

Message from Pat Conroy, Australian Minister for International Development and the Pacific

Thank you for the opportunity to make welcoming remarks at this Blue Talks event.

The Albanese Government recognises that climate change is the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific and an urgent global challenge. And we also know that ocean is at the heart of the Blue Pacific. Which is why, as a member of the Pacific family, Australia is committed to action to enable a secure, prosperous and sustainable Blue Pacific.

We need to reduce emissions to address climate change and its impacts on the health of the ocean. The IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate highlighted the importance of the ocean as a global carbon sink and the particular exposure of small islands to climate change-related impacts such as sea level rise.

Together we can take practical action to build the health and resilience of our ocean, supporting the sustainability of our fisheries, protecting, and restoring blue carbon ecosystems and our precious coral reefs while ensuring we support livelihoods

We recognise and respect the diverse uses of the ocean and the importance of engaging with indigenous communities to draw on and protect Indigenous knowledge and culture, livelihoods and food security.

I wish you all the best for these discussions, in the lead up to the United Nations Oceans Conference, graciously co-hosted by Portugal and Kenya.

Blue Talks of the Pacific

Canberra, Australia
June 10, 2022

Challenges and solutions leading up to



Message of João Gomes Cravinho, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal

We know there will be no survival if we don't protect and preserve the 70% of the earth's Surface covered by the Ocean. The wellbeing of current and future generations is directly dependent on the health and productivity of our Oceans.

The Ocean generates 50 percent of the oxygen we need, it absorbs 25 percent of all carbon dioxide emissions and it captures 90 percent of the additional heat generated from those emissions. It is not just 'the lungs of the planet', but also its largest carbon sink - a vital buffer against the impacts of climate change.

It is an immensely valuable source of nutritious foods, energy, mineral resources and is also home to extraordinary biodiversity, all essential to life on our planet. And all nations, maritime and landlocked alike, depend upon the oceans for opening up new trade opportunities. 90% of goods traded globally are transported through maritime routes, and estimates indicate that the volume of goods traded this way will triple by 2050.

The new concept of Blue Economy, with its advances and technological promises, adds enormous value and momentum to the two great transitions of our time: the green transition and the digital transition. Ever more advanced technological solutions are required in order to guarantee the protection and the economic promotion of the Ocean as part of the efforts to mitigate the worst effects of climate change, and to ensure the sustainability of human life in our planet.

The introduction of new digitalization tools in the field of maritime observation and prospection will greatly contribute to the expansion of the Ocean's economy, which is due to double its size by 2030. Many of the secrets still held by the seas, as well as the challenges they still present to human activity, are being routinely revealed and surpassed. This is the future in which we want to invest.

But the blue future should not be measured and assessed solely on economic or strictly environmental terms. The human dimension of the Ocean cannot be forgotten. Political, economic, and technological investment in the blue economy holds significant potential for promoting equality and inclusiveness. Possible positive outcomes from a gender equality perspective are relevant. The fishing and maritime tourism industries, the main sectors of the blue economy, employ primarily women, who are often poorly paid, lacking social recognition and labour protection.

In Small Island Developing States, where tourism is often responsible for between 30 and 80% of the total volume of exports, 54% of the people employed in this sector are women, often with temporary, informal, and low skilled jobs.

In the fishing and aquaculture sector, the role of women is largely unknown and undervalued. It is however mostly up to women to extract from the Ocean the daily number of calories consumed by three billion people worldwide. Sustainable and inclusive investment in these industries, supported by robust capacity building and training programs, could have a transformative effect in the lives of many millions of women around the globe.

I must also mention the impact of demographic growth, urbanization, and coastal development in the expansion of the ocean economy. By 2050, the world's population is due to have two billion more

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people. This will contribute to increased pressure on fishing and marine stocks, not only for food, but also for the trade of goods, the transport of passengers, the exploitation of oil and gas reserves, and the pharmaceutical industry.

The responses we choose to give to these emerging needs will determine the future ahead. But we must ensure that development is just, inclusive, and sustainable. Portugal is fully committed to the promotion of a better system of governance of the Ocean and of the sustainable use of its resources. This is one of the reasons that led Portugal to co-host with Kenya, the next United Nations Ocean Conference, that will take place in Lisbon, between the 27th of June and the 1st of July 2022.

The last section of the route to Lisbon and to the Conference began last March with the inauguration of the Blue Talks cycle. With this series of dialogues, we aimed to promote and amplify the debates, the sharing of experiences, ideas and knowledge regarding the Ocean.

In two and a half months, we have organized this kind of debate in roughly 25 countries, spread over 4 continents, discussing the ocean, its value and importance, and the solutions that will allow us to protect it and its riches.

On behalf of the Portuguese Government, let me assure you of Portugal's profound commitment to the development of a strong multilateral system of ocean governance. A system based on the premise that the ocean belongs to all and that it is up to all nations to protect it. 2030 is just around the corner, and no country will be able to solve on its own the complex challenges faced by the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.

