

UNCSD Ocean Cluster draft text recommendations

The NGO ocean cluster welcomes the focus given to oceans issues in the Rio+20 zero draft, and we hope that the final Rio outcomes will reflect the importance of protecting our blue planet to ensure a sustainable future. We strongly welcome many of the paragraphs in the current draft.

We recognize that many NGOs support initiating the negotiation of an implementing agreement to UNCLOS that would address the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (paragraph 80 of zero draft) as a key outcome of the UNCSD.

Suggested Text Amendments to the UNCSD Zero Draft on Behalf of the NGO Major Group Ocean Cluster

States should incorporate the following text recommendations as a supplement to the current zero draft language to more comprehensively address ocean and fisheries concerns:

[Green Economy in the Context of Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication: Framework for Action]

Para 42 (c)

- Subsidies that are incompatible with sustainable development and that have considerable negative effects on the environment should be eliminated, phased out or reformed by 2020 at the latest.

[Cities]

Para 72

- According to the Hangzhou Declaration on coastal mega-cities, integrated coastal area management, including sustainable urban and coastal systems, should be recognized as the appropriate tool to effectively address the management and planning of coastal urban areas, and that natural and social sciences should inform this process from start to end.

[Green jobs-social inclusion]

Para 74

- Investments in sustainable fisheries and ocean management, including capacity building for sustainable livelihoods, should be included as a contribution to job creation.

[Oceans and SIDS]

Para 78

- We note, with concern, the major threats facing the health and well-being of marine ecosystems and species, and the direct impacts that such threats have on human well-being.
- We recognize the important social benefits that oceans provide.

Para 81

- We further call on countries to act in conformity with decisions taken under the Convention on Biological Diversity (Decision IX/16 C, Decision X/33 paragraphs 8(w) and 8(x)) and the London Convention and Protocol (Resolution LC-LP.1(2008) and Resolution LC-LP.2(2010)) regarding restrictions on ocean fertilization and other marine-based geoengineering activities.

- Implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities should be carried out in the context of integrated coastal and ocean management.

Para 82

- Growing greenhouse gas emissions and climate change threaten global ocean health, particularly due to rising sea temperatures and increasing acidification. We must reduce global carbon dioxide emissions and address other ocean stressors, including overfishing, destructive fishing practices and land-based pollution. These threats are particularly relevant for coastal communities in SIDS and developing coastal countries.
- We support the implementation of an international observing network for ocean acidification, including chemical, biological and ecosystem monitoring/observation as an early warning system, and commit to work collectively to prevent further ocean acidification. The observing network must include chemical, biological and ecosystem monitoring/observation in order to act as an early warning system of this threat.
- Sea-level rise poses a severe threat to marine ecosystems and coastal communities around the world.
- We must establish representative networks of marine protected areas, including in particular marine reserves, to increase the resilience of marine ecosystems.
- Ecosystem-based adaptation, supported by sufficient funding, is needed to increase the resilience of marine ecosystems and coastal communities.

Para 83

- States must urgently strengthen efforts to maintain and restore fish stocks to levels which can produce maximum sustainable yield and to further commit to managing fisheries based on the precautionary and ecosystem approaches as established in Articles 5 and 6 of the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement, including implementing science-based management plans to rebuild overfished stocks by 2015, recognizing that MSY is a minimum target for rebuilding, and reducing or suspending fishing catch and effort for all stocks being over-fished or at risk of over-fishing.
- Science-based fisheries management should be based on the precautionary principle and ecosystem approach.
- Fisheries impacts must be reduced to levels that are within safe ecological limits by 2020.

Para 84

- Illegal fishing is criminal activity and must be recognized as such.
- Bottom fishing not in compliance with existing UNGA resolutions should be considered illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) and should be ended immediately.

