



PLENARY MEETING

Statement to the Plenary of the United Nations Ocean Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14

Distinguished Co-Presidents and Co-Facilitators; excellencies; ladies and gentlemen,

The Ocean Frontier Institute, or OFI, is honoured to take part in this first UN Ocean Conference in support of Sustainable Development Goal 14.

The OFI is a recently-launched research partnership largely funded by the Government of Canada and headquartered in Halifax, Nova Scotia. It is a tangible demonstration of Canada's commitment to reinvest in ocean research.

OFI's aim is the safe and sustainable development of the ocean frontier, through the conduct of solution-oriented, transnational, interdisciplinary research. Our partners include scientists, policy makers, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders from the government, academic, private and NGO sectors in Canada, as well as major ocean institutes in France, Germany, Ireland Norway, and the United States.

As the global community continues to work together to advance SDG 14, the OFI would like to place special emphasis on two specific areas where international cooperation and collaboration is needed:

First, the OFI strongly supports the Call to Action Paragraphs 13 d and e, related to fostering ocean literacy and education within the global community. We recognize the importance of an ocean literate citizenry to our economy, environment, culture, heritage and society - at local, national, regional and global scales. This is a cross cutting topic that spans all SDGs, and constitutes a critical step we must take to prepare the next generation of global decision-makers. We strongly encourage member states, UN systems, intergovernmental organizations, and other stakeholders here today, to support and invest in ocean literacy/education initiatives, such as the Ocean Frontier Institute's Ocean School program, and to join the international conversation on how we can work together to foster a global, ocean literate society. We thus invite you to join us as a partner on our "Ocean Literacy For All" voluntary commitment (#15187) to build an improved public knowledge base across the world's population regarding our global ocean.

The OFI also supports Call to Action paragraph 13f, which calls for sustained ocean and coastal observations, as well as the collection and sharing of data and knowledge, including traditional knowledge. In that light, we support the call by UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) for 2021-2030 to be declared the International Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development aimed at developing a plan of action toward "The Ocean We Need for the Future We Want".

Thank you.