Australia
23 September 2019, New York

[Senator the Hon Marise Payne]: Madam Chair, on behalf of Australia’s Prime Minister Scott Morrison I want to commend you Prime Minister for your leadership in establishing the High Level Panel here and thank you also your co-chair [the] President from Palau for enabling this important initiative to be brought here today. We are very pleased to co-lead, with our close Pacific neighbour and friend Fiji, the working group that developed the Panel’s Call to Action.

Australia is surrounded by the Pacific, the Southern and the Indian Oceans. We are acutely conscious of the importance of ocean health to the marine environment and to economic development and it is a major focus for our Government. The economic growth and wellbeing of communities across the Indo-Pacific depends on healthy and sustainable oceans. We know that when crucial ocean ecosystems are damaged, it is the vulnerable, including women, children and the poor, who suffer the most.

We acknowledge today, in the lead up to the UN Climate Action Summit, that oceans play a very important role in our efforts to take action on climate change.

I want to speak briefly, Madam Chair, about the ways in which Australia is committed to taking practical steps to improve the health of our oceans, recognising the time constraints that we have here this morning.

Firstly, our Blue Economy Cooperative Research Centre is a $70 million investment from Australia in developing innovative offshore industries. It’s actually a collaboration between 45 Australian and international partners with expertise in aquaculture, in marine renewable energy and in engineering.

Secondly, we are committed to preserving and protecting Australia’s iconic Great Barrier Reef. We’re investing over $1 billion in the Reef 2050 Plan, to boost the Reef’s health and resilience so we can better cope with climate change pressures.

We’re investing in initiatives throughout the Indo-Pacific to protect and restore our blue carbon ecosystems that other speakers have referenced this morning. We very much welcome the High Level Panel member countries joining the International Partnership for Blue Carbon which Australia established in 2015.

Our efforts will continue to focus on our region, which is the Indo-Pacific. Earlier this month I attended the third IORA [Indian Ocean Rim Association] Blue Economy conference in Dhaka in Bangladesh, in which Indian Ocean Rim countries reaffirmed our collective focus on the Blue Economy. And at which Australia announced the launch of our IORA Blue Carbon Hub.
We also have a strong focus on a key regional security issue for us of IUU. Its impact on regional economies is significant and we must work together in our efforts to stop IUU. We of course also strongly support the SPC [Pacific Community] in Noumea, and I acknowledge Mr Thompson who I last saw in Noumea at our conference there earlier this year, and the Forum Fisheries Agency in Honiara [Solomon Islands]. Both vital agencies in protecting our oceans.

We’re very much looking forward to continuing our close work with other Panel members to bring forward a roadmap to the 2020 UN Oceans Conference for how we make a rapid transition to a sustainable ocean economy.
Indonesia
23 September 2019, New York

Distinguished Head of States and Head of Governments,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Indonesia is pleased to be among countries who are at the forefront of efforts to save the ocean. For Indonesia, the future lies within our oceans. Today, they face a myriad of challenges.

For Indonesia, we have no other choice but to move forward together in protecting the ocean. We must preserve the delicate balance between maintaining economic growth and protection of the ocean and its resources. These are two sides of the same coin that are inseparable. The coalition of countries to save our oceans are of paramount importance. The coalition to preserve oceans that are healthier and more productive for the prosperity of all. Indonesia is your partner in our joint efforts to protect our oceans.
Ladies and gentlemen,

Our coalition contributes greatly to towards efforts to mainstream the ocean agenda at the regional and global level, namely:

Combatting IUU Fishing as part of 2019 G20 Leaders’ commitments.
Full support for the Call for Ocean-Based Climate Action initiatives which we will launch today, in support of the UN Climate Action Summit

This is an important undertaking in underlining the nexus of ocean and climate change. Going forward, Indonesia would like to underline three priorities for the Panel. First, supporting global efforts to address marine plastic debris. Indonesia, in this regard, has achieved 20% target in 2019 (out of 75% by 2025) in this regard.
Second, to ensure sustainable fisheries. Commitments to combat IUU Fishing and Transnational Organized Crime in Fisheries must be reaffirmed. Strong cross-border collaboration between ASEAN and the Pacific is a must.