Today, more than ever, the world needs a strong multilateral system. Lisbon must be a transformative moment, to the benefit of the current and future generations.

I look forward to seeing you here in Lisbon at the end of June.

Thank you very much.

Message from Macharia Kamau, Principal Secretary Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kenya

Hello, everybody. It's wonderful to be part of this conversation that is taking place around the United Nations Oceans Conference and particularly around the blue talks. We in Kenya have been extremely pleased with the amount of energy and engagement that has been generated by the Blue Talks globally.

At last count, we had over 70 countries that were in the process of trying to organise blue talks and this has created just the kind of momentum and interest and has generated the kind of commitment that we need to have in preparation for what will be one of the signature events of the United Nations and the international community calendar, which is the United Nations Oceans Conference, which will be taking place in Lisbon and is co-hosted by Kenya and Portugal. So, we really are very keen to make sure that everybody understands through these blue talks just how crucially important the oceans agenda is for planet Earth and for life as we know it on the planet.

You hear a lot these days about the blue economy, and it's true there is an entire economy Nations have been built on the back of oceans. Some of the greatest nations in history have built their economies on the back of oceans. But we also hear of the blue societies. We hear of blue energy, we hear of many things including education and others, and technologies that are now linked to the opportunities and the challenges that we are facing around the ocean's agenda.

So, for us, the blue talks are crucial, and your engagement in them means that we are able to send some very critical messages out there about what it is we need everybody to understand. Enough has been said already about the areas in which oceans are crucial for life as we know it. As I said earlier, we know that if we don't get the ocean's agenda right, we are going to undermine every effort that we have for creating greater opportunities from for transit and from energy conditions on Earth.

The use of carbon-based energy products is going to undermine the consequences of all of that in trying to help us manage the climate change that is becoming so real in all of our lives.

We all recognise that we are going to have to do things differently without a doubt, whether we are talking about the science and how we apply the science, whether we are talking about the education realm, and how we mobilise people and young people in particular, in changing how they engage in the reality of being on planet Earth in ways in which they can enhance the protection of our planet, whether it is in engaging in how we manage pollution and these very issues that are so consequential to the oceans, for example, acidification, whether it is how we manage our interaction with the ecosystems both on the planet, on earth as well as at sea, because these two, our symbiotic in their relationship, all these things are going to become more and more crucial as we move forward.

We know that we need to do some very crucial things in a timely fashion and every one of the Sustainable Development Goals, every single one of them is somehow tied to a goal 14. And what the promise of Goal 14 is for the realisation of the entire set of Sustainable Development Goals from goal one right through to 17.

And so, we have to regard the oceans agenda as huge, Kenya and Portugal have made a very serious commitment to playing their role as the co-hosts we have seen an amazing amount of interest globally.

We are anticipating a huge number of non-governmental organisations as well as private sector entities to be in Portugal. Of course, we also expect governments, and we expect policy makers, and we expect those in communities who drive community actions to also be in Portugal.

And for Kenya and Portugal we have created the conditions to make sure that all these stakeholders are in Portugal and are able to provide their contribution Let me conclude by saying that we can say a lot about how crucially important the ocean's agenda is, and we can say a lot about how crucially important the Ocean's agenda is for climate and the management of our climate moving forward.

We can say a lot about how the Ocean's agenda is going to be so crucial to our food the provision of food in the global and global markets, and how the marine ecosystem is going to be such a crucial part of the food chains and how we can make a better, better contribution and better use of those things.

We can say all of these things, but until we change our behaviour and until we change our commitment and our attitude towards the oceans, then everything that we are doing and saying will remain at the level of rhetoric.

And I think this is the primary message of the oceans conference that the time for now is a time of action, action at the individual level, action at the community level, at governmental level, action through the private sector, action through the scientific community science is running behind the challenge that we are facing with the oceans agenda and somehow we have to make the investing sense around science to make sure that science itself becomes part of that transformative change that we need to save our oceans and to make sure that our climate and our ecosystem is protected for all of us for a better future.

Thank you very much.

Message from Peter Thomson, UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for the Ocean

For every breath we take we are connected to the ocean. The ocean gives us oxygen, provides us with food and livelihoods. It stabilizes our climate absorbing most of the heat trapped in the Earth's system.

Billions of humans, animals and plants rely on a healthy ocean, but the ocean is in trouble.

Rising carbon emissions are making the ocean more acidic weakening its ability to sustain life underwater. And all that plastic waste is choking the ocean.

More than half the world's marine species may stand on the brink of extinction by 2100 if we continue on the current track.

Solutions exist that can help us restore the health of the ocean.

But it will require action from all parts of society, from world leaders to the person in the street.

The UN Ocean Conference which will take place from June 27th to the 1st of July this year in Lisbon, Portugal provides a critical opportunity to mobilize partnerships and increase investment in science driven approaches.

I urge governments, industries and civil society to join forces to take action to reverse the decline in the ocean health. When we protect the ocean, the ocean protects us back.

So, we must stop destroying the life support systems of this planet and restore humanity's relationship with the ocean to one of respect and balance.

I count on your support to make that so.