



## **EAST ASIA SUMMIT LEADERS' STATEMENT ON MARINE SUSTAINABILITY**

**WE**, the Heads of State/Government of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Australia, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America, met via videoconference on 14 November 2020, under Viet Nam's 2020 ASEAN Chairmanship, on the occasion of the 15th Anniversary of the East Asia Summit;

**EMPHASISING** that the East Asia Summit, sitting at the apex of the ASEAN-centred regional architecture, will continue to be a Leaders-led forum for dialogue on broad strategic, political, and economic issues of common interest and concern with the aim of promoting peace, stability and economic prosperity in East Asia;

**REITERATING** our commitment in the 2010 Ha Noi Declaration on the Commemoration of the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the East Asia Summit and the 2015 Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the East Asia Summit to move progress and cooperation in the EAS further forward, including in the priority areas;

**REAFFIRMING** the commitment we made in the 2015 East Asia Summit Statement on Enhancing Regional Maritime Cooperation and the 2018 East Asia Summit Statement on Combating Marine Plastic Debris, and as outlined in the Manila Plan of Action to Advance the Phnom Penh Declaration on the East Asia Summit Development Initiative (2018-2022), to enhance our cooperation in sustainable marine economic development, in protecting and preserving the marine and coastal environment, including biodiversity, ecosystem and resources, as well as in protecting people who depend on oceans for their livelihoods from harmful activities and other threats, such as land-based and sea-based pollution;

**RECOGNISING** that the ocean is fundamental to life on our planet and our future; that the ocean acts as an important source of our planet's biodiversity and plays a vital role in the climate system and water cycle; that the ocean contributes to food security, decent work and livelihoods, and plays an essential role in the sustainable development of ocean-based economies and poverty eradication; and that the ocean It also forms an important part of our natural and cultural heritage;

**STRESSING** that the First Global Integrated Marine Assessment (also known as the World Ocean Assessment) has warned nations that the world's oceans are facing major pressures resulting in such great impacts that exceed the carrying capacity of the ecosystem to buffer against them, and that any delays in implementing solutions to the identified problems that threaten the oceans health will lead to greater environmental, social, and economic costs;

**RECALLING** our common commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14: Life Below Water, and its focus on people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership, for this and future generations, with concern over the health of oceans and marine biodiversity which form an integrated and essential component of the Earth's ecosystem and are critical to sustaining it;

**REAFFIRMING** the commitment to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development as articulated in SDG14, including through relevant regional platforms such as the ASEAN Cooperation on Coastal and Marine Environment, and in line with the 2019 Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in ASEAN Region;

**UNDERLINING** the inter linkages and synergies between SDG 14 and the other Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and **EMPHASISING** that our actions to achieve SDG 14 should be in line with, reinforce and not duplicate or undermine, existing legal instruments, arrangements, processes, mechanisms or entities;

**EMPHASISING** that addressing negative environmental impacts on ocean systems, including through the mitigation of and adaptation to negative impacts of climate change, represent an immediate priority for ensuring the health, productivity and resilience of the ocean and marine resources and environment, coastal communities and thus our future;

**RECOGNISING** that enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to negative environmental impacts and marine-related disasters can be achieved by continuing to engage in adaptation planning processes, enhancing cooperation in disaster risk reduction and management, as well as pursuing other efforts to limit the adverse impacts of climate change;

**RECOGNISING** that the seas and oceans connect our region and link it to other regions of the world, and that our growth and our future are anchored to the stability of this marine area;

**COMMITTED** to the promotion of the protection and conservation of the marine environment and its resources, as well as a sustainable and responsible fisheries regime, including the long-term conservation and management of fish stocks;

**EMPHASISING** the importance of promoting cooperation on marine sustainability through dialogue and optimising ASEAN-led mechanisms to address common challenges and concerns;

**CONVINCED** that East Asia Summit participating countries should intensify efforts and promote further cooperation and collaboration among multiple authorities and agencies at the local, national, regional and international levels, including governmental, the public and the private sectors and other relevant stakeholders to promote sustainable use of the seas and oceans

**COMMITTED** to enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS), which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources;

**DO HEREBY DECIDE TO:**

1. **Promote** dialogue and cooperation on marine sustainability, as well as of the conservation and protection of the marine environment through appropriate and relevant ASEAN-led mechanisms;
2. **Promote** sustainable use and management of marine resources and marine environmental protection and conservation, by:
  - a) **Enhancing** food security and nutrition in the region, including the promotion of sustainable and responsible fisheries management and fishery development, recognising the importance of the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiation;
  - b) **Enhancing** education and public awareness on the value of the ocean ecosystem including climate systems, environmental sustainability, marine species and habitats, as well as the benefit of coastal resources, for resilience to natural disasters, the negative impacts of climate change, for food security, human health, and livelihoods, to encourage conservation action and transformative change among stakeholders;
  - c) **Strengthening** digital marketing and logistics to support sustainable fisheries production and livelihoods and income, especially for small-scale fishers among countries in the region;