Third and lastly, to mainstream ocean into climate change negotiations, including in the UNFCCC. Indonesia underlines the importance of sustainable management of mangrove and peatlands. Not only as a large carbon sink to support mitigation, but also adaptation. As well as means to support the livelihood of coastal communities. It is our sincere hope that the panel will continue to produce concrete outcomes to mainstream ocean agenda at the global level. So as to achieve sustainable ocean economy... for the benefits of us all and our future generations.

I thank you.
Colleague Heads of State and Government,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I wish to start by thanking Prime Minister Solberg for her leadership on matters of The Blue Economy, Ocean Health, and Climate Change. This has manifested in the work of the High Level Panel which is making great strides in delivering on its mandate to “develop, catalyse and support solutions for Ocean health and wealth, in policy, governance, technology and finance, which are critical to development and sustainability.”

It is also important to acknowledge the work of the secretariat from the World Resources Institute and the many experts who have committed to:

• The development of the Blue Papers,
• The Report before us today, and;

indeed, what will ultimately constitute the final report consolidating the work of this Panel. As it continues to examine the issues of Climate Change, Illegal Unreported & Unregulated (IUU) Fishing and Fishing Subsidies, the Panel has determined that these are areas critical to Ocean Health.

I wish also to acknowledge and thank the members of the Panel however, for agreeing with Jamaica’s call to expand the scope of work, and to establish a working group to examine “Leadership & Action on Sustainable Tourism”. For many SIDS, certainly within the Caribbean region, coastal tourism is a key driving force within our economies.

Today marks an important milestone in the life of the Panel. The “call to Ocean Based Climate action” being made, has the full support of Jamaica as we believe it reflects the ambition required to face the urgency of today’s climate risks. It is my hope that the report before us, will serve as a wakeup call globally. Though not the first report detailing climate risks, it is the first report which creates a measurable road map for using the Ocean to provide solutions to the Climate emergency we face. Jamaica will examine it thoroughly and use it to assist with our National development planning. We know other SIDS will do so as well.

I have said in other fora that it is sometimes easy for reports to fall by the wayside. Measurable commitments however, such as those set out in the Panel’s Report which are required to tackle climate change and build resilience, provide real opportunities for us all to galvanize action with the level of urgency needed today.

SIDS like Jamaica and other Caribbean countries disproportionately face the devastating risks of Climate Change. We trust the world will not forget that our neighbours Dominica, Antigua & Barbuda, Puerto
Rico and most recently the Bahamas, have suffered the most extreme damage to their countries due to unprecedented storms. These weather events should make the need for commitment to urgent climate action, easier for countries in less vulnerable regions, to understand.

Having spoken to the work of the Panel and the circumstances that drive our commitment to the process, allow me to highlight a few of Jamaica’s commitments for ocean-based solutions:

- In 2020, we will start an assessment of the health of approximately 7,000 hectares of existing mangrove & swamp forests and the replanting of over 2,000 hectares of mangrove and swamp forests.
- We have declared approximately 15% of Jamaica’s archipelagic marine resources legally protected through 14 Special Fishery Conservation Areas (SFCA) and 2 marine parks. By 2020, we will have increased this to 20%.
- By 2020, we will develop a mechanism to support comprehensive and integrated management of all Protected Areas in an effort to determine the true economic value of marine and coastal ecosystems and to aid in decision making.

- Jamaica has also instituted a single use plastic ban which has already started to change the composition of our waste stream and reduce the non-biodegradable waste entering the marine environment.

Jamaica is clear that there can be no lasting prosperity through pollution, and that there can be no sustainable economic development on the back of environmental degradation. Indeed, we are ensuring that we protect our Ocean Health to generate Ocean wealth for our people.

I wish to close by again extending my congratulations to the team which worked with such commitment, on this ground-breaking report.

