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**INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION**  
(of UNESCO)

**INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

**IOC CONTRIBUTION TO THE RIO+20 PROCESS AND FOLLOW-UP**

Summary: Responding to the call of the UN General Assembly for UN entities to 'provide ideas and proposals reflecting their experiences and lessons learned as a contribution to the Rio+20 preparatory process', the IOC got involved at an early stage in stage. The IOC advocated for the ocean during the whole preparatory process, taking the lead of several initiatives and collaborating with several of UN agencies and International Organisation. One of the main outcomes has been the edition and publication of the interagency report "A Blueprint for Ocean and Coastal Sustainability". The IOC has also organised various side events and information sessions. The IOC has also been part of important events on the ocean.

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO is the sole UN organization specializing in ocean related science, services and capacity development. It has been carrying out these responsibilities for fifty years. This role has supported the objectives of UNCED and WSSD, notably in developing and coordinating for societal use, a global ocean observing system to forecast coastal and marine hazards, assess ocean change and conditions, and in building national and local capacity in marine science and sustainable management of oceans uses and their resources.

Following the instructions received through IOC Resolution XXVI-5 calling *inter alia* for IOC to play an advocating role for the ocean during the Rio+20 preparatory process, IOC has engaged actively in the Rio+20 process through a number of activities. These are summarised below:

### **Statement on IOC's Special Contribution to Sustainable Development**

Following the guidance provided through IOC Resolution XXVI-5 on the Preparation for the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the IOC Statement has been circulated to all IOC Member States and collaborating organisations. It was submitted to the Secretariat of Rio+20 as an input to the zero draft of the outcome document

### **The Blueprint for Ocean and Coastal sustainability**

Following this statement and responding to the call of the UN General Assembly for UN entities to 'provide ideas and proposals reflecting their experiences and lessons learned as a contribution to the Rio+20 preparatory process', the IOC took the lead in the edition and publication of an inter-agency report entitled "A Blueprint for Ocean and Coastal Sustainability". This report (and its executive summary) raise the importance of the ocean for a sustainable future, highlight the many threats to its health and unveil ten proposals to safeguard the ocean. The report has been submitted to DESA as an input to the zero draft of the outcome document.

### **The IOC's involvement in Rio+20 preparatory process**

On September 12, 2011, the IOC co-organised, together with the Global Ocean Forum, a workshop in New York City entitled "Oceans at Rio+20: Discussions with UN Delegations" to discuss possible ocean outcomes for the upcoming UN Conference on sustainable Development (Rio+20), which took place in Brazil in June 2012. Over 70 high-level participants, including the Ambassadors of Australia, Barbados, Fiji, Grenada, Mauritius, Nauru, and Spain to the UN, the Oceans Ambassador from the United States, and leaders of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, attended the workshop. It provided a valuable opportunity to share information and perspectives on achieving a significant ocean outcome at Rio+20.

On November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011, a side event during the 36th General Conference of UNESCO was organised under the patronage of UNESCO DG to launch the Blueprint. Several Member State representatives (Brazil, Australia, Monaco, India, France, Grenada on behalf of AOSIS, and Korea) delivered statements presenting their national priorities for Rio+20, stressing the need to provide political weight to ocean issues within the existing and future sustainable development agenda. The meeting was also addressed by H.E. M. Meetarbhan, Co-chair of UN Informal Process on Oceans (Mauritius) and Ms L. Inniss, Co-coordinator of the UN Group of Experts on the Regular Process for Reporting and Assessing the State of the Marine Environment. The Blueprint was also presented to the press in New York and London.

On February 10, 2012, Circular Letter, 2420 was sent to Permanent Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC Member States, National Commissions for UNESCO in IOC and Member States Officers of the IOC and Major Subsidiary Bodies to transmit the Rio+20 Zero Draft document released on 10 January 2012, and to invite IOC Member States to consider the IOC

proposed amendments. The Circular Letter also reminded the deadline of a 29 February 2012 for Member States to propose amendments to the existing document.

The IOC and the European Parliament, MEP Kriton ARSENIS have organized an information session on 6 March 2012 to debate on the ocean and Rio+20. It was an opportunity to present and discuss some of the key issues affecting the ocean and people that depend on it, as well as opportunities and solutions for addressing these challenges. Experts presented the main threats to the ocean in detail through presentations on ocean acidification (Carol Turley), overfishing, illegal fishing (Commissioner Damanaki), and loss of biodiversity (Raphaël Billé) among other key issues. This meeting was also the occasion to review the Rio+20 process, including the state of the negotiation process and next steps.

