

FINAL

Speaking Notes

for

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Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the
Canadian Coast Guard**

**Minister's Opening Statement
United Nations Sustainable Development Goals**

**Partnership Dialogue 4:
Making Fisheries Sustainable**

**New York City, New York
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INTRODUCTION

Good morning honourable colleagues, partners, friends.

I would like to begin by thanking Fiji and Sweden for co-hosting this conference and bringing together such a diverse group of participants. I'm especially pleased to be co-chairing this partnership dialogue on sustainable fisheries alongside Oumar Guèye, Minister of Fisheries and Maritime Economy from Senegal.

Canada and Senegal have been cooperating on fisheries and have a long history of successful partnerships.

SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

Like many countries represented here today, Canada is a proud maritime nation.

Our commercial fisheries and aquaculture sectors contribute approximately \$9 billion to the Canadian economy every year and generate countless jobs in rural, coastal and Indigenous communities. We are also a major exporter of fish and seafood with more than \$6 billion worth of exports annually around the world.

The fisheries sector provides the backbone of many national and small-scale economies, and is the primary source of protein for millions of people.

This is particularly true for Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States.

Sustainable fisheries are key to achieving many of the Sustainable Development Goals. One of Canada's main priorities is to develop our fisheries in a sustainable manner.

SDG 14 emphasizes the need to protect marine ecosystems, and the fisheries sector is already playing a critical role. The challenges facing fisheries are well-recognized and we need to make a more concerted effort to tackle such issues as illegal fishing, under reporting and harmful subsidies that result in overcapacity.

Concrete international action needs to be our common goal and the World Trade Organization process provides the venue and means to achieve effective and enforceable fisheries subsidies rules. The challenge of harmful subsidies can only be effectively addressed by a commitment to collective action.

Fisheries management is playing an important role in contributing to conservation and resulting in positive biodiversity outcomes. There are a wide range of conservation measures applied that provide protection, not just to single stocks, but to the ecosystems upon which they rely, and we need to continue to incorporate these conservation objectives into our fisheries management plans.

Particularly, as the demand for safe, nutritious and sustainably sourced fish and seafood grows, our resolve to responsibly manage our ocean resources must grow along with it.

MARINE CONSERVATION

Marine Protected Areas are an essential component of sustainable fisheries management. Protecting ecologically important areas of ocean builds sustainable industries, local economies and coastal communities.

In Canada, we have adopted a milestone to conserve five percent of our waters by the end of this year as a demonstration of our clear commitment to conserving 10 percent by 2020. We will achieve this by factoring in not only our marine protected areas, but by also counting our fisheries management measures that meet the most rigorous of tests. As per our registered commitment, Canada has introduced science based criteria for Other Effective Area Based Measures which are key to effectively managing conservation and fisheries. Our decisions are based on sound science and facts to determine what counts.

We need to be innovative and inclusive in how we plan to meet the full range of our sustainable development goals.

CONCLUSION

Canada is celebrating an important milestone this year – 150 years since our Confederation. This is an opportune time to reflect on our collective responsibility to gift our children and grandchildren an environmental inheritance that includes healthy, productive and prosperous oceans and coastal areas. Tackling climate change is key to achieving this inheritance. Canada’s commitment to this task and implementing the Paris Agreement is unwavering.

In Canada’s experience, partnerships with provincial and territorial governments, Indigenous peoples, environmental organizations and industry to advance the marine conservation agenda is required for a transparent and credible process that helps ensure the long-term sustainability of our oceans and marine resources.

Thank you.