

Speech in Athens

"16th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas Convention and Action Plans"

Distinguished authorities

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning,

First of all, I would like to thank on behalf of the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific Assembly (CPPS,) which represents the countries of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Chile, this significant invitation to speak about the importance of regional seas and the objectives of sustainable development in these maritime zones.

There is no doubt about the importance of this issue, which covers a wide range of challenges and get most of the attention from the members of this regional organization, but also of the international community as a whole.

Currently, our regional seas are affected by numerous threats and phenomena that cause great environmental damages, resulting in a deep deterioration of the existing marine biodiversity in multiples areas of the oceans.

Sustainable Development, which pursues a balance between economic, social and environmental factors, is an effective way to address the management of the oceans. In that sense, the States of the world, as well as the global international community and the regional organizations, have understood this by joining forces in order to enhance the conservation and protection of our seas and marine resources.

Our intention is to strength the work in the region by means of consensus and joint efforts, in order to obtain results that will result in marine biodiversity sustainability, and to that end, we have given an important signal to address the activities that generate damages to the ocean environment, such as overexploitation of fishery resources, the use of methods or harmful fishing art for the marine environment.

Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, which is considered one of the largest illegal activities of the world and the pollution of the marine environment, among many other factors, clearly goes against and damages the marine sustainability goals.

It is also important to emphasize the protection of marine ecosystems; especially those who are today considered "vulnerable" in order to avoid adverse impacts impossible to recover.

Also necessary, is to strengthen the recovery and resilience capacity of those ecosystems that are currently damaged, in order to achieve our essential long-term goal, namely, to

have more healthy and sustainable oceans. Especially if we consider that the seas as a whole, cover more than 70% of the planet, and their wealth is very significant for developing countries.

In that sense, one of the important international objectives on an environmental level, are the Aichi targets, which are a major challenge to the environmental goals that each country must adopt according to their realities. The Permanent Commission of the South Pacific, strives to provide the support and cooperation to the countries of the region so they can achieve their own internal goals; considering as essential elements, the protection of terrestrial and aquatic environment, as well as, the social and economic development understood as central elements of any State.

In this regard, the CPPS has been working towards the implementation of the Galapagos agreement, where the Foreign Affairs Ministers from the member countries decided to:

1. - Strengthen the CPPS, in the sense of establishing a new strategic direction of the Organization, in response to the new common challenges of the XXI century. Central to this objective is to support countries members to achieve a sustainable development, according to the Rio Declaration on Environment and development of 1992 and Agenda 21, taking into account among other factors, the ecosystem approach, the precautionary principle and international instruments for the protection of the ocean. All of the above, according to the national policies and mechanisms of each member of our organization.
2. Achieve Peace, Solidarity and Cooperation among our countries, in order to strengthen joint actions aimed to encourage sustainable development.
- 3.- Coordinate its participation in multilateral initiatives that reaffirm the place of the CPPS as the Regional Maritime Agency counterpart with other regional organizations.
4. Also coordinate among member countries efforts to address the remaining challenges of sustainable development in all areas.
- 5.-Identify the serious consequences of climate change and the measures to be taken in order to mitigate its negative effects through regional projects.
6. Similarly, regarding the Galapagos agreement, the foreign ministers reiterate their support for initiatives developed through the Protection of the Marine and Coastal Areas of the Southeast Pacific Plan of Action, in order to support the biodiversity conservation and the protection of the marine environment, which is an important task that has been done gradually to this day.

This President reaffirms the Commission's commitment to strengthen ties between the countries of our region in the fight against marine pollution and other activities that harm

the sustainability of the seas, in order to generate an effective cooperation in the region tending to the conservation, protection and sustainable use of our oceans.

Thank you very much.