Thank You.
Japan
September 23, 2019 New York

Excellency, Prime Minister Erna Solberg of the Kingdom of Norway,
Excellency, President Tommy Remengesau of the Republic of Palau
Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,
Distinguished delegates,

Today, we have issued a “Call to Ocean-Based Climate Action” by the heads of 14 nations of the High-Level Panel. For this notable achievement, I would like to congratulate, with respect, Prime Minister Solberg of Norway, on her admirable leadership.

In order to hand over this beautiful blue earth to the next generation, we must address the wide-ranging issues concerning our oceans.

Today, I would like to specifically point to the problem of marine plastic litter.

On marine plastic litter, the G20 nations, at the Osaka Summit last June, agreed to share the “Osaka Blue Ocean Vision,” a visionary concept that aims to reduce additional pollution by marine plastic litter to zero by 2050. In order to realize this vision, the G20 nations also agreed on establishing the G20 Implementation Framework for Actions on Marine Plastic Litter, which strives to advance actions to combat marine litter based on continuous sharing of new information.

I would like to call upon all countries around the world, including members of this High-Level Panel, to work together toward achieving this vision and propose to embed in the recommendations by the High-Level Panel during the 2020 United Nations Ocean Conference, a call for all countries in the world to unite in embracing the Osaka Blue Ocean Vision, to take effective measures to combat marine plastic litter.

We believe that the key to preventing plastics from turning into wastes is to advance the “reduce, reuse, recycle” approach, or the so-called “3R strategy.”

To attest this view, the Government of Japan has just adopted a Resource Circulation Strategy for Plastics that aims to re-configure plastics in a reusable and recyclable form by the Year 2025, and to advance concrete measures to achieve these goals.

At the same time, it is also important to focus on the issue of managing plastic wastes. Japan plans to support waste management in developing countries, with a goal to train 10,000 waste-management experts worldwide by Year 2025, making full use of our past experience and technologies.

Additionally, driving innovation is critical in resolving the issue of marine plastic litter. Companies in Japan are now striving to develop and promote biodegradable plastics alternatives that are soluble in the sea. We would
like to continue promoting international partnerships to advance such measures to combat marine plastic litter, taking into account innovations based on recent advances in technology.

At the G20 Osaka Summit, the Japanese Presidency also highlighted the need to eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and all G20 heads of state at the summit united in full agreement. I look forward to working on these important issues associated with the ocean economy, with fellow High-Level Panel members, as we head toward the next UN Ocean Conference in June 2020.
Kenya

23 September 2019, New York

Excellencies;

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

This meeting is historic. It marks the moment when a small group of leaders decided to take bold action to bend the arch of history towards ocean sustainability and climate resilience. I am very pleased to be here as part of this transformative group of leaders.

We are here to make a new compact and use our collective influence and moral persuasion, buttressed by strong scientific evidence, to galvanize global action in support of this compact.

I welcome the new study prepared by experts in support of the high level panel (HLP) which shows that ocean-based climate action could deliver up to 21 percent of the annual greenhouse gas emissions cuts needed by 2050 to keep global temperature rises below 1.5°C. This would also protect coastal communities from catastrophic disasters such as severe storms, boost food security, create and safeguard jobs.

We all know that the Ocean is the heart of our planet, it contains 97 percent of the Earth’s water, supplies nearly half the oxygen we breathe, and regulates the weather and temperature. In addition, waters have huge economic potential, with an estimated asset base of over $24 trillion which supports livelihoods, food security and nutrition, millions of jobs, tourism and maritime trade and transport.

But our actions have put the Ocean systems under immense stress and compromised their ability to act as the heart of the planet. We dump more than eight million tons of plastics into the ocean each year which is transformed into micro plastics that enter the food chain and negatively impact ecosystems as well as animal and human health; we are threatening the stability of fish populations through Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, and are altering and destroying marine ecosystems through dumping of toxic waste into the water.

