

WWF, Pew Environment Group, High Seas Alliance and Deep Sea Conservation Coalition Intervention 19 August 2013 BBNJ

Thank you Co-Chairs and good afternoon delegates.

The intervention is being given on behalf of WWF and the Pew Environment Group, as well as the High Seas Alliance, which comprises 30 non-governmental organizations, and the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition, which comprises over 70 NGOs worldwide.

We have listened with great interest to the discussions so far. One of the major positive outcomes from Rio+20 was the strengthened commitment of the international community to address oceans management problems, especially in deciding to take a UNGA decision urgently to address the need for high seas conservation, including through a possible new Implementing Agreement under the Law of the Sea Convention. The high seas constitute 2/3rds of the world's oceans, and cover nearly half the planet. Their conservation and sustainable management lag far behind that of the coastal waters of many countries.

Co-chairs, recommendations from this meeting are a litmus test for Rio+20.

This BBNJ meeting is the first time since Rio+20 that States have met together to actually address this deficiency and to demonstrate this political will to advise the UNGA on the basis upon which negotiations for a new Implementing Agreement should be launched.

Without a new Implementing Agreement, protection for the biodiversity of the high seas is like a jigsaw puzzle with half the pieces missing. We have, in fact, put a jigsaw up at our website at highseasalliance.org and have some available here for delegates. At the moment there are more gaps than pieces. We have also shared with you our synthesis of the important workshops held in May of this year. That synthesis is also on the HSA website. Those workshops showed that there is a need to:

- create a mandate to establish and enforce management measures for marine protected areas, especially on the high seas;
- develop and adopt uniform requirements for environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments for all sectoral uses in all regions;
- choose and create a mechanism for sharing benefits derived from marine genetic resources;
- establish an effective framework for state responsibility and control of nationals, including vessels, for monitoring, control, surveillance and enforcement/compliance mechanisms for all maritime activities;
- establish an effective framework for coordination and cooperation among existing organizations (especially 'sectoral organizations') charged with managing different types of human maritime activity, especially high-impact extractive industries, including fisheries and seabed mining; and
- establish an annual plenary meeting, to openly discuss issues facing the high seas and with the power to make decisions about it on behalf of the international community as a whole.

Co-chairs, the meeting this week must go beyond further discussion and result in clear recommendations to the UNGA on the basis for a decision to move to negotiations for a new UNCLOS Implementing Agreement. We welcome interventions by the EU, G77, PSIDs and the many States in support of an implementing agreement.

It is time for a wave of change to protect marine life in the high seas. That is why twitter is already talking about this meeting under the hashtag #waveofchange.

We look forward to a productive and constructive week of discussions. Thank you.