



Statement delivered by

Italy

Preparatory meeting

Thursday 16 February

Conference Room 4 United Nations

Theme: “Our Oceans our future: partnering for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14”

Discussion on elements for the Call for Action

Excellencies, Co-Facilitators,

Let me once more acknowledge your patient work and wise guidance.

As we align with the declarations by the European Union, we recognize that the Conference represents an unique opportunity to focus on each and every SDG 14 target, bearing in mind that today some of the limits of oceans’ carrying capacity have been reached and that extra, shared efforts are needed to ensure oceans’ health.

In our view, the Call for Action should address the following key points:

- importance of an holistic approach where conservation and protection are to be considered not only the main driver but also the key goal of any actions. Consideration of the interlinkages with other SDGs should be based on their capacity to support SDG14 targets;
- the implementation of SDG14 should be carried out improving the international ocean governance and within the framework of Regional mechanisms. Italy reiterates its commitment to contribute to the achievement of SDG14 targets within the Regional Convention for the Mediterranean Sea (UNEP/MAP, Barcelona Convention) as well as through the implementation of the EU relevant Directives, in particular the Nature Directives and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, with particular focus on the notion of Good Environmental Status.

With reference to some of the specific SDG14's targets:

On 14.1 in the context of marine pollution, we would like to draw your attention on the strong Italian commitment in the Marine Litter cause. In particular, within the framework of the G7 Italian Presidency, the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea, in collaboration with UNEP/MAP, is organizing a workshop with the aim of identifying the way to mainstream the Regional Sea Programmes activities and best practices in the marine litter field towards the better implementation of the G7 action plan to combat marine litter and the actions for the prevention and management of marine litter on a global scale. The outcome of the workshop is intended to be used also as a technical basis for further discussions in the UN context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular at the High Level Conference on SDG14.

In the context of the “Circular Economy package”, Italy is going to define a National strategy on plastics, addressing issues such as use, reuse, recyclability, with a clear international component against leakage of plastic to the environment;

On 14.2 and On 14.5: Italy is firmly convinced that Marine Protected Areas and “Area-based conservation measures” are both essential to the achievement of CBD Aichi Target 11 and SDG14.5, as being discussed in the Preparatory Committee on the Implementing Agreement on BBNJ. In particular, their different and complementary objectives and scopes should be further investigated in order to better achieve the said targets. Moreover, the 10% target for marine and coastal areas should enshrine an effective management of the said areas, to ensure the coherence of the overall network of protected areas. (Use existing maps and identify priority areas);

Italy believes that countries should be called to incorporate MPAs into their own national strategies for implementing the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to help other countries with their establishment of MPAs;

On 14.3 and 14.2 (again) Partner with research center and link with UNFCCC and IPCC. Far more research is needed;

On 14.4: Italy recognizes that Regional Fisheries Management Organizations are instrumental in coordinating efforts by governments to effectively manage fisheries at regional level, with specific reference to the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean;

On 14.7 promote MPAs and artisanal fisheries, also through certification programmes in both fisheries and aquaculture. Elaborate economic measures to support the transition towards MPAs. Promote monitoring and governance. Promote capacity building.

On 14. (a-c) increasing of awareness and knowledge about wide range of potential public and private sources of funding for MPAs, from a various set of funds (GEF, GCF, and other Adaptation Funds).