We urgently need a new compact that commits us to build an ocean-based economy which can help reduce emissions while providing jobs, supporting food security, sustaining biological diversity and enhancing resilience. The compact needs to strengthen the law of the sea to hold countries accountable, to make communities key stakeholders and beneficiaries and to be accompanied by a time bound implementation framework beyond 2020.
This action must be collective because no one nation can achieve it alone. Two-thirds of global waters lie in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) of Economic Exclusive Zones. Action in one sea will have a positive or negative effect on other seas. Success in managing our global aquatic resources, therefore, critically hinges on us working together.

This is why Kenya co-hosted, together with Japan and Canada, the first ever Global Conference on the Sustainable Blue Economy in Nairobi in November 2018 and will be co-hosting with Portugal the next UN Ocean Conference in June 2020.

Kenya’s commitment to low carbon development is long term. We have been victims of recurring droughts, erratic rainfall patterns and floods which destroy livelihoods and community assets. We seek to be proactive in preventing further climate related catastrophes by protecting and preserving our ocean resources even as we put them into sustainable and productive use. In this context Kenya has:

- Banned the use of single use plastics;
- Dramatically scaled up the use of green energy. Currently, 90 percent of the electricity used by Kenyans is from renewable energy sources;
- Established a Coast Guard to combat Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated fishing, and to enhance security and safety of our collective waters;
- Invested in Nature-Based Climate Solutions. We have committed to increase forest cover to at least 10% and to restore degraded landscapes by 2022. We have also created six Marine Protected Areas. Mikoko Pamoja, the mangrove conservation and restoration project in Gazi Bay in Kenya, aims to provide long-term incentives for mangrove protection and restoration through community involvement and benefit and is the first community-based Mangrove Payments for ecosystem Services (PES) in the world.
- Proudly hosted the global headquarters for the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP);

We are equal to the challenge, we have the resources and the knowledge to take transformative ocean based climate action. We owe it to our young people who are challenging us to act urgently. In the last few days, more than four million youth, including a young Kenyan girl, Anne Wanjuhi Njoroge, have been
speaking to us loudly from across the globe. Today I challenge you with the words of another young change advocate Greta Thunberg who said:

“The year 2078, I will celebrate my 75th birthday. If I have children, maybe they will spend that day with me. Maybe they will ask me about you. Maybe they will ask why you didn’t do anything while there still was time to act. You say you love your children above all else, and yet you are stealing their future in front of their very eyes”.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the time is Now!

I thank you.
Good morning, Co-Chairs and members of the High Level Panel, distinguished delegates and colleagues. Thank you for having us.

It is a great pleasure to join this Second Meeting of the High Level Panel.

On behalf of the President of Mexico, Mr. Andrés Manuel López Obrador, I would like to recognize all the countries gathered this morning to put the spotlight on a topic that is of paramount importance for the wellbeing of our societies and the planet.

For Mexico, the sustainable use and conservation of the oceans is not just a necessary condition to ensure the world’s economic prosperity, but also a moral imperative to ensure that we leave no one behind.

Mexico has one and a half times more maritime surface than land territory. Considering our Exclusive Economic Zone, 60 per cent of our country’s territory is sea. We rank third in fish and shellfish production in Latin America and 16th worldwide.

On the other hand, almost 18 per cent of Mexico’s population lives in coastal areas. These communities and their livelihoods are directly affected by the impacts of climate change and marine ecosystem degradation.

Therefore, for Mexico, promoting a sustainable ocean economy means first and foremost to prioritize local communities, making sure that the ocean’s ecosystem services continue to be a source of wellbeing.

The links between the health of our ocean and climate change are so profound that we cannot attempt to solve the crisis of one without confronting the crisis of the other. That’s why Mexico is fully committed to the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy’s Call to Ocean-Climate Action, and strongly supports ocean-based solutions to climate change. Bolstering our natural defenses not only builds opportunities for prosperity, it also makes our most vulnerable communities more resilient to the challenges of a warming world.

Today, I have the honor of formally announcing that Mexico joins the Call to Action for Climate-Based Ocean Action. The importance of this high-level pledge cannot be stressed enough. Humans, a single species among millions of others on this planet, have changed the climate system to the point that we have altered the ocean’s
chemistry. We are still uncertain about the tipping points that we might have already triggered, and the irreversible damage we might have already caused to the Earth’s life support.