UNESCO-IOC, the Global Ocean Forum, the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Fiji to the United Nations, and the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Seychelles to the United Nations joined forces to organize a side-event the third open-ended informal intersessional meeting in preparation for Rio+20 (March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012) and address the perspectives of States, UN agencies, and civil society on achieving a viable ocean outcome from the Rio+20 process.

During the second round of informal negotiations on the zero draft of the Rio+20 outcome document, a side event was organized (April 26, 2012) together with IUCN and CI to inform delegates of the potential value of coastal ecosystem conservation through blue carbon initiatives, as a means to ensure long term sustainability of coastal areas and green economic development whilst effectively mitigating climate.

At Rio+20, the IOC has organised 3 major side events. During the ICSU forum, a side event on ocean and science has been organised (June 13, 2012). This side event put the emphasis on the need for deeper marine research to fully understand and evaluate the impacts of global change on the world's oceans and for the implementation of an international framework of cooperation for both ocean research and governance.

The IOC has co-organised and co-chaired the Ocean Day (June 16, 2012), together with the Global Ocean Forum. This one-day event aimed at advancing the ocean and coasts at Rio+20 and beyond. This event has brought together high-level representatives from governments, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, industry, and the science community. It stressed the importance of strong outcomes and actions for the ocean through the Rio+20 process.

On the first day of the Conference (June 20, 2012), the IOC organised a side event to discuss and present a number of initiatives that supports the Rio+20 ocean targets leading to the sustainable use of the ocean. The side event was structured around three inter-connected themes: (i) Know our Ocean; (ii) Protect our Marine Treasures; (iii) Empower Ocean Citizens. This event demonstrated the need for inter-related actions to move towards the sustainable use of our undivided ocean's resources.

### **Participation in ocean related side event**

The IOC received many requests to intervene during various events:

- Workshop on the “Sustainable Use of Oceans in the Context of the Green Economy and Poverty Eradication”, Monaco (November 28-30, 2011), presentation of the Blueprint;
- Durban Ocean Day (December 13, 2011) on the sidelines of the 17th session of the Conference of the Parties 17 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Durban, South Africa, presentation entitled “Climate change and sustainable development: Tying COP17 outcomes to the Rio+20 process”;

- Information session (March 16, 2012) in Paris, presentation entitled “Ocean at Rio+20: A plan for action”;
- European Union ministerial roundtable (May 8, 2012), presentation entitled “Advancing the ocean at Rio+20: What is at stake?”;
- WESTPAC subcommission meeting (May 9, 2012);
- European Parliament’s Green Week (May 23, 2012), presentation entitled “The Ocean at Rio+20: Possible solution for multiple threats”;
- Greens/EFA conference on Rio+20 at the European Parliament (June 6, 2012), presentation entitled “Strengthening ocean governance”;
- G77 Plenary Meeting (June 6, 2012).

At Rio+20, the IOC has been part of numerous events:

- UNEP side event entitled “Green Economy in a Blue World” (June 14, 2012), statement on the importance of blueing the maritime economy;
- UNEP side event entitled “Nutrients: for food or pollution? The choice is ours!” (June 17, 2012), statement on leading nutrient issues and key actions and their barriers;
- UNSTC-SDR-IWG side event on “Disaster Risk Reduction: Tools for Sustainable Development” (June 17, 2012), presentation entitled “Ocean hazards and tsunamis, the role of the IOC-UNESCO”;
- IOC side event, organised together with Global Oceans entitled “Public private Partnership for global oceans” (June 18, 2012);
- European Union side event entitled “Hot, Sour and Breathless – Ocean under stress” (June 16, 2012), presentation entitled “Strengthening the science-policy interface for ocean sustainability”;
- UNESCO DREAM Center side event “Defying Disasters: A tri Continental South-South Dialogue” (June 19, 2012);
- Tara Oceans event on the Ocean (June 20, 2012), presentation on the Blueprint
- The Principality of Monaco, the Republic of Kiribati and the World Bank group side event on Global Partnership for Oceans (June 21, 2012).

The articles referring to “Oceans and Seas” and “Small islands Developing States” of the finalized outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development “The Future We Want” is annexed hereafter.