- States must combat IUU fishing by adopting and implementing effective tools, including through strengthened flag State, port State, national and market measures and the establishment of effective measures for monitoring, control, surveillance and enforcement. States should also adopt a global register of vessels fishing on the high seas

Para 85

- Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are at the frontline of climate change and face the most immediate and severe threats from impacts such as sea level rise and extreme weather events.

Para 86

- SIDS and developing countries must be supported in enjoying the full economic and social benefits derived from the sustainable use of their marine resources.

[Accelerating and Measuring Progress]

Para 107

- Sustainable fisheries should be included as a priority area under the Sustainable Development Goals.

[Means of Implementation]

Para 126

- Harmful subsidies that impede the transition to sustainable development and which threaten food security should be eliminated, reformed or phased out by 2020 at the latest. Harmful subsidies include fisheries subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing and to overcapacity.

Proposed Text for Potential New Paragraphs

[Oceans and SIDS]

Integrated, ecosystem-based governance

- We call for enhanced integrated, ecosystem-based governance and management of oceans and coasts at the local, national, regional, and global level, including through the scaling-up of successful integrated coastal and ocean management initiatives.
- We call for ecosystem-based approaches for ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity, including through marine spatial planning and the establishment of networks of marine protected areas with a view to achieving the CBD Aichi Biodiversity Target of conserving or managing at least 10% of marine and coastal areas by 2020.
- Recalling the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) commitment and CBD Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, States must strengthen efforts to establish representative networks of MPAs and marine reserves and marine spatial planning.

Capacity Building

- We call for increased levels of strategic funding for capacity building at local, national, and regional levels, including through sustainable financing instruments such as targeted funds, to enhance integrated, ecosystem-based ocean and coastal management, supported by periodic assessments of overall expenditures and aggregate impact of capacity development efforts.

- We support knowledge and technology transfer, and capacity building for renewable energy as an important means of addressing energy security and poverty alleviation for coastal communities in SIDS and developing countries.

Sustainable Fisheries

- We urge relevant RFMO/As to provide priority access to fish resources for low-impact small-scale fisheries and direct investments are made in sound economic and sustainable fishing practices that maximize benefits to local communities.
- States, individually and through RFMO/As must implement effective, transparent and science-based fisheries management in accordance with the ecosystem approach and precautionary principle. Implementation should be accountable to the UNGA.
- We renew the JPOI commitment to eliminate destructive fishing practices, which damage vulnerable marine ecosystems and recognize that deep sea bottom trawling is the single most destructive fishing method on the high seas. States should agree to phase out this practice by 2015.
- We recommit to implement the FAO IPOA-Overcapacity and IPOA-IUU on an urgent basis.
- We support the need to reaffirm and uphold a human rights approach towards sustainable fisheries, recognizing the social importance and ecological value of sustainable artisanal and small-scale fisheries and the need to promote the nutritional security of the poor.
- States, aid agencies, multilateral development banks and other relevant international organizations should ensure that their policies and practices related to the promotion of international fish trade and export production do not result in environmental degradation or adversely impact the nutritional rights and needs of people for whom sustainable fisheries are critical to their health and well-being and for whom other comparable sources of food are not readily available or affordable.
- We support the development of an international agency to implement effective monitoring, control, surveillance, compliance and enforcement measures on the high seas and to promote prosecution of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities.
- We call for improved access to, and the use of, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea as a means of resolving disputes or clarifying the interpretation of oceans related law (e.g. the duties of flag States with respect to fisheries on the high seas).

Blue Economy

- The blue economy represents a significant opportunity for achieving sustainable development priorities. In this respect, human uses of ocean and coasts should contribute significantly to: (1) income and jobs; (2) reduction in harmful emissions and pollutants; (3) conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity; and (4) sustainable development of oceans and coasts, social equity and inclusiveness, and poverty reduction.

UN Coordination and Reform

- We call for the elevation of oceans to the highest levels of the UN system to enable a cross-

cutting approach and timely response to major threats and opportunities, including through the establishment of a UN Secretary-General or other high-level coordination mechanism on oceans.