



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. LUIS OCHOA GARCÉS, THIRD SECRETARY OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF ECUADOR, ON AGENDA ITEM 6: MEASURES SUCH AS AREA-BASED MANAGEMENT TOOLS, INCLUDING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS, AT THE 3RD PREPCOM MEETING ON CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF MARINE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF AREAS BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION (New York, 28 March 2017)

Mr. Facilitator,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 6 regarding measures such as area-based management tools (ABMTs), including marine protected areas (MPAs). I would like to assure you of our full support in the discussion on this informal working group.

The Group of 77 and China recalls the main objective of the new instrument, which is to conserve and sustainably use the marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, and in this regard, the Group underscores the important role that the area-based management tools, including MPAs, as a measure to achieve this objective.

At this stage, we would like to reiterate the need to carefully consider the definition of concepts of ABMTs and MPAs, taking into consideration various definitions existing in the global and sectoral frameworks and adapting them in the context of conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

Mr. Facilitator,

The Group of 77 and China is of the view that the consideration of this topic should also include the issue of basic governance principles such as the precautionary approach, science-based approach, integrated management approach, transparency as well as accountability. Such principles are also important in the process of establishing MPAs which could comprise different steps, such as the designation of the areas to be protected, to the development of standard criteria based on best scientific available as well as the establishment of a global institutional mechanism that administers all the process. In this connection, the Group is of the view that such global institutional mechanism in a form of technical or scientific body should be entrusted with advisory competence in ensuring that any consideration in relation to identification, designation, implementation, monitoring and review of ABMTs including MPAs is based on best available scientific information.

It is important to restate that the criteria to identify priority areas should be developed on the basis of the existing internationally recognized criteria for area-based conservation measures. These currently include the uniqueness and rarity of the areas, vulnerability, fragility, sensitivity of the area, biological productivity and diversity. Each area has different conservation purposes, hence there may be a need for different levels of stringency of measures.

The process for the designation or establishment of ABMTs shall be consistent with the purposes and principles of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. Any proposal can be submitted by States parties to the new instrument and should comprise at least the objective of the measure, the delimitation of the area, the conservation or management measures needed to reach the specified

objective on the basis of best available scientific evidence.

Mr. Facilitator,

The proposal to establish an ABMT should take into account the best available science and be based on the precautionary approach and could be reviewed by a scientific and technical body, without prejudice to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of coastal States and, also, in conformity with international law.

Without prejudice to the consideration whether an ABMT should be time-framed or not, the ABMT should be kept under review and be monitored on the basis of best available science and within the objective to conserve and sustainably use marine biological diversity.

Finally, based on the General Assembly resolution 69/292, we are of the view that the new instrument should not undermine the existing management regimes established either by global sectoral or regional organizations such as RFMOs, IMOs, etc. In line with this, we are of the view that there is a need for an institutional mechanism to coordinate the existing management tools at global level, as well as establish communication and monitoring protocols to ensure that there is proper implementation and enforcement where these area-based management mechanisms shall be applied.

I thank you.