But we are still in time to stop the crisis, and even maximize benefits and profits, if we engage in deliberate, concrete and radical action today. This is what this Call to Action signifies.

So, what are we doing to walk the talk? Today I am pleased to announce three pledges on behalf of my country:

- First, we will expand and strengthen the effectiveness of our Fishing Refuge Areas. Our plan includes expanding 41 fishing refuges, and declaring 31 additional refuges that will cover more than one hundred thousand hectares. This will promote restocking of marine species and reduce their vulnerability to climate change, while enhancing marine connectivity and securing future food sources.
- Second, we will strengthen our efforts on coral reef restoration, including through new capacities and technology, to ensure the integrity and increase the resilience of these ecosystems.
- Thirdly, Mexico will implement a Strategic Action Program for the Great Marine Ecosystem of the Gulf of Mexico, with GEF funding for 12.9 million dollars. By 2021, this program will have improved water quality in the coastal area, promoted the recovery of living marine resources, and ensured community involvement in conservation and restoration of coastal ecosystems that act as key carbon sinks.

Beyond these specific actions, Mexico will develop a National Plan, led by the federal government, to fully enforce the six recommendations of the Call to Action. This National Plan should be adopted by the time we meet again at the SDG 14 Conference in Lisbon in 2020, and I commit here and now to present our first results within a year, at the 75th United Nations General Assembly.

I thank you again, Mr. Co-Chairs, for your leadership, and I invite all other Panel Members to join us in these efforts.
Namibia
23 September 2019, New York

Your Excellency António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations;
Your Excellency Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway; and Your Excellency Tommy Remengesau, President of Palau; Co-Chairs of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy;
Your Excellencies Presidents and Prime Minister’s, who are members of the High-Level Panel on Sustainable Oceans Economy;
Distinguished Sherpas of the 14-member countries of the High-Level Panel on Sustainable Ocean Economy;
Ladies and Gentlemen;

Namibia is a member of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, and today we are launching a Call to Ocean-Based Climate Action to bring attention to the role a healthy ocean can play in addressing climate change. The threat that climate change poses to the ocean is a common challenge that requires collective action. The Call to Ocean-Based Climate Action provides a pathway to a low carbon, climate resilient future that secures a healthy ocean and human wellbeing. We urge all actors to join and take action.

In line with this Call, Namibia is committed to the following:

• Ensuring that at least 10% of our EEZ is gazetted as marine protected areas (MPAs) by 2020. Currently, Namibia’s entire coastal belt is gazetted as national parks, and includes 3 coastal RAMSAR sites, namely Walvis Bay lagoon, the sandwich harbour and the Orange River mouth, hence they are protected. Further, our marine waters which are less than 200 meters in depth are protected from most commercial fishing activities, as they are breeding grounds for fish.

• Namibia is one of the countries with the best potential for wind power generation globally, especially around the coastal town of Lüderitz. In this regard, Namibia is committed to generating about 144MW additional wind power by 2022.

• Namibia is in the final stages of ratification of Annex 6 of the MARPOL Convention (Convention on the Prevention of Pollution from Ships), which includes 50% reduction in greenhouse gasses emissions from ships by 2050, in line with IMO Agreement.

• Namibia is committed to increasing national per capita fish consumption to the global average of 20.4 kg by 2020. We have already increased per capita national fish consumption from 4kg in 2014 to current 15.4 kg in 2018, and all regions in Namibia have access to affordable fish.
• Namibia has committed an additional US$ 5 million towards ocean research and protection during the 2019/2020 financial year. This includes US$ 2.3 million to facilitate research on oceans, especially on fisheries stocks and marine ecosystem, and a further US $ 2.7 million to intensify the fight against illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing, and improve ocean governance.

• In addition, Namibia, Angola and South Africa, together with development partners, have committed US$ 3.8 million for maritime research activities under the Benguela Current Convention (BCC) for the 2019/2020 financial year.

