



OceanCare Statement

Twenty-Third Meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea on "New Maritime Technologies: challenges and opportunities", New York, 5th – 9th June 2023

Agenda Item 3, General Exchange of Views, Monday, 5th June 2023

Distinguished Co-Chairs and Delegates,

I have the honour to address you on behalf of OceanCare. We commend the UNGA for choosing to address the challenges and opportunities of new maritime technologies as theme for this 23rd Meeting of the open-ended informal consultative process.

As a starting point, let us consider the current state of play addressing the triple planetary crisis – climate breakdown, biodiversity loss and pollution – in a context of complex marine ecosystems and governance challenges in the vastness of the ocean. On the one hand the United Nations agreed the Agenda 2030 with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as the overarching framework tackling these existential crises and those are supported by numerous international decisions and initiatives. On the other hand most science based reports – whether it is the report from the IPCC or IPBES, and others - demonstrate that the trends of those crises are even worse than we thought.

Sustainable development and conservation are intrinsically linked as our marine resources are finite and we must preserve the ocean, which is our life support system. Only then, do we stand a chance that a variety of measures and new sustainable technologies - which must not additionally harm marine biodiversity – will complementarily successfully address these existential crises.

We must take immediate and ambitious action to curb further anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions, plastic, chemical and ocean noise pollution, overfishing and other harmful activities which are otherwise exacerbating the dire situation in our ocean indefinitely. A cultural, social, and political transformation, including legally binding regulatory responses are likely the most sustainable and precautionary response.

In this respect, we welcome the newly agreed upon text of the BBNJ Agreement which provides a meaningful opportunity to apply robust Environmental Impact Assessments



(EIAs) and Area-Based Management Tools, including Marine Protected Areas, to more effectively protect biodiversity on the high seas.

Furthermore, conservation action and management measures should be based on the proven efficacy of Best Environmental Practice (BEP) and Best Available Technologies (BAT). Successful examples applying the BAT/BEP approach clearly show that mandatory frameworks based on strong conservation principles can generate investments and guide technological solutions.

Therefore, we have to be crystal clear: new technologies cannot and will not be a panacea fixing the crises but a complementary part of the mix of solutions. Time to prevent irreversible damage to our planet is alarmingly short.

We thank you for your attention and look forward to the dialogue with all stakeholders in order to achieve the UN objective towards a healthy, thriving and resilient ocean.

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