## ANNEX

### **Article on “Oceans and Seas” and “Small Islands Developing States” of the final outcome document of the United Nation Conference on Sustainable Development, “The Future We Want”**

#### **Oceans and seas**

158. We recognize that oceans, seas and coastal areas form an integrated and essential component of the Earth’s ecosystem and are critical to sustaining it and that international law, as reflected in United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), provides the legal framework for the conservation and the sustainable use of the oceans and their resources. We stress the importance of the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and seas and of their resources for sustainable development, including through the contributions to poverty eradication, sustained economic growth, food security, creation of sustainable livelihoods and decent work, while at the same time protecting biodiversity and the marine environment and addressing the impacts of climate change. We therefore commit to protect, and restore, the health, productivity and resilience of oceans and marine ecosystems, and to maintain their biodiversity, enabling their conservation and sustainable use for present and future generations, and to effectively apply an ecosystem approach and the precautionary approach in the management, in accordance with international law, of activities impacting on the marine environment, to deliver on all three dimensions of sustainable development.

159. We recognize the importance of UNCLOS to advancing sustainable development and its near universal adoption by States, and in this regard we urge all its Parties to fully implement their obligations under the Convention.

160. We recognize the importance of building the capacity of developing countries to be able to benefit from the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and seas and their resources and, in this regard, we emphasize the need for cooperation in marine scientific research to implement the provisions of UNCLOS and the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development, as well as for the transfer of technology, taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) Guidelines for the transfer of marine technology.

161. We support the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including socio-economic aspects, established under the United Nations General Assembly, and look forward to the completion of its first global integrated assessment of the state of the marine environment by 2014 and its subsequent consideration by the General Assembly. We encourage consideration by States of assessment findings at appropriate levels.

162. We recognize the importance of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. We note the ongoing work under the UN General Assembly of an Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. Building on the work of the ad hoc working group and **before the end of the 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly** we commit to address, on an urgent basis, the issue of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction including by taking a decision on the development of an international instrument under UNCLOS.

163. We note with concern that the health of oceans and marine biodiversity are negatively affected by marine pollution, including marine debris, especially plastic, persistent organic pollutants, heavy metals, and nitrogen-based compounds, from a number of marine and land-based sources, including shipping and land runoff. We commit to take action to reduce the incidence and impacts of such pollution on marine ecosystems, including through the effective implementation of relevant conventions adopted in the framework of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and the follow up of the relevant initiatives such as the Global Programme of

Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, as well as the adoption of coordinated strategies to this end. We further commit to take action by 2025, based on collected scientific data, to achieve significant reductions in marine debris to prevent harm to the coastal and marine environment.

164. We note the significant threat alien invasive species pose to marine ecosystems and resources and commit to implement measures to prevent the introduction of, and manage the adverse environmental impacts of, alien invasive species including, as appropriate, those adopted in the framework of the IMO.

165. We note that sea level rise and coastal erosion are serious threats for many coastal regions and islands particularly in developing countries and, in this regard, we call on the international community to enhance its efforts to address these challenges.

166. We call for support to initiatives that address ocean acidification and the impacts of climate change on marine and coastal ecosystems and resources. In this regard, we reiterate the need to work collectively to prevent further ocean acidification, as well as enhance the resilience of marine ecosystems and of the communities whose livelihoods depend on them, and to support marine scientific research, monitoring and observation of ocean acidification and particularly vulnerable ecosystems, including through enhanced international cooperation in this regard.

167. We stress our concern about the potential environmental impacts of ocean fertilization. In this regard, we recall the decisions related to ocean fertilization adopted by the relevant intergovernmental bodies, and resolve to continue addressing with utmost caution ocean fertilization, consistent with the precautionary approach.

168. We commit to intensify our efforts to meet the 2015 target as agreed to in JPOI to maintain or restore stocks to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield on an urgent basis. In this regard we further commit to urgently take the measures necessary to maintain or restore all stocks at least to levels that can produce the maximum sustainable yield, with the aim of achieving these goals in the shortest time feasible, as determined by their biological characteristics. To achieve this we commit to urgently develop and implement science based management plans, including by reducing or suspending fishing catch and effort commensurate with the status of the stock. We further commit to enhance action to manage bycatch, discards, and other adverse ecosystem impacts from fisheries including by eliminating destructive fishing practices. We also commit to enhance actions to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems from significant adverse impacts including through the effective use of impact assessments. Such actions, including those through competent organizations, should be undertaken consistent with international law, the applicable international instruments and relevant General Assembly resolutions and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Guidelines.