Let us act together, and with urgency, to ensure that our ocean continues to support sustainable global climate. The livelihoods of our people and indeed humanity, depends on our collective ability to take urgent action to sustain our Oceans.

I thank You.
Opening remarks:

Fellow panel members,

We are meeting just ahead of the UN Climate Action Summit. And we are making a significant contribution to the summit.

Ocean/Climate Call to Action

One year ago, we established this panel with the aim of advancing solutions for the ocean. That is exactly what our Call to Action does: it presents ocean solutions to climate change.

We do this on the basis of an unprecedented and impressive scientific report. The findings are politically powerful:

Ocean action can deliver up to 21% of what the world needs to achieve the 1.5 degree target by 2050.

This report is quite an opportunity for us as political leaders.

It is a multiple win proposition:

We can at the same time

- step up climate action,
- increase biodiversity,
- strengthen coastal resilience,
- trigger technological innovation,
- and create jobs and economic opportunity.

Our Call to Action drives home the purpose of the High Level Panel: to protect the ocean and produce from it. We can do both, and we need to do both in order to achieve the SDGs.

Today’s climate action summit is an expression of the urgency of the problem of global warming. At the summit, I will announce the Call for Action on behalf of us, and I am happy that many of you will be coming forward today with concrete announcements to scale up and speed up the deployment of solutions.
Our message is quite clear:

*The world needs to accelerate climate action in order to save the ocean.*

*And the world needs to accelerate ocean action in order to fight climate change.*

Let me thank the sherpas, expert group, advisory network and secretariat for the excellent work done in this regard.

There will be new opportunities to present more actions over the coming year: At the Our Ocean conference in Oslo in October; at the Climate COP in Santiago in December; at the UN Ocean conference in Lisbon in June.

As for this week, I hope you will all help spread the message and talk about our Call for Action on the various platforms this week.

I am encouraged by the message coming from leading businesses – in offshore renewables, shipping and seafood – that they support our Call and are ready to act on it.

**Towards 2020 and beyond**

In the next phase, over the coming months, we will receive 16 Blue Papers from our global expert group. These will provide a basis for the political conclusions from our panel ahead of the UN Ocean Conference in June 2020.

In this process, we should engage a wide community of actors – industries, international organisations, foundations, NGOs. They can give input to our recommendations – and play a key role in implementing them. We need to focus on how our recommendations will translate into action. For this purpose, our sherpas should prepare a plan beyond Lisbon 2020.

This morning, I look forward to hearing your perspectives and priorities for the political delivery from our panel as we embark on this next phase of our work.

**Closing remarks:**

Fellow panel members,

We have reached an important point in our work.

We have agreed to a clear message: our call to ocean-based climate action.

Based on science we are providing ocean solutions to climate change.

Now we need to make sure that the world hears our message.

I encourage us all to use the opportunities this week in New York to speak to this effect.
And then to act at home to translate our Call into national action.

Colleagues,

Let’s continue our joint work.

We need to find and advance innovative solutions to other key ocean challenges, that you have highlighted here today:

- safeguarding biodiversity through science-based ecosystem management
- bringing an end to IUU fishing through stronger shared action
- fighting marine litter and other pollution
- ensuring opportunities and livelihoods for coastal communities.

Achieving these objectives will require solutions in governance, technology and finance. We need to continue to advance science, observation and data sharing. Importantly, we must all improve and we must engage in capacity building at a greater scale.

In other words, we have a lot to do.

This week’s Call to Action is just a start of what we can and must deliver.

Now, our sherpas need to take on the very important task of bringing the ship to shore.

They must be charged with authority in this task.

When we meet again at the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon next June, our aim is to deliver a to-do-list for the ocean. We should be ambitious and go beyond the expected.

The ocean and the world need nothing less.

Thank you for being a part of this wave!

Thank you.
Palau
23 September 2019, New York

Opening Remarks:

Prime Minister Solberg, your leadership and the leadership of your government has been pivotal in steering the international ocean discussion towards a Call to Ocean Based Climate Action. We would not be here today, as a group of committed and driven global leaders, without the substantive support of the Norwegian Government.

