



## **DECLARATION FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF MARINE SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE, RESEARCH CAPACITY AND TRANSFER OF MARINE TECHNOLOGY TO SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES**

27 JUNE 2022

*Recognizing* the role of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) as the custodians of the ocean because of their leadership in sustainable ocean management and conservation, including through the use of traditional knowledge, knowledge of Indigenous Peoples, and local knowledge systems,

*Further recognizing* the centrality of the ocean to the cultural identity of SIDS, the dependency of SIDS on the ocean to sustain lives and livelihoods and the role of the ocean in advancing sustainable development in SIDS through ocean-based economies,

*Acknowledging* that SIDS have been disproportionately affected by the changes to ocean health due to climate change and ocean acidification, with worsening impacts anticipated,

*Further acknowledging* that capacity building is a pivotal factor in appropriation, ownership and sustainability in technical cooperation, and targeted technology transfer and capacity building needs to be accelerated to meet the urgent global need for the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean and its rich biodiversity,

*Concerned* with the diverse and persisting capacity gaps at regional, sub-regional, national, sub-national, individual and institutional levels in SIDS, in particular as it relates to ocean science, technology, knowledge, policy and finance,

*Further concerned* with the inadequacy of existing approaches to capacity building that pose more of a burden than a benefit in developing, sustaining and locally retaining capacity,

*Emphasizing* the need to seize and optimize innovation capacities by maximizing benefits to all parties involved in capacity building, through focusing on future-proofed long-term outcomes, with modernized approaches that eliminate outdated and ineffective technologies,

*Guided by* the principle of special circumstances of SIDS and their unique vulnerabilities as established in the Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA), the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation (MSI) and the S.A.M.O.A Pathway, and further affirmed in the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the Paris Agreement and the New Urban Agenda,

*Further guided by* the declaration entitled “Our ocean, our future: call for action” adopted by the first UN Ocean Conference, the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), as well as the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and its vision of the science we need for the ocean we want,

*Recognizing* the important role of international partnerships, and the wide range of co-benefits that effective capacity building partnerships will deliver to all stakeholders involved, further facilitating the achievement of the Decade’s objectives,

*Further recognizing* the challenges faced by SIDS in accessing development finance, which severely limits national efforts for developing, enhancing and retaining local capacity,

Meeting at the Second United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 of the 2030 Agenda:

**We encourage** all stakeholders engaging in capacity building partnerships that address the full range of capacity needs identified by SIDS, including science, technology, policy, institutional, and adequate finance that are all critical to ensure future proofing and sustaining local capacity to meet local needs now and in the future.

**We call for** the establishment of partnerships to increase marine scientific knowledge, develop marine research capacity and transfer marine technology in SIDS, that are:

- 1. Genuine, durable, equitable, sustainable and responsive to needs that are self-identified**, inter alia through national, regional and global policies and strategies as well as needs assessments.
- 2. Co-designed, co-developed and co-implemented by all partners** through meaningful engagement and information-sharing to build a shared understanding of the objectives, aims and desired outcomes, and ensure the terms are suitably defined, while allocating sufficient time and resources to establish effective and long-term relationships based on mutual trust and respect, **recognizing that SIDS are key partners rather than passive beneficiaries**.
- 3. Built on mutual learning and innovation between all partners**, while respecting that all partners hold diverse forms of knowledge and experience, including traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples, and local knowledge systems that should be accessed and used **following the principle of free, prior and informed consent in accordance with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**.
- 4. Achievable by being realistically designed** in a country-relevant and context specific manner, **with the flexibility to adjust with changing needs or respond to new opportunities**, while recognizing that needs assessments are integral to the development of such strategies.
- 5. Fully supported for the duration of the partnership, and provides for long-term sustainability strategy and capacity retention** through allocating adequate long term, predictable and sustainable resources for long-term implementation, especially for early-stage development, while accommodating for the mobilization of new resources as required, and ensuring that transfer of technology and capacity-building are mutually supported by appropriate and effective human resources capacity,
- 6. Accountable, inclusive and transparent with open communication** amongst all partners, to reflect on the motivation, benefits, and other factors influencing equitable capacity development outcomes, by providing spaces for engagement with all relevant stakeholders and

knowledge exchange about best-practice approaches, results and challenges, with all relevant stakeholders.

- 7. Subject to periodic monitoring, evaluation and learning from experience,** with the purpose of evaluating whether the long-term outcomes were achieved, through the use of clearly established baselines, targets and indicators, supplemented by support for the data collection and reporting to enable adjustments of the partnership based on the results.
- 8. Designed with the flexibility to review and reform** the operating, funding and governance structure, to ensure that evolving needs can be reflected and catered for.

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