



Permanent Mission of Saint Lucia to the United Nations

STATEMENT DELIVERED

BY

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Development

at the

*United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of
Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use
the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable
development*

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Mr. President,

Five years ago at the Rio+20 Summit, member states collectively recognized that our oceans and seas are not healthy, and pledged to protect and restore the health, productivity and resilience of oceans and marine ecosystems, and to maintain their biodiversity. Two years later, the outcome of the SIDS Conference -the SAMOA pathway - addressed the critical role that oceans and seas play in the sustainable development of Small Island States. And two years ago, the historic adoption of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development provided us with the stand alone Goal 14 on oceans, which is the focus of our deliberations this week.

We wish to echo the sentiments of gratitude expressed by previous speakers to the President of the General Assembly for convening this High Level Conference on the Oceans – with the goal of raising awareness, amplifying efforts and initiating concrete action toward the implementation of sustainable development goal 14.

Mr. President,

It cannot be overstated that the oceans are of strategic importance, and constitute an irreplaceable development resource for island states. Saint Lucia stands with our fellow SIDS at the forefront of global efforts to ensure the successful implementation of SDG 14.

The sustainable development of Saint Lucia, like that of all SIDS, is intrinsically linked to our oceans and seas. We rely heavily on a healthy marine environment for numerous social and economic activities including tourism, fisheries, transportation, food and nutrition and recreation.

The Government of Saint Lucia has long recognized this heavy dependence on the island's coastal and marine resources and the related pressures that are exerted on the environment, and we have actively engaged in the development of frameworks and mechanisms to facilitate the effective conservation, management and sustainable use of marine resources.

Mr. President,

This conference provides the opportunity to move from ideas to action, to galvanize opportunities that establish an equilibrium between economic and social progress and environmental sustainability. We must create favorable conditions that simultaneously promote economic growth, environmental sustainability, social inclusion and the strengthening of ocean ecosystems.

Saint Lucia wishes to emphasize that, although our focus this week is on Goal 14, the SDGs are integrated and indivisible. Our work toward the targets under Goal 14 must be undertaken with the awareness of the connections with other SDGs, and with the opportunities to advance targets under multiple goals. For example, sustainable fisheries management will be critical to achieving the goals

of eradicating poverty and food security for many member states, particularly SIDS.

Small Island Developing states have long been characterized by our constraints – our small size in land area, our fragile ecosystems, narrow economies and vulnerabilities to natural disasters; compounded by the devastating threat of being on the front lines of sea level rise and the negative consequences of a warming climate. We need to safeguard the advantages that we derive from our oceans, as target 14.7 of goal 14 challenges us to “By 2030, increase the economic benefits to SIDS and least developed countries (LDCs) from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.”

Mr. President,

We have come together today to work toward making tangible progress, through commitments - local, national, regional and global, to collectively progress the agreed targets under SDG 14. Our advancement toward these targets must be supported by the best available scientific information and advice. We therefore wish to echo the calls for the forging of appropriate partnerships which result in tangible investments in scientific research, cooperation and knowledge sharing to underpin efforts toward multiple targets. If we are to leave no one behind we need to engage innovatively on development solutions tailored to the vulnerable and smallest countries.

Mr. President,

Our determination must be focused, as our ambition is significant. Saint Lucia remains committed to working toward the effective implementation of Goal 14 and the other 16 sustainable development goals, which are all vital

to the re-shaping of future development and ensuring the sustainability of all our nations for future generations.

Thank you.