To my other 12 global colleagues who have joined me and my esteemed co-chair, Prime Minister Solberg, to raise our collective voices in support of action on Oceans through the work of the High Level Panel for the Sustainable Ocean Economy, Alii and thank you for your work this year.

We have achieved much this year, Colleagues. At the recent regional Sherpa meeting hosted by Australia in August if this year, we agreed as a collective to:

- To join the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership and work towards achieving 25 countries publishing ocean accounts by 2025 and 50 countries committing to action plans to develop ocean accounts by 2025.
- To enhance the Panel’s work on IUU Fishing, we agreed to look at existing mechanisms that we can leverage to improve transparency, explore market enhancement mechanisms, reach out to industry and establish partnerships and improve transparency of movements of vessels and of product.
- We also discussed possibilities to enhance our work on Ocean plastics through the circular economy and support nature-based solutions for coastal defense, to deliver coastal protection, ecosystem services and cost-effective humanitarian partnerships.

At the recent meeting of Sherpas held in Amsterdam, we as a coalition agreed to utilize the recommendations of the HLP to enhance national, regional and international action beyond 2020.

In Palau, the Ocean is our Economy. With this in mind, we have committed to a set of actions that incorporate our cultural values and economic needs within the framework of the UN sustainable development goals. In 2020, we plan to take even bolder actions in support of our work internationally, in particular, through the HLP. We will not only implement the Palau National Marine Sanctuary, but also, further contribute to the BBNJ process, continuing our role in facilitating negotiations within the Capacity Building and Technology Transfer Thematic Session toward the goal of establishing the first legally binding instrument for the High Seas. Finally, Palau will proudly undertake the critical hosting of the Our Ocean Conference in August 2020 guided by the vision of islands as microcosms of innovation and leadership.
My thanks to the many experts and advisors who’ve worked tirelessly to develop the Blue Papers. In particular, sulang to the Government sherpas and sous Sherpas who, together with support from the HLP Secretariat, have led the actions of the HLP’s working groups on Climate Change, IUU Fishing, which Palau proudly co-leads with Canada, and Subsidies. Finally, without the coordination of the HLP Secretariat led by Kristian (Teleki) and his team, to maximize our effectiveness and efficiency, the substantive work and impact of HLP could not come to fruition. I thank you all for for your engagement in the work of the HLP since we first convened last year.

Colleagues, as we continue to move forward in our global canoe driven by the fuel of Blue Action, we do so with hope and a recommitment to our role within the HLP.

Closing Remarks:

Colleagues, the recently released HLP driven report, ‘The Oceans as a Solution to Climate Action’, perfectly captures Ocean-based solutions to the urgent science of the HLP Blue Papers and the IPCC Report on the Oceans and the Cryosphere. With all that is going on this week, in particular the Secretary General’s Climate Action Summit, it is essential that the world does not lose sight of the ocean in our climate change response.

I am delighted that today marks the first formal outcome of the HLP, with the launch of the Call to Ocean-Based Climate Action. The Call and the underlying Report will only support and reinforce the messages of Wednesday’s IPCC report on climate and Oceans and help us to build broader coalitions and deeper partnerships with stakeholders of all types.

For those who have come forward to new commitments and actions, like the Climate Summit itself, our Call is not an endpoint, but a beginning. I know that Chile’s presidency of COP25, Portugal and Kenya’s chairmanship of the UN Ocean Conference and Palau’s hosting of the 2020 Our Ocean will only accelerate these connections further.

Much more is still to come over the next year. Through the various HLP priority initiatives working groups, and regional meetings, we have developed a clear set of processes to focus our attention and take into consideration our respective interests and priorities.

2020 is a big year for Oceans. By the time we get to that point, the recommendations of the Panel will prove useful to draw on to enhance the impacts of commitments made at Our Ocean.

The political moment for the ocean is ripening, and through this Panel we can play a decisive role in shaping this wave of ocean action.