



# PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

## United Nations Member States

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### Statement

by H.E. Mr Robert G. Aisi

Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations and

Chair of Pacific SIDS

on behalf of Pacific Troika in the OWG on SDGs and the

Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS)

for the

10<sup>th</sup> Session of Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals

Focus Area 16/on Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Resources, Oceans and Seas,  
Ecosystems and Biodiversity

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*Check against delivery*

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Co-Chair,

I have the honor to make this intervention on behalf of the Pacific Troika on the Open Working Group on SDGs, namely Nauru, Palau and my own country, Papua New Guinea as well as on behalf of the 9 other Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) represented at the United Nations, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. We are pleased to be joined by our neighbor, Timor-Leste.

We also align ourselves with the statement delivered on this cluster by Nauru on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). With the exception of PSIDS members who are not G-77 members, we also associate with the intervention made by the Plurinational State of Bolivia as the Chair of G-77 and China on this cluster of issues.

Co-Chair,

Oceans and seas must have a central place in the SDG discussions and in the development of the post-2015 development agenda to fulfill the global commitments made at the 1992, 2002, and 2012 world summits on sustainable development and the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea as well as to ensure that the smallest and poorest are not left behind again. We can thereby rectify the omission of oceans from the MDGs. Achieving universal sustainable development is linked to the health, resilience and productivity of oceans -- as is the path to alleviating extreme poverty.

Moreover, within the context of sustainable development, oceans and seas are an issue which is unique given the shared nature of responsibility we have for the ocean and therefore not one which can or should be clustered with others.

An SDG on Oceans and Seas would provide a new impetus for the integration of the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, overcoming deficits of sector-specific goals or approaches, which has been the main approach to managing the ocean so far.

In support of this goal, we propose the following targets for consideration.

We need a **healthy marine environment**. Targets should include:

Target 1: By 2020, establish and effectively manage ecologically representative and well-connected systems of marine protected areas within and beyond national jurisdiction, covering at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas.

Target 2: Enhance technical and scientific collaboration, including building the capacity of nations to sustainably and equitably manage oceans and seas;

Target 3: Implement relevant conventions and regional protocols on integrated and ecosystem-based ocean and coastal management by x [date]

Target 4: Reduce the incidence and impacts of marine pollution from marine and land-based sources by x%

Target 5: Ensure that coastal and island communities have adequate resources and management capacity in place for effective adaptation to the impacts of ocean warming and ocean acidification, including climate change-induced displacement of coastal and island peoples.

- We need **healthy fish stocks**. Targets should include:

Target 6: By x[date], restore highly migratory and straddling fish stocks to levels that can produce at least maximum sustainable yield.

Target 7: By [x] date, eliminate illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing including through, *inter alia* implementing national and regional plans to identify vessels engaged in IUU fishing and deprive offenders of the benefits accruing from IUU

Target 8: By [x] date, manage by-catch, discards, and eliminate destructive fishing practices

Target 9: By [x] date, eliminate harmful fishing subsidies, which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing;

Target 10: Assess on an [annual] basis the progress and performance of Regional Fishery Management Organizations under their respective treaties and the UN Fish Stocks Agreement

We also need to **realize the economic benefits of sustainable development of marine resources.** Targets should:

- Address the special needs of least developing countries, African countries, and small island developing states in the management of coastal and marine resources and enhance the economic and social benefits derived from these resources.
- Develop approaches and mechanisms to ensure that the burden of conservation and management of ocean resources is not disproportionately transferred.
- Integrate the principles and strategies of “ocean-based economy” in national economies to help eradicate poverty, move toward a low-carbon economy, enhance social inclusion, improve human welfare, and create job opportunities in coastal and island communities, while maintaining healthy oceans.
- Improve access and equity to fisheries and markets for subsistence, small scale and artisanal fisheries, women fish workers and indigenous people, particularly in SIDS.
- Provide support for sustainable tourism activities.

Finally, in order to meet these commitments, we will need strong international cooperation and technical support for implementation, particularly for developing countries especially SIDS.

Co-Chairs,

Now is the time for the international community to show a transformative agenda in exercising stewardship of the oceans and seas, protect their vital role in sustaining life on earth, and promote economic growth to achieve prosperous and resilient peoples and communities.

I thank you.