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Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Seventy-sixth session

Agenda item 2

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

76/1. Strengthening cooperation to promote the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development¹ that supports the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 14 targets through concrete policies and actions,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, and stressing the importance of concerted efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 14 on conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development,

Recalling further General Assembly resolution 71/312 of 6 July 2017, in which the Assembly endorsed the declaration entitled “Our ocean, our future: call for action”, adopted in June 2017 by the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 74/19 of 10 December 2019 on oceans and the law of the sea and resolution 74/210 of 19 December 2019 on strengthening cooperation for integrated coastal zone management for achieving sustainable development,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 73/292 of 9 May 2019, entitled “2020 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development”, in which the Assembly decided to convene said Conference in Lisbon from 2 to 6 June 2020 with the overarching theme “Scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation for the implementation of Goal 14: stocktaking, partnerships and

¹ General Assembly resolution 70/1.

solutions” and decision 74/548 of 13 April 2020 in which the Assembly decided to postpone the Conference to a later date to be decided by the Assembly,

Recalling further General Assembly resolution 72/73 of 5 December 2017, in which it proclaimed the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development for the 10-year period beginning on 1 January 2021, within existing structures and available resources, and called upon the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission to prepare an implementation plan for the Decade in consultation with Member States, specialized agencies, funds, programmes and bodies of the United Nations, as well as other intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and relevant stakeholders,

Recalling resolution 70/7 of 8 August 2014 of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on the implementation of the Suva Declaration on Improving Maritime Transport and Related Services in the Pacific, its resolution 71/6 of 29 May 2015 on maritime transport connectivity for sustainable development, its resolution 72/9 of 19 May 2016 on regional cooperation to promote the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific, its resolution 73/4 of 19 May 2017 on the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific and its resolution 73/5 of 19 May 2017 on strengthening Asia-Pacific’s support for the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14,

Recognizing the importance of the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal resources in Asia and the Pacific, which promote economic growth, environmental sustainability and social inclusion and can help member States in the region, in particular the least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, as well as developing middle-income countries, to address their sustainable development challenges,

Taking note of the *Special Report on the Ocean and the Cryosphere in a Changing Climate* of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change,

Taking note also of the theme study for the seventy-sixth session of the Commission,² in which the secretariat presents research on promoting economic, social and environmental cooperation on the oceans for sustainable development, including, but not limited to, issues related to sustainable fisheries, maritime connectivity, marine plastic debris and the need to promote multi-stakeholder dialogue,

1. *Noting* the role of relevant national policies and frameworks, calls upon all members and associate members, and relevant stakeholders, to take urgent actions for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources, and, in this regard, to share good practices and lessons learned, including from the respective voluntary commitments made at the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development in June 2017 and at the “Our Ocean” Conferences;

² ESCAP/76/1/Rev.1.

2. *Recalls* General Assembly resolution 74/19 of 10 December 2019 on oceans and the law of the sea³ and its preambular paragraphs on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea⁴ and notes the other international agreements, as applicable;

3. *Cognizant* of the challenges posed by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak, which may hamper the progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, encourages member States to strengthen regional economic, social and environmental cooperation on the oceans, seas and marine resources in Asia and the Pacific for the benefit of the sustainable development of all member States of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the attainment of the Goals, including by:

(a) Enhancing the capacity of member States for the protection of the marine environment and resources, including the environment of coastal areas, for economic development in an environmentally sound and inclusive manner, and for the promotion of, inter alia, related research and development, application of modern tools like marine spatial planning, where applicable, ocean literacy, investments, social and environmental safeguards, capacity-building and transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms;

(b) Encouraging the implementation of policies built on sound science and considering applicable market-based approaches, as appropriate, to reduce marine pollution from various sources in the region, in particular marine plastic, aiming to reduce additional pollution by marine plastic litter to zero by 2050, including through a life-cycle approach and by promoting environmentally sound waste management, recycling capacity and innovative solutions, while recognizing the important role of plastics in society, and the consideration of voluntary and qualitative estimations of marine plastic debris by member States;

(c) Promoting North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation for capacity-building and information-sharing, including science-based decision-making and policy development on oceans and seas, guided by all the principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;¹

(d) Promoting public-private and civil society partnerships to increase economic benefits to small island developing States and the least developed countries from the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources, including sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism, and through coastal habitat restoration efforts;

(e) Promoting partnerships and developing innovative approaches in line with the challenges and opportunities of the oceans, seas and climate change, contributing to global actions of international organizations, through collaboration with stakeholders and, inter alia, the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management, promoting discussion on the issues pertaining to disaster risk reduction and post-disaster recovery, and sharing information and expertise for building resilience and multi-hazard early warning systems for the member countries in the Asia-Pacific region;

(f) Promoting synergy among the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular between Goal 13 on climate action and Goal 14 on life below water, at the regional level, with a view to supporting global action to address these Goals and to highlight the importance of the ocean, including as an integral part of the Earth's climate system, and of ensuring the integrity of

³ See A/74/PV.43.

⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1833, No. 31363.

ocean and coastal ecosystems, as well as promoting synergy between the Goals and the societal outcomes of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030);

(g) Implementing policies for marine invasive species management by increasing scientific knowledge of marine invasive species and improving its availability and dissemination, utilizing marine spatial planning and ecosystem-based approaches for conserving marine ecosystems and promoting the protection of sites of particular importance for biodiversity;

(h) Strengthening cooperation and policy coherence among institutions at all levels, including between and among international, regional and subregional organizations;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To continue to strengthen current partnerships and to develop new partnerships, where appropriate, for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources, including through participatory, multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms;

(b) To continue to strengthen and facilitate national capacities and to provide, upon request, and within existing resources, technical assistance for the effective implementation of relevant internationally agreed conventions to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources, in collaboration with relevant United Nations bodies and specialized agencies and regional and subregional organizations, in line with their existing mandates;

(c) To continue to support countries, in particular least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, as well as developing middle-income countries, in sharing experiences as well as in enhancing cooperation on the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources, including ecosystem restoration and sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism and through coastal habitat restoration efforts, in light of the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific;⁵

(d) To continue to strengthen and facilitate national capacities, including through engagement with the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership, on a voluntary basis, for measurement and accounting of progress towards the sustainable development of the oceans, in line with the document entitled “Advancing official statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: a collective vision and framework for action by the Asia-Pacific statistical community”,⁶ endorsed by the Committee on Statistics at its fifth session;

(e) To continue to support systematic regional dialogue on sustainable maritime connectivity, in close collaboration with the key global and regional stakeholders, and as part of the work of the Commission on promoting sustainable transport connectivity in the region;

5. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its seventy-eighth session on progress in the implementation of the present resolution.

*2nd plenary meeting
21 May 2020*

⁵ E/ESCAP/73/31, annex II.

⁶ E/ESCAP/CST(5)/1/Rev.1.