

## **Joint Statement by the Nordic Prime Ministers on a Sustainable Ocean Economy and the Green Transition**

The Nordic countries represent an area of considerable innovative strength in advancing a sustainable ocean economy and a green transition that is also inclusive and fair. By coordinating our efforts, we can make a real difference and provide inspiration for other regions.

The ocean and seas around the Nordic countries are vast and among the most productive in the world. The fish stocks and other marine resources in these waters are an important source of food not only for our region, but also globally. The fish stocks are also key biodiversity components of the marine ecosystems. Our shared ocean and seas are the basis for the development of a blue economy where sustainable food and energy systems play a key role in contributing to the 2030 climate goals, aiming to keep global warming within the 1.5-degree target. It is important to increase our understanding of how the blue economy can be developed in a sustainable way, reducing pollution, halting the loss of biodiversity, strengthening ecosystem resilience, and restraining invasive and opportunistic species. We must also ensure that oceans are resilient to combat the negative impact of climate change, and that nature-based solutions contribute to the green transition.

The marine ecosystems of the Nordic oceans are subject to multiple pressures. This calls for even stronger cooperation, an improved knowledge base, and more integrated and sustainable management. Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM) is the central instrument for regional cooperation amongst the Nordic countries. We will seek to collaborate even more closely on issues relating to protecting the ocean, on ecological sustainability, climate resilience and reduction of pollution including the input of nutrients from land-based sources. We will strengthen our Nordic dialogue aimed at sharing research and knowledge, including blue and green industries linked to the ocean. We will make use of high-level Nordic meetings on ocean issues this year to advance our joint agenda for action.

With a view to strengthening the implementation of SDG 14 and other relevant millennium goals, we agree to cooperate on international initiatives such as the UN Decade of Ocean Science, the High-level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, and the follow-up of the UN Food Systems Summit. We welcome the historic outcome of the fifth UN Environment Assembly and will continue to cooperate on developing an ambitious legally binding international instrument to end plastic pollution. We will also cooperate to achieve an ambitious outcome at COP15 under the Convention on Biological Diversity and COP27 under the Climate Convention. What we do locally will reflect and support our efforts globally.

We will establish research and innovation pilot projects on restoration of marine biodiversity, assessing and creating resilience to climate change, ocean-based carbon capture and ecological sustainability. We will assess how lessons learned from the Baltic Sea can lead to closer cooperation on environment and sustainability in Skagerrak.

We will collaborate to reach international agreement on an IMO target on climate neutral shipping by 2050 and support green shipping corridors and port infrastructure along international trade routes as well as upscaling production of climate neutral fuel for shipping. We will support the establishment of zero-emission shipping routes for ferry transport between the Nordic countries and an effective IMO framework to minimise the transfer of aquatic invasive species.

We also agree to cooperate on European initiatives such as the EU Green Deal Mission Restore Our Ocean and Waters by 2030 and the ocean related Horizon Europe partnerships, including the Partnership on Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport.

We stress the need to come together and finalise the negotiations on a new implementing agreement under UNCLOS to strengthen the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ).

The transition to renewable energy is at the heart of the green transition in the Nordic region. We will enhance our cooperation relating to the considerable wind resources in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea and accelerating offshore projects, permitting and market conditions, for example by building on the existing efforts to develop offshore wind in the North Seas Energy Cooperation and the Baltic energy market interconnection plan. We will continue to work to replace Russian fossil fuels with renewable and low carbon alternatives while maintaining focus on energy security, reliability, and affordability.

We want to cooperate to advance safe and sustainable carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS) in Europe. CCUS will be necessary for achieving the ambition of carbon neutrality by 2050. We have the potential in the Nordic region and the North Sea and Baltic Sea regions to develop a full-scale CCS chain with