169. We urge State Parties to the 1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of UNCLOS relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks to fully implement it, and give, in accordance with its Part VII, full recognition of the special requirements of developing States. Furthermore, we call upon all States to implement the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the FAO International Plans of Action and technical guidelines.

170. We acknowledge that illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing deprive many countries of a crucial natural resource and remain a persistent threat to their sustainable development. We recommit to eliminate IUU fishing as advanced in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and to prevent and combat these practices including through the following: developing and implementing national and regional action plans in accordance with the FAO's international plan of action to combat IUU fishing; implementing—in accordance with international law—effective and coordinated measures by coastal States, flag States, port States and chartering nations and the States of nationality of the beneficial owners and others who support or engage in

IUU fishing by identifying vessels engaged in IUU fishing and by depriving offenders of the benefits accruing from IUU fishing; as well as cooperating with developing countries to systematically identify needs and build capacity, including support for monitoring, control, surveillance, compliance and enforcement systems.

171. We call upon States that have signed the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing to expedite procedures for its ratification with a view to its early entry into force.

172. We recognize the need for transparency and accountability in fisheries management by regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs). We recognize the efforts already made by those RFMOs that have undertaken independent performance reviews, and call on all RFMOs to regularly undertake such reviews and make the results publicly available. We encourage implementation of the recommendations of such reviews and recommend that the comprehensiveness of those reviews be strengthened over time, as necessary.

173. We reaffirm our Johannesburg Plan of Implementation commitment to eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing and overcapacity taking into account the importance of this sector to developing countries, and we reiterate our commitment to conclude multilateral disciplines on fisheries subsidies which give effect to the WTO Doha Development Agenda and the Hong Kong Ministerial mandates to strengthen disciplines on subsidies in the fisheries sector, including through the prohibition of certain forms of fisheries subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and over-fishing, recognising that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiation, taking into account the importance of the sector to development priorities, poverty reduction, and livelihood and food security concerns. We encourage States to further improve the transparency and reporting of existing fisheries subsidies programmes through the WTO. Given the state of fisheries resources and without prejudicing the WTO Doha and Hong Kong Ministerial mandates on fisheries subsidies nor the need to conclude these negotiations, we encourage States to eliminate subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and over-fishing, and to refrain from introducing new such subsidies or from extending or enhancing existing such subsidies.

174. We urge the identification and mainstreaming of strategies by 2014 that further assist developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, in developing their national capacity to conserve, sustainably manage and realize the benefits of sustainable fisheries, including through improved market access for fish products from developing countries.

175. We commit to observe the need to ensure access to fisheries, and the importance of access to markets, by subsistence, small-scale and artisanal fishers and women fish workers, as well as indigenous peoples and their communities particularly in developing countries, especially small island developing States.

176. We also recognize the significant economic, social and environmental contributions of coral reefs, in particular to islands and other coastal States, as well as the significant vulnerability of Biological Diversity, that by 2020, 10 percent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are to be conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures.

### **Small Island Developing States (SIDS)**

178. We reaffirm that small island developing States (SIDS) remain a special case for sustainable development in view of their unique and particular vulnerabilities, including their small size, remoteness, narrow resource and export base, and exposure to global environmental challenges

and external economic shocks, including to a large range of impacts from climate change and potentially more frequent and intense natural disasters. We note with concern that the outcome of the 5-year review of the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation (MSI+5) concluded that SIDS have made less progress than most other groupings, or even regressed, in economic terms, especially in terms of poverty reduction and debt sustainability. Sea-level rise and other adverse impacts of climate change continue to pose a significant risk to SIDS and their efforts to achieve sustainable development and for many represent the gravest of threats to their survival and viability, including for some through the loss of territory. We also remain concerned that, while SIDS have progressed in the areas of gender, health, education and the environment, their overall progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals has been uneven.

179. We call for continued and enhanced efforts to assist SIDS in implementing the Barbados Programme of Action and Mauritius Strategy for Implementation. We also call for a strengthening of the United Nations System support to SIDS in keeping with the multiple ongoing and emerging challenges faced by SIDS in achieving sustainable development.

180. Building on the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation, we call for the convening of the Third International Conference on SIDS in 2014, recognizing the importance of coordinated, balanced and integrated actions to address the sustainable development challenges facing SIDS and we invite the General Assembly at its 67th Session to determine the modalities of the Conference.