

Intervention by Dr. Johanna Polsenberg, Conservation International at the Preparatory Meeting for The Ocean Conference, 16 February 2017:

Thank you to the Facilitators and to the delegations here today. We are inspired by your commitment.

Ladies and gentlemen, this meeting has created tremendous enthusiasm to care for the oceans, and SDG14 provides the map to do so. To assist states in implementing SDG14 and indeed the full suite of SDGs, regardless of levels of capacity, data availability and resources, Conservation International recommends that the Call for Action includes:

1st, promotion of decision-support tools that are flexible and user-friendly. These can identify the role of natural capital in delivering on the SDGs, and can support the cross-sectoral policy coordination and governance structures necessary for effective ocean management.

2nd, that the Call for Action includes indicators to track progress toward SDG14. We note that the current set of proposed indicators for SDG14 needs to be strengthened and added to.

To help countries deliver on SDG14 and implement an inclusive, ecosystem-based approach to managing their coasts and oceans, **Conservation International and the University of California, Santa Barbara developed the Ocean Health Index.** The Index, already being used in 28 countries, is an innovative framework that assesses all elements of ocean health—biological, physical, economic, social and cultural—and provides decision makers with the information needed to make sustainable decisions about ocean use.

The Ocean Health Index methodology includes step-by-step instructions and support for both stakeholder identification and engagement processes and tools that facilitate technical analyses. We all know that good science is essential but it alone is not sufficient, especially if it is difficult to use. People need to be motivated to come to the table, they need to be able to understand fully what is being discussed, and, most importantly, they need

to feel like they can contribute to a solution. Clear, user-friendly platforms such as the Ocean Health Index can help achieve this, and we hope that the Call for Action includes specific recommendations on how countries can immediately begin implementing SDG14.

Thank you