

Statement
RAPA NUI PACIFIC LEADERS SUMMIT 2024
Protection of the Oceans and the Challenge of Plastic and
Microplastic Pollution in the Region

Easter Island, April 5th 2024

During the Rapa Nui Pacific Summit 2024;

It was recognized the outstanding role of the organization of the Summit, and the important work done by the participating entities;

It was acknowledged and appreciated the support and hospitality of the inhabitants of Rapa Nui, and in particular of its Municipality for the celebration of this Pacific Summit on Plastics and Microplastics;

It was recognized the opportunity of providing a regional vision of the Pacific Ocean that contributes to the achievement of results against pollution by plastics and microplastics;

The Summit addressed the following issues;

1. As background to this Leaders' Summit, the following documents were valued, the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development*¹, the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, the document "*The Future We Want*" of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20), the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, in particular the *Sustainable Development Goal N°14: Life below water*², the UNEA³ resolutions adopted in order to prevent and counteract plastic pollution in the terrestrial and marine environment, in particular UNEA Resolution 5/14⁴: *End Plastic Pollution: Towards an International Legally Binding Instrument*, and the UN General Assembly Resolution 77/321 (UNGA), by the adoption of the *Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction* (BBNJ), Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, Paris Agreement, Basel Convention, Stockholm Convention, Rotterdam Convention.
2. It was acknowledged the existence of a triple planetary crisis associated with climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.
3. It was extensively discussed plastics pollution within the region, and it was acknowledged the invaluable wealth of our ocean for present and future generations.

¹ Rio of Janeiro, Brazil. 1992.

² United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) 70/1. September 2015.

³ United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEA), 2016, 2018, 2019a, 2019b.

⁴ End plastic pollution: Towards an international legally binding instrument (UNEP/EA.5/L.23/ Rev.1) UNEA 5.2.

4. It was recognized the invaluable contribution of Indigenous Peoples, leaders and local communities, especially highlighting the crucial role played by women, youth and the traditional knowledge passed on by elders. Their participation is fundamental for the conservation and sustainable use of our ocean.
5. It was noted with growing concern the persistent and widespread plastic pollution in the environment, especially in marine ecosystems, which threatens biodiversity, affects food systems and livelihoods of millions of people, and poses a serious risk to human health and the Pacific economy.
6. It was emphasized the vital importance for the health of the planet and human well-being of having a healthy ocean and marine and coastal ecosystems, which are fundamental for the sustainable development of our communities; it was recognized the vulnerability of these ecosystems to environmental impacts and pollution, especially by plastics and microplastics, and we are fully aware of the negative impacts that endanger their sustainability and the communities that depend on the services they provide.
7. It was welcomed the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including its goals and targets that will contribute to the protection of the ocean, and highlight the importance of the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity as a cross-cutting element of the framework that is key to achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity.
8. It was recognized the importance of the *Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)*, as a fundamental instrument for the health of the ocean. In this regard, it was welcomed the ratification by Palau and Chile and the ongoing efforts by other Member States for early ratification. It was noted with appreciation Chile's offer to host the Secretariat of the BBNJ agreement.
9. It was further recognized the importance of the *Paris Agreement*, including its goals and targets, as a fundamental instrument for the health of the ocean, given the importance of the ocean in regulating the climate by absorbing the majority of heat and carbon.

The Summit expressed commitment,

10. To undertake effective, inclusive, sustainable and rights-based considerations to address the challenge of plastic pollution, and the degradation of marine and coastal ecosystems. In this regard, we reaffirm our commitment to adopt concrete actions aimed at the protection, conservation, and sustainable use of our ocean, its biodiversity and ecosystems, actively promoting mechanisms to increase its resilience, especially among Indigenous Peoples and local coastal communities.
11. To collaborate closely to advance the full implementation of applicable international law aimed at reducing significantly the pollution of our ocean by 2030. Recognizing the intrinsic value of the ocean as a source of wealth, health, enjoyment and employment, to further promote financial mechanisms in its conservation, according to different national

circumstances. In addition, to actively promote regional cooperation for the conservation, sustainable use, restoration and recovery of marine and coastal ecosystems. Together, to work to ensure a healthier and more prosperous future for our ocean and for future generations.

12. To accelerate concrete actions to protect the ocean, especially against plastic and microplastic pollution in the Pacific region, taking into consideration the international environmental instruments adopted by the international community. In this regard, to encourage and support the work being undertaken by the Intergovernmental Negotiations Committee mandated by UNEA resolution 5/14, aiming to conclude, by the end of 2024, an International Legally Binding Instrument that addresses the full life cycle of plastic.
13. To strengthen our links and cooperation in order to adopt a package of actions and means of implementation in our respective jurisdictions.
14. To promote the care and protection of our ocean, through the promotion of effective governance, capacity building, and the generation and dissemination of scientific and traditional and local knowledge, for the protection of our marine ecosystems, and to address the environmental impacts caused by plastic pollution.
15. To encourage local, national and regional initiatives to integrate efforts of different stakeholders such as civil society, academia, private sector, and different levels of governance.
16. To further encourage and recognize the contribution of children, youth, women, and Indigenous People in the ocean's care, restoration and recovery, as well as deepening our commitment to the future of our ocean.
17. To continue in advancing the understanding, generation and dissemination of scientific, traditional and local knowledge about the ocean, especially with regard to the vulnerability of the biodiversity and ecosystems, increasing scientific research through collaboration with the academic sector to achieve science-based decision making, which will contribute significantly to the conservation and sustainable management of our marine resources.
18. To continue to further collaborate, and strengthen networks, to share good practices, experiences and, joint initiatives among the Summit participants.