

**THE OCEAN CONFERENCE — 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**

New York, 05-09 June 2017

Statement by UNIDO

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) proudly associates itself with the proceedings of the Ocean Conference and congratulates the organizers for a well-managed event. We stand ready to take active part in the recommendations of the Ocean Conference, within our domain of competence in the UN family.

And what is our domain of competence in the UN family as it mobilizes towards Agenda 2030? Under the guidance of our member states UNIDO actively promotes a path of Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development. On the strength of empirical evidence, we are convinced that industrialization represents an essential part of any country socio-economic progress: it adds value to local commodities, it creates incomes, it provides employment opportunities to a typically youthful workforce. We make it our task to encourage a path of industrialization that is inclusive and environmentally sustainable.

In the language of the Ocean Conference, it translates into the Blue Economy, that is, the income and jobs created by seas and oceans for the coastal communities. That is where inclusive and sustainable industrialization comes to the shores. Let me articulate the argument along four points, supported by concrete illustrations:

First point. Some of the world's poorest communities live by the sea. In fact, they live **off** the sea in small-scale fisheries along the coastline. Fish is their main source of proteins and a critical element of their nutrition and food security. Processing for most is very simple indeed—it is about sun drying or smoking. However, a modern value chain from the catch to the inland markets can considerably increase the economic benefits accruing to the fishing communities: in Sudan and Sierra Leone, UNIDO has worked with local communities to improve the vessels, train fishermen to maintain their fleet, help design more efficient jetties,

support the organization of cold storage and modern markets so as to reduce post-harvest losses.

In Bangladesh, Cambodia, Pakistan and Vietnam we have been working with traders and processors to improve quality and food safety in line the stringent seafood standards, facilitating thereby access to competitive international markets. We have helped establish to that effect testing and certification laboratories fully equipped to detect traces of chemical and biological contamination at par with the strictest international standards.

We acknowledge the support of donors such as Norway, the EU, Canada, the Russian Federation and others in this task.

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If it is to provide a stable source of income for coastal communities, the marine fishery resource must be managed sustainably. **That is my second point.** An accurate assessment of the fish stock is difficult in low-income countries where data are typically difficult to find. Through the project “Building institutional capacities for the sustainable management of the marine fishery in the Red Sea State” (2015-2017) funded by Norway and jointly executed with the Marine Fisheries Administration of Sudan and the Norwegian Institute for Marine Research we are providing training, capacity building and technical assistance for monitoring surveys of the fisheries resources along the Red Sea State coast and the development of a fisheries statistics system combining fishery-independent data from the survey with fishery-dependent data on the landings delivered.

The aim is to develop and maintain data bases on abundance and distribution of living marine resources and of landings, as well as to analyze and interpret these data so that changes in abundance and distribution patterns can be identified in time and addressed through appropriate management responses.

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And that brings me to **my third point** where inclusive and sustainable industrialization meets the Blue Economy. By promoting green industries and the circular economy, by facilitating

the Transfer of Environmentally Sound Technologies, UNIDO helps abate pollution discharge in Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs).

For nearly 10 years now, we have been actively engaged alongside Mexican and US authorities to promote the ecosystem-based and sustainable management of the Gulf of Mexico Large Marine Ecosystem. During 2008-2013 the project “Integrated Assessment and Management of the GoM-LME” funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) set the foundations for ecosystem-based LME management approaches to rehabilitate marine and coastal ecosystems, recover depleted fish stocks, and reduce pollution and nutrient overload.

After six years of research and careful analyses for informed transboundary policy decisions, the Strategic Action Programme for the GoM-LME is ready to go. With the continued support of the GEF over the coming five years, the new project will improve water quality thanks to the Transfer of Environmentally Sound Technologies to industries discharging effluents to the GoM’s water bodies. The project will help recover depleted stocks of living marine resources through the implementation of a transboundary stock assessment and technical assistance towards sustainable small-scale fisheries. It will upscale the conservation and restoration of the ecosystem by up-scaling the mangrove restoration efforts.

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Lastly, no economic activity, let alone industrialization, can progress without energy. **My fourth point** is more specifically targeted at small island developing states, where energy imports drain public finances and fossil fuels undermine fragile ecosystems. Replacing diesel-powered generators and outdated cooling equipment by affordable renewables and energy-efficient technologies increases the productivity and competitiveness of domestic small-scale fishery. I acknowledge here the support of Austria, Spain and the EU in this endeavor.

But think of the nexus between energy, waste management, and coastal and fresh water protection in small island developing states such as the Caribbean. Dumping organic refuse and effluents into the sea is wasting a valuable commodity; it also harms coral reefs, touristic sites and fisheries. Waste-to-energy solutions help promote domestic economic development, mitigate coastal and marine pollution and reduce energy generation costs. Biogas plants using

feedstock from agro-industries, treated sewerage sludge, waste materials from rum distilleries, breweries, food markets, slaughterhouses and fishery rely on proven technology, as demonstrated in a joint initiative with the Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE) in the region.

UNIDO and partners such as SIDS DOCK, IRENA and CCREEE recommend to integrate ocean energy technologies—wave, tidal or ocean thermal energy conversion—in the outcomes of the Ocean Conference. Some of the technologies are not mature yet: SIDSs can become important technology accelerators and offer a platform for testing, verification and the provision of real-time data. SIDS DOCK, UNIDO and CCREEE have formed a multi-stakeholder partnership to develop the first utility-scale Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion generation plant in the Caribbean and invite interested industry partners and investors to join.

In all the examples listed here, UNIDO operates in close partnership with the local communities and public authorities, as well as with international donors, institutions, and, most importantly, private enterprises eager to share expertise, knowledge and experience. That is SDG#17 at work, probably the most important of all for without effective partnerships, Agenda 2030 remains an abstract concept. No more, no less.

I thank you for your attention.