

23 March 2020

Excellencies,

With reference to your letters dated 2, 13 and 19 March 2020, Iceland would like to make the following observations with regards to the zero draft of the declaration for the 2020 UN Ocean Conference.

*Point 10*

The language on solutions or actions in this point is quite soft and should be strengthened.

*Point 10.b*

While Iceland could support the content of this point, we would like to stress two important factors that are missing.

First,

sustainable fisheries management. This must be stated, either by rewriting point 10.b or by a new separate point. We refer to SDG targets 14.4 and 14.7 in this regard.

Second, Iceland would suggest making better reference to the use of existing tools and measures under different instruments and mechanisms, including firm actions under the Port State Measures Agreement against IUU fishing and the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels.

Where there are no existing tools or measures in place, Iceland would support concrete proposals for action in the text, i.e. prescription of what needs to be done in the short and long term and to call on States to cooperate towards that end.

*Point 10.d*

Iceland proposes that a reference be made to

*Point 11.f*

Iceland fully supports the inclusion of empowering women in the text. We would, however, suggest having concrete proposals on how this goal should be reached. This could, for example, be formulated in this manner: Empower and support women, in progressing towards a sustainable ocean-based economy and achieving Goal 14, and mainstream a gender perspective in our work to conserve and sustainably use the ocean and its resources .

*Point 11.g*

In addition to reference to the education for young people, a reference to their participation in decision-making on ocean affairs should be made.

In conclusion, Iceland thanks you for an excellent zero draft that provides a good basis for our further work, and appreciates your leadership under difficult circumstances. You can continue to count on our support.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Jörundur Valtýsson