thank you.