

APPF28/RES/11

**RESOLUTION
ON
PRIORITISING OCEANS MANAGEMENT AND THE BLUE
ECONOMY TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION**

(Sponsored by Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and Japan)

We the parliamentarians of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF), gathering in Canberra, Australia, for the 28th Annual Meeting of the APPF under the theme *Parliamentary Partnerships for 2020 and Beyond*:

Considering that oceans cover three quarters of the Earth's surface, contain 97 percent of its water, and house millions of its species;

Aware that the ocean is a conduit for 90 per cent of global trade, activity that connects people and markets, creates livelihoods and enables growth and prosperity;

Cognisant of the economic importance of marine and coastal resources, which provide livelihoods for more than three billion people;

Considering that marine resources in the Asia-Pacific region account for more than 50 per cent of the world's wild capture fishery production and more than 80 per cent of the world's aquaculture production;

Bearing in mind that oceans are effective carbon capture bodies and therefore play a fundamental role in maintaining the stability of the Earth's climate;

Drawing attention to the increased oceanic uptake of carbon dioxide, which is a contributing factor in ocean acidification, a phenomenon that threatens ocean biodiversity and the survival of many ocean species and marine organisms;

Recognising that nutrient pollution can create oxygen-depleted "dead zones" in the ocean;

Aware that an estimated eight million tons of plastic are dumped in the ocean every year;

Acknowledging the commitments made through the United Nations (UN) Environment Programme's 2012 *Global Partnership on Marine Litter* and the 2018 *Clean Seas* campaign to reduce the impacts of marine litter on animals, ecosystems, economies and human health;

Reaffirming support for a science-based approach to decision-making about the ocean;

Recalling the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)*, which establishes the legal framework within which activities in the ocean must be carried out, and its related agreements, including the 1995 *United Nations Agreement on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks*;

Welcoming UN General Assembly Resolution 73/124 of 11 December 2018 "Oceans and the law of the sea" which calls for universal implementation of UNCLOS through capacity building and regional cooperation;

Also recalling the *Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter*, the *International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships*, and other relevant conventions developed by the International Maritime Organisation;

Also recalling the UN *Convention on Biological Diversity*, the States parties of which agreed to a target of conserving, by 2020, 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, through systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures;

Reiterating the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes a specific goal – Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 – on conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas and marine resources;

Welcoming UN General Assembly Resolution 71/312 of 6 July 2017 “Our ocean, our future: call for action,” which aims to synergise national commitments to implement SDG 14 in an integrated and coordinated manner;

Recalling UN General Assembly Resolution 74/4 of 15 October 2019 endorsing the promotion of research, innovation and capacity-building initiatives in order to achieve sustainable development in line with the SDGs;

Welcoming the decision to establish 2021–2030 as the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development;

Recalling the Valparaiso Declaration, adopted by the 9th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) in 2001, which established a shared commitment to conserve the Pacific Ocean;

Determined to address the decline in the health and productivity of our oceans and their ecosystems toward the ultimate goal of sustainable development;

Committed to addressing the particular needs of low-lying coastal states, small island developing states, and coastal communities;

Convinced that instituting effective measures to protect ocean ecosystems and resources will benefit the people of the Asia Pacific region, now and in the future;

RESOLVE TO:

1. **Recognise** the imperative of protecting and preserving the ocean, which is common heritage shared by all;
2. **Raise** public awareness of ocean issues and related scientific research, particularly among youth;
3. **Promote** the sustainable use of marine resources, while taking into account the needs and traditions of local coastal communities;
4. **Promote** “blue economy” strategies that can provide jobs, food safety and sustainable development for everybody living in the region;
5. **Encourage** work towards the restoration of marine and coastal ecosystems in order to strengthen oceanic health and the resilience of coastal communities that rely on the ocean;
6. **Reinvigorate** our commitment to achieve the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 14, while taking into account national capacities;

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7. **Promote** tools for sustainable coastal and oceans management, including the enactment of marine protected areas, consistent with international law and based on the best available scientific information;
 8. **Encourage** the generation of an updated record of marine protected areas in the Asia Pacific region, as a first step, in order to identify unprotected and especially risky marine and coastal ecosystems;
 9. **Assist** small-scale artisanal fishers by improving their access to marine resources and markets and by enhancing their ability to contribute to food security;
 10. **Prioritise** efforts that can help to rebuild over-exploited, depleted and recovering fish stocks, while enhancing sustainable fisheries management, in a way that addresses the root causes of destructive fishing practices;
 11. **Advance** science-based policy making and robust ocean observation by working to improve scientific and research capacity in the Asia Pacific region;
 12. **Support** initiatives that can further the understanding of the effects of climate change on the ocean and marine biodiversity;
 13. **Encourage** all APPF Member States that have not yet done so to become parties to international agreements that address the protection and preservation of the marine environment and its living marine resources, including those targeting marine plastic litter, land-based pollution and abandoned fishing gear;
 14. **Provide** oversight of the national implementation of international and regional conventions and commitments on ocean conservation and management; and
 15. **Work** to mainstream ocean-related concerns in policy, legislative and budgeting processes.