



CELAC 2023
Saint Vincent
and the Grenadines

Project Special Communication on Oceanic conservation

The Heads of State and Government, gathered in Kingstown, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, on the occasion of the VIII Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC):

1. We reaffirm our commitment to oceanic conservation and the sustainable use of oceanic resources recognizing their vital importance for all humanity.
2. We emphasize that the above mentioned is essential for achieving sustainable development, especially for the eradication of poverty, sustainable economic growth, food security and the creation of sustainable livelihoods and decent work. Additionally, ocean action plays a crucial role in enabling and building resilience against the adverse effects of climate change, and contributes to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, fisheries, aquaculture, food security, tourism, and global-scale goods transportation.
3. We express our concern about the related environmental challenges, such as the rise in average sea levels, the worsening of coastal erosion, temperature rise, acidification, deoxygenation, pollution, overexploitation of resources, waste, and their impacts on biodiversity loss, as well as the illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and we recognize the effects this has on island and coastal communities, as outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and particularly in Sustainable Development Goal 14, "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development."
4. We highlight the importance of the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030, one of whose main objectives is to improve the basis of scientific knowledge through capacity building in developing countries.



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5. We reaffirm our interest in promoting measures to strengthen the fight against illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, with the goal of reducing overexploitation of resources. We aim to implement sciencebased management plans to restore fish populations as quickly as possible, at least reaching levels that can yield the maximum sustainable yield according to their biological characteristics.

6. We celebrate the decision 15-4 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in which the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework was adopted, with the goal of urgently taking actions to halt and reverse biodiversity loss. This framework contributes to the balanced achievement of the three objectives of the CBD.

7. We welcome the adoption and opening for signature of the treaty regarding the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, known internationally as the "BBNJ" (Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction) Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. We acknowledge the importance of this Agreement and stress the need for broad participation of developing countries to enhance their involvement in international decision-making and their capacity to participate in activities within the framework of the BBNJ Agreement. We appreciate Chile's offer to host the Secretariat of the BBNJ Agreement.

8. We reiterate our commitment to combat plastic pollution, with comprehensive science-based and life-cycle approaches, promoting the progressive implementation of measures through the efficient use of resources and recycling, as well as the environmentally sound management of waste. We take note of the progress in the negotiation process for an internationally legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, towards the development of a global approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastics in order to reduce the negative impact on Marine life and ecosystems as well as a robust financial



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mechanism dedicated to developing countries, including technical and technological cooperation.

9. We recognize the importance of a just and equitable transition to a sustainable ocean economy that leaves no one behind, allows the access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization, and protects the most vulnerable from additional risks of harm according to international standards as applicable.

Kingstown, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, March 1, 2024