



Statement delivered by Ms. Lara Daniel
Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of Nauru to the United Nations
on behalf of the
Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)
8th Session of the OWG-SDG on Oceans and Seas
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Co-Chairs,

Nauru has the honour to speak on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), a coalition of 44 island and low lying coastal states from the AIMS, Caribbean and the Pacific region.

Co-Chairs,

We take the floor today to underscore that healthy, productive, and resilient oceans and seas are a critical source of livelihoods and are an important element of our identity. Oceans and seas are critical not only to ourselves, but to the whole global community. And, we believe that oceans and seas are a priority and should be prominently reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 agenda, including through consideration of a thematic Sustainable Development Goal.

Co-Chairs,

While SIDS live more closely to oceans and seas than others, we are not the only ones affected. Oceans and seas contribute to poverty eradication by creating sustainable livelihoods and decent work in fisheries and marine aquaculture, shipping and shipbuilding, ports, tourism, oil, gas, mining, and maritime transportation industries.

Oceans and seas are crucial for global food security and human health --providing food and nutrition, directly through fishing and marine aquaculture, as well as indirectly through animal feeds. Moreover, oceans and seas are the primary regulator of the global climate and an important sink for greenhouse gases. They provide us with water and the very oxygen we breathe.

Oceans and seas are indeed a topic of universal importance and should have a prominent place in the SDGs and post-2015 agenda. Indeed, failure to address oceans and seas in the SDG process will hamper efforts to meet development goals, especially those related to poverty eradication, food security and health efforts.

Co Chairs—

In line with the importance of oceans and seas to SIDS, we highlight some of the important factors to take into consideration:

- Restoring and sustaining healthy fish stocks is critical for the livelihood and economic sector of SIDS, as well as globally. Harmful activities including IUU, overfishing and other damaging practices are undermining the achievement of this target. They must be addressed and the subsidies which contribute to them eliminated. SIDS have also called for concrete, sustainable support to enhance and implement the regime for monitoring, control and surveillance of fishing vessels, to effectively prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.
- Coral reefs are important ecosystems. They face various threats, localized and globalized. Coral bleaching is one of the most severe threats faced by coral reefs ecosystems. SIDS have called for improving monitoring to predict and identify bleaching events, supporting and strengthening action taken during such events and improving strategies to manage reefs to support their natural resilience and enhance their ability to withstand other pressures, including ocean acidification. Such strategies and efforts require international assistance to further the protection of coral reefs, and to develop and implement comprehensive and integrated approaches for their management and enhancement.
- International action to address climate change remains grossly inadequate, and emissions of greenhouse gases continue to rise globally at a distressing rate. Related impacts including extreme events and slow onset events such as climate variability, temperature rise, sea level rise and ocean acidification – as well as security related issues threaten the survival and viability of SIDS and pose a significant challenge to our sustainable development efforts.

Co-chairs,

For oceans and seas, the issues are known. What is needed is political will to take the actions necessary. We are at a historical juncture and we need a paradigm shift. We look forward to working with all of our partners in this process to ensure that it provides a framework for the delivery of sufficient means of implementation and effective partnerships to allow for us to go beyond the rhetoric of sustainable development and make real, measurable progress on the ground in the post-2015 development framework.

I thank you.