

**DRAFT PHILIPPINE STATEMENT**  
**HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF SDG 14**

**High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development**

10-19 July 2017, UN Headquarters, New York, USA

*Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Good morning!

The Philippines acknowledges the importance of reviewing at the high level the implementation of SDG 14 noting the interlinkages of SDG 14 with other sustainable development goals and the need to identify the factors that contribute towards its implementation.

The Philippines, in this regard, emphasizes the importance of the following key strategies in achieving our goals for the sustainable development of our coastal and marine resources: i) enabling science-based policy environment; ii) provision of the necessary institutional and financing instruments for planning, programming and monitoring at all levels of government through multistakeholder partnerships; iii) more effective implementation and enforcement mechanisms; and iv) increasing involvement and awareness among stakeholders on their critical role as stewards of the coastal and marine resources.

A key element in the SDG 14 implementation is the presence of an enabling science based policy environment. Towards this, the Philippines has embarked on policy reforms and programs such as the amendments to the Fisheries Code and adoption of the Comprehensive National Fishery Industry Development Plan, the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program (a 12-year program which aims to comprehensively address the drivers and threats of degradation of the coastal and marine ecosystems and manage the ecosystems using the integrated and science-based approaches, the Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, and the Coral Triangle Initiative National Plan of Action, among others. The Philippines' Medium-Term Plan incorporates the 17 Sustainable Development Goals along with the SDG 14 conscious of their interlinkages. The recently approved Philippine Development Plan also includes country targets related to SDG 14.

The critical role of financing mechanisms such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Green Climate Fund (GCF) in supporting the ocean agenda is also recognized. The continuity of assistance especially for developing countries which tend to have limited fiscal space to ensure sustained financing for the management of coastal and marine ecosystems is important.

In terms of enforcement, the Philippines is moving towards strengthening its capacities through the acquisition of patrol vessels, monitoring systems and additional personnel. Likewise, current catch documentation and traceability system is in place for tuna exports and we are collaborating with other institutions and other partners in improving the system and expanding its coverage.

As current Chair of the ASEAN, the Philippines has elevated the issue of marine pollution as a priority matter in the organization's agenda. It has been noted during the meeting of ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment (AWGCME) that a concrete action plan must be put in place to address the burgeoning issues on marine plastics and microplastics pollution. As a Coastal and Flag State, the Philippines notes the important role of Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) and regional cooperation such as the Coral Triangle Initiative in implementing measures and strategies to fully comply with the conservation and management measures.

The Philippines recognizes the value of stakeholder participation in the entire planning process, including programming, implementation and monitoring. Equally significant is the need to ensure complementation of efforts and resources across stakeholders, particularly the private sector, civil society, non-government organizations, and development partners. We have established a mechanism to enable the meaningful participation of various stakeholders in policy-making and planning through the Philippine Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD).

Stakeholder participation is also evident through their membership in the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Councils (FARMCs), mainly a council of local people's organizations where stakeholders are increasingly made aware of their important role in the management of resources, on which their income depends, hence facilitating behavioral change. Aside from these, the Indigenous Community Conserved Areas ensures the full participation of the local and indigenous communities and other relevant stakeholders.

Excellencies,

The recent Ocean Conference through the Call for Action has provided the impetus for States to embark on more aggressive and focused actions to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources. The more than 1,300 Voluntary Commitments mirror the high degree of enthusiasm across entities and the globe. The Ocean Conference and the other big ocean events this year present a big challenge for the global community to keep up the momentum and follow through on the SDG 14 implementation.

The establishment of review mechanisms at the national, regional and global levels would ensure continuous monitoring of their implementation. Regional fora could serve as venues for States to report on their successes. Existing UN bodies and mechanisms could link capacity building programs to implementation of SDG 14 targets. The First Global Integrated Marine Assessment could serve as a guide in following up the progress on SDG 14 implementation. Public interest especially from policy makers must be sustained and cultivated. Initiatives from the scientific and research community must be pursued. Finally, the importance of transparency and early harvest must be promoted.

Thank you.