Thank you Chair,

Ocean Conservancy would reiterate our gratitude to Kenya and its people for welcoming us for this important meeting and their hospitality.

Excellencies, delegates, esteemed colleagues.

Numerous studies have shown that to combat plastic pollution and its associated climate and human health impacts, we must produce less plastic.

As such, the inclusion of globally binding, ambitious, and time-bound targets for the reduction of primary plastic polymers is paramount. Opting for this path, as presented in the zero draft, is the most effective strategy to eliminate plastic pollution. Building on this ambition, Ocean Conservancy encourages Member States to include a global minimum target of 50% reduction of single-use plastics by 2050. Furthermore, these targets should be considered in addition to other complementary measures, such as defining, identifying, and phasing out single-use, avoidable, toxic, and highly polluting plastics.

There’s a growing precedent centered on source reduction. Countries worldwide are taking action by identifying and phasing out unnecessary or harmful single-use plastics and setting targets for reuse and refill. Just last year, one of the world’s major economies enacted a law mandating a 25% reduction in single-use plastics over the next decade. We know this approach is possible, because we are seeing it happen.

We also acknowledge the importance of downstream emissions control, plastic remediation, and improved waste management to address the crisis, but it’s crucial to note that harmful waste management practices such as chemical recycling, refuse-derived fuel and related current technologies are not a viable solution and should not be considered a step in the right direction.

Additionally, the language of resolution 5/14 is clear regarding pollution in the marine environment. To that end, it is critical to address sea-based sources of plastic pollution including abandoned, lost, or discarded fishing gear. As such, we stress the need for a dedicated category in Part II of the zero draft specifically for plastic fishing and aquaculture gear. This category would comprehensively and holistically address this distinct and pervasive form of plastic pollution across the entire life cycle going beyond waste management, as it currently stands in the zero draft.

These recommendations stem from the belief that this process is more than a legally binding instrument; it is a roadmap toward a future where the ocean thrives unburdened by the weight of our plastic pollution, enabled by a more just world.

Thank you, Chair.