

**Statement by
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Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran
to The
United Nations**

**At the general debate of 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
(New York, 9 June 2017)**

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Peter Thomson, for his initiative and his support for implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14. I would also like to thank the Co-Presidents of the Conference, Sweden and Fiji, for their outstanding leadership.

The Conference is of great opportunity to assess challenges, identify opportunities and actions, as well as to strengthen partnerships to advance the implementation of SDG 14 on oceans and seas.

Bearing in mind the tremendous impact of oceans and marine resources on our lives as well as the greatness and urgency of the challenges that these environments face, we believe that the following points remain to be critically important for realizing the SDG 14:

First: Raising awareness at all levels to alter this perception that ocean is an infinite source of food and a dumping ground and also to develop comprehensive strategies to further public knowledge on the ocean and its importance for sustainable development.

Second: taking ambitious actions to sustain and conserve the ocean for future generations, preventing its exploitation, contamination and other harmful activities that impair its irreplaceable role in the Planet. It is imperative that the actions taken for the conservation and sustainable use of the Ocean are guided by the Agenda 2030, especially by the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Third: The preservation of the ocean depends solely on our actions. In order to ensure that all countries are able to implement the goal and its targets, developed countries must take the lead in addressing the challenges of the ocean and in providing support by enhancing the capabilities of countries that are unable to engage in the implementation of SDG 14. In other words, the ambitious objectives of Agenda 2030 should be facilitated by ambitious, fully inclusive and non-discriminatory provision of means of implementation for all developing countries and taking into account the comprehensive-integrated implementation of Agenda 2030, its universality and the link with SDG 17.

Forth: The long-term protection and sustainable management of the Ocean's health is critical to build the resilience of ocean ecosystems. The Oceans Conference represents a timely and appropriate platform to reaffirm the importance of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change as an essential international tool to tackle this global challenge to our planet and our future. The Paris Agreement, under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), as a global response to the threat of climate change is of utmost importance in this regard and closely linked to the implementation of SDG 14.

Mr. President:

The Islamic Republic of Iran is blessed with three water bodies: the Persian Gulf, Sea of Oman, and Caspian Sea. Hence, marine environment and marine resources are vital in our everyday life.

we are facing many challenges to our marine and coastal ecosystems such as: oil pollution, land reclamation, urban and industrial pollution, frequent occurrences of Harmful Algal Bloom, over-exploitation of aquatic bio-resources, mass mortality of marine life, invasive alien species, declined environmental status, declined biodiversity, dust storm, natural disasters, sea level rise, and climate change.

Mr. President:

The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran pursues a strategic approach towards sustainable development, and despite various challenges and constraints, including unfair restrictions and sanctions, has set out a transitional course to achieving sustainable development objectives.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has put much effort in implementing the SDG14. There have been numerous domestic policies and actions. Allow me to highlight some of the actions taken by my government:

In November 2015, long-term policies for protection of environment were endorsed at the highest level. This set of policies is a clear demonstration of our commitment and determination towards the conservation of environment and sustainable use of natural resources.

The Islamic Republic of Iran will present its first national sustainable development report in this coming HLPF. This will be done in line with our Sustainable Development priorities, including goal 14.

In addition to the national Sixth Development Plan which includes national policies for the implementation of the SDGs, another three important national plans which have direct relevance to the SDG14 were developed in early 2017. These are the “Marine Development Plan”, “Marine Technology Development Plan” and “Marine Ecotourism Plan”.

Moreover, we plan to develop and implement conservation and sustainable management plan of fisheries resources and their habitats by 2020 and intend to complete studies, introduce and promote the protection level of sixteen areas where have the potential for being considered as coastal and marine protected area by March 2025

On the climate adaptation, Iran is implementing various green economy activities in full coherence with its National Adaptation Plan, NAP, under the general policies of resilient economy.

Furthermore, the Islamic Republic of Iran, despite various challenges and unfair restrictions and sanctions, has also set out a transitional course to achieve a robust low carbon and green economy for Iran. In its INDC, Iran has announced its readiness to mitigate its GHGs emission comparing with the business as usual scenario, subject to termination of all sanctions, access to financial resources and the required technologies.

Let me conclude, by emphasizing that Goal 14 of the SDGs is of great importance to the Islamic Republic of Iran. We will continue to contribute to its successful and effective implementation. Accordingly, Iran welcomes cooperation and partnership in the implementation of this global goal which could eventually benefit all of us especially at regional and sub regional levels. Mr. President, the Persian Gulf sub-region with all its geopolitical significance is confronting serious environmental challenges. It is in dire need of attention and as such offers a viable platform for development of serious regional cooperation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,