

STATEMENT TO THE PREP COMMITTEE OF THE UN CONFERENCE ON OCEANS

Distinguished Co-facilitators, Your Excellencies, delegates, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, I would like to make a Statement on behalf of WOLMI/CALL Foundation for Environment & Sustainable Development ... and outline what we believe are some key components of the CALL to Action.

I would like to express my organization's deep concerns about the clear and present dangers we face regarding the health of our oceans including ocean acidification, pollution from land based sources of pollution, destruction of key habitats ... and its impacts on the economies of small island developing states.

Most of the SIDS countries depend on tourism and agricultural activities including fishing for their economic development. White sand beaches, healthy marine ecosystems including coral reefs and wetlands, and sustainable fishing activities are the backbone of the economic activities in SIDS countries.

Co-facilitators, the World Wildlife Fund estimates that the value of the assets of the oceans resources is 26 trillion dollars. With this asset value, there are outstanding opportunities for the private sector to make investments to protect these vital resources ... and have proper asset management, which are both sustainable and profitable.

We believe that the CALL for Action should be clear, concise ... and with measurable result and should outline how we can minimize the challenges that we face in ocean management. It should also outline the opportunities available to the private sector to manage these resources and still earn profits.

Private sector investments in the management of key ocean resources, monitoring and controlling air emissions from various sources as a strategy to reduce ocean acidification and other such initiatives **will provide an appropriate financing mechanism to ensure proper management of ocean resources and the implementation of SDG 14.**

We note that private sector companies in developing countries such as Impact Global Emission Solutions (IGES) Eco-transport Ghana and Tomae Jamaica Ltd (Testing of motor vehicles and emissions from vehicles, airplanes and ships) have made investments in these areas, with a clear objective to protect the environment, collect scientific data required for decision making, whilst making profits.

Other Innovative financing mechanisms such as crowd funding, accessing funds from capital markets and other financing mechanisms should be utilized to finance the

implementation of SDG 14, particularly among women in SIDS countries; and because concessional financing from bilateral and multi-lateral sources is shrinking in developing countries (See study by OECD and World Bank).

We recognize the work of the Blue Innovation Institute which is supported by the Government of the Netherlands, which is developing innovative financing mechanisms for ocean management.

Co-facilitators we believe that the CALL For Action should recognize the specific role of women in the management of ocean resources and developing sustainable livelihoods. We agree with the delegation from Canada that one half of the persons in the fishing industry worldwide are women ...and believe that mechanisms should be implemented to improve their capacity to sustainably manage ocean resources.

Special emphasis should be made on the poor and vulnerable groups; and mechanisms should be developed to improve their capability to sustainably manage these ocean resources.

Co-facilitators we need to improve public awareness in our countries so that individuals, communities, CBOs, NGOs, private can take action and lobby for the changes in legislation that is required to improve the health of our oceans and deal with the challenges of micro-plastics, ocean acidification and its impacts on our economies. These public awareness programs should use conventional media tools, social media and cultural activities to convey the need for new approaches in the management of the oceans.

We believe that International, regional and national organizations should allocate funds to relevant research institutions to conduct further ocean research in areas such as ocean acidification and its impacts; and to improve scientific cooperation among these institutions.

Finally, we believe the **CALL for Action** should also strengthen regional initiatives such as the Regional Seas Program of UNEP as part of the global ocean governance system. We believe it provides an effective framework to deal with pollution from land based sources, protection of bio-diversity and monitoring of ocean related targets and indicators under the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

We stand ready to work with you, Co-facilitators, as we seek to find innovative solutions to the challenges we face in ocean management.

Thank you, Co-facilitators.