



**United Nations
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**United Nations Environment Assembly of the
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2/12. Sustainable coral reefs management

The United Nations Environment Assembly,

Noting that the General Assembly in its resolution 65/150 of 20 December 2010, entitled “Protection of coral reefs for sustainable livelihoods and development”, urged States, within their national jurisdictions, and the competent international organizations, within their mandates, given the imperative for action, to take all practical steps at all levels to protect coral reefs and related ecosystems for sustainable livelihoods and development, including immediate and concerted global, regional and local action to respond to the challenges and to address the adverse impact of climate change, including through mitigation and adaptation, as well as of ocean acidification, on coral reefs and related ecosystems,

Noting also the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”, which states, “We also recognize the significant economic, social and environmental contributions of coral reefs, in particular to islands and other coastal States, as well as the significant vulnerability of coral reefs and mangroves to impacts, including from climate change, ocean acidification, overfishing, destructive fishing practices and pollution. We support international cooperation with a view to conserving coral reef and mangrove ecosystems and realizing their social, economic and environmental benefits as well as facilitating technical collaboration and voluntary information-sharing”,¹

Considering the World Food Summit Plan of Action adopted in Rome in 1996, as well as the Five Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security identified in the Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security of 2009,

Considering also Aichi Biodiversity Target 10, which aims to minimize the multiple anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change or ocean acidification so as to maintain their integrity and functioning, and deeply concerned that the 2015 deadline has not been met,

Bearing in mind the outcome document of the 2015 United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in particular paragraph 14, which, inter alia, acknowledges that increases in global temperatures, sea level rise, ocean acidification and other climate change impacts are seriously affecting coastal areas and low-lying coastal countries, including many least developed countries and small island developing States, and also bearing in mind Sustainable Development Goal 14,

¹ Endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/288 of 27 July 2012.

Recalling that General Assembly resolution 65/150 reaffirms that the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea provides the overall legal framework for ocean activities, and emphasizes its fundamental character, conscious that the problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and need to be considered as a whole through an integrated, interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach,

Acknowledging the Manado Ocean Declaration, adopted by the World Ocean Conference on 14 May 2009, and the Jakarta Mandate on Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity of 1995, as well as decision XII/23 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity,

Recognizing the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities as well as the International Coral Reef Initiative Continuing Call to Action and Framework for Action 2013, which provide a meaningful basis for advancing ocean issues, as well as other international and/or regional entities related to the management of ocean and marine biodiversity,

Recalling the International Coral Reef Initiative resolution adopted in October 2014 on promoting an integrated approach to community-based coral reef conservation and management emphasizing land-sea connectivity,

Noting the Manado Communiqué, adopted at the World Coral Reefs Conference on 16 May 2014, which recognized the importance of continued cooperation among Governments and the United Nations Environment Programme as well as with other international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and communities towards the sustainable management of coral reefs, and that such cooperation may be advanced by countries through the United Nations Environment Assembly,

Recognizing that, as is stated in General Assembly resolution 65/150,² millions of the world's inhabitants depend on the health of coral reefs and related ecosystems for sustainable livelihoods and development, as they are a primary source of food and income, add to the aesthetic and cultural dimensions of communities and also provide protection from storms, tsunamis and coastal erosion,

Welcoming regional cooperation and initiatives, including the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security, the Micronesia Challenge, the Caribbean Challenge Initiative, the Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape Project, the Western Indian Ocean Partnership, the West African Conservation Challenge and the Regional Initiative for the Conservation and Wise Use of Mangroves and Coral Reefs in the Americas,

1. *Calls* for national, regional and international initiatives, cooperation and commitments to conserve and sustainably manage coral reefs, including cold-water coral ecosystems, and mangrove forests, which contribute to food security and nutrition for peoples' livelihoods;

2. *Stresses* the need to develop environmentally sustainable economic opportunities and inclusive sustainable growth to improve the livelihoods of the local community-level beneficiaries of coral reefs;

3. *Recognizes* that education, capacity-building and knowledge transfer with regard to the importance of coral reefs and related ecosystems, including cold-water coral ecosystems and mangrove forests, the threats to these ecosystems and recommended measures to ensure their protection and sustainable use, are crucial, and invites Governments in a position to do so to support such action;

4. *Encourages* Governments to further develop partnerships with industry, including fisheries, aquaculture and tourism, and civil society, and the establishment of public-private partnerships to raise awareness of the importance of coral reefs and related ecosystems, including cold-water coral ecosystems and mangrove forests, the threats to these ecosystems and recommended measures to ensure their protection and sustainable use; encourages Governments to cooperate in the protection and sustainable management of these ecosystems; and in this regard invites initiatives for the development of sustainable tourism, including through the Sustainable Tourism Programme of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production;

5. *Also encourages* Governments to formulate, adopt and implement integrated, ecosystem-based and comprehensive approaches for the sustainable management of coral reefs, cold-water coral ecosystems, mangrove forests and related ecosystems;

² Preambular para. 10.

6. *Calls*, in this context, on countries to undertake the priority actions to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 10 on coral reefs and closely associated ecosystems;
7. *Encourages* Governments to prioritize coral reef conservation and sustainable management, including through the establishment and active management of marine protected areas, as well as through other spatial and relevant sectoral approaches, consistent with national and international law and based on best available scientific information, with a view to enhancing climate change resilience and securing continued coral reef ecosystem services provision;
8. *Invites* Governments and donors to provide technical and financial support for the conservation and management of coral reefs, including in developing countries;
9. *Recognizes* the vital role that women play in the conservation and sustainable use of coral reefs and affirms the need for the full participation of women at all levels of policymaking and implementation for the conservation and sustainable use of coral reefs;
10. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, in particular through the Coral Reef Unit and in cooperation with other relevant international organizations and initiatives, within the programme of work and available resources, to contribute to raising awareness through public outreach campaigns as well as the Global Environment Outlook assessment processes of the importance of the sustainable management of coral reefs and related ecosystems, including cold-water coral ecosystems;
11. *Also requests* the Executive Director, within available resources and in cooperation with Governments and stakeholders in a position to do so, to strengthen capacity-building, knowledge transfer and the development of relevant planning tools to avoid, minimize and mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change and human-based threats on coral reefs and related ecosystems, as well as to support the improvement and maintaining of the resilience of coral reefs and related ecosystems;
12. *Further requests* the Executive Director, in particular through the Coral Reef Unit and in cooperation with other relevant international organizations, forums and initiatives, to, within available resources, assist Governments, including those of small island developing States, least developed countries and other developing coastal States, upon their request, in the development and implementation of national and regional measures and action plans in this regard;
13. *Requests* the Executive Director, in cooperation with the International Coral Reef Initiative, other relevant international organizations and other relevant partners to prepare, by 2018, an analysis of global and regional policy instruments and governance mechanisms related to the protection and sustainable management of coral reefs;
14. *Also requests* the Executive Director to support the further development of coral reef indicators and regional coral reef assessments as well as the preparation of a global report on coral reef status and trends through the International Coral Reef Initiative Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network, in collaboration with existing regional initiatives, and taking into consideration ongoing regional and global assessments;
15. *Further requests* the Executive Director to report to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its third session on progress in the implementation of the present resolution.

*6th plenary meeting
27 May 2016*