- d) **Empowering** small-scale fishers as well as individuals and local communities in sustainable fisheries production through capacity building and exchange of information and best practices to mitigate the economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic and future economic downturn;
- e) **Ensuring** long-term conservation and sustainable use and management of fish stocks and other marine resources, including encouraging the assessment and implementation of ecosystem approach to management of fisheries, sharing best practices and emphasising the importance of an inclusive, integrated, and ecosystem-based approach for coastal and marine environment management;
- f) **Exploring and undertaking** relevant cooperative activities, including taking action against cases of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and illegal activities, in accordance with existing international and national law, and applicable instruments including the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, and regional fisheries management organisations, noting the pending comprehensive and durable settlement of territorial and jurisdictional disputes;
- g) **Enhancing** regional cooperation on the use of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) information for the purpose of combating IUU fishing;
- h) **Strengthening** regional efforts to support countries to regularly generate data and information required to regularly assess and monitor the state of coastal and marine resources and marine environment as the basis for planning, policy development, and decision-making;
- i) **Promoting** knowledge-sharing, capacity building, and technology transfer on a voluntary basis, and support for the adoption of innovative monitoring and enforcement technologies and strengthening digital infrastructure to address illicit trafficking of wildlife, IUU fishing, and other transboundary threats related to marine sustainability;
- j) **Promoting** cooperation and coordination among relevant agencies, including maritime law enforcement agencies;
- k) **Protecting** and conserving the marine and coastal environment, including marine biodiversity, ecosystems and resources, as well as protecting people who depend on oceans for their livelihoods from harmful activities such as land-based and sea-based pollution; IUU fishing; unsustainable and unregulated development; unregulated bottom trawling; destructive fishing practices such as dynamite and cyanide fishing; coral exploitation;

destruction of corals, reefs and shoals; illicit trafficking of wildlife; as well as from the adverse impacts of climate change and acidification and deoxygenation of the ocean;

- l) **Continuing** to mainstream biodiversity in aquaculture, tourism, marine-based energy development, oceanic infrastructure and industries, actions to address the negative impacts of climate change and disaster risk reduction and climate change mitigation and adaptation framework in ASEAN, through a cross-pillar and cross-sectoral approach within ASEAN and East Asia Summit and with other partners, with the support of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) and other mechanisms;
- m) **Enhancing** activities and multi-stakeholder cooperation on marine and coastal conservation and rehabilitation including to strengthen ecosystem resilience, in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans and seas;
- n) **Promoting** actions to increase public awareness and participation, and enhancing research capacity and education with the aim to prevent and reduce marine debris;
- o) **Strengthening** collaborative actions among East Asia Summit participating countries to prevent and reduce marine debris, including implementing joint actions and partnerships for addressing this challenge;
- p) **Improving** and promoting environmentally sound management of plastic waste and resource efficiency, including circular economy, product life-cycle management, sustainable materials management, and reduce, reuse, recycle (“3R”) approaches, as appropriate; through activities such as improving relevant programmes on reducing plastic waste from land-based and sea-based activities; through developing sustainable, quality and resilient infrastructure and through innovative solutions;
- q) **Encouraging** cooperation among East Asia Summit participating countries through relevant mechanisms in investigation and research of the impacts of climate change on the oceans and in strengthening scientific and technical cooperation and information sharing in the areas of marine monitoring and observation, marine forecast as well as marine disaster prevention and mitigation;
- r) **Encouraging** sharing of information relevant to the sustainable use and management of marine resources and marine environmental protection and conservation, including on sea level change, the status and impacts of marine deoxygenation, ocean acidification, among others;

- s) **Enhancing** capacity and cooperation in disaster prevention and mitigation as well as building coastal resilience for disaster risk reduction through relevant ASEAN-led mechanisms working in partnership with relevant regional and international agencies;
- t) **Encouraging** all East Asia Summit participating countries to promote marine economic development, and explore approaches to enhancing and facilitating sustainable, low emissions and climate resilient marine economic development;
- u) **Enhancing** collaboration for capacity-building and scientific research to identify solutions to marine pollution, protect marine biodiversity, and enhance the resilience and productivity of coastal communities and marine ecosystems, including in the context of climate change impacts;
- v) **Enhancing** collaboration in study and research on biodiversity, marine resources, ecosystem services, conservation of coastal habitats, and relationships among them, as well as strengthening collaboration and information sharing on marine resources for conservation and sustainable use;

**3. Strengthen** maritime connectivity, through:

- a) **Enhancing** efforts to develop maritime connectivity in line with and in support of the vision of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025 towards a seamless and connected ASEAN, and develop sustainable and resilient infrastructure logistics and port management, navigation cooperation to promote economic growth that will not only contribute to narrowing development gaps but also promote regional cooperation and the community building process, as well as better mobility of people, skilled labour, goods and services;
- b) **Encouraging** East Asia Summit participating countries to address the capacity building needs on the conservation of the seas and oceans through sharing experiences and best practices for marine sustainability; and
- c) **Encouraging** collaboration on the development and utilisation of innovative technologies, through using relevant advancements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

**ADOPTED** on the Fourteenth of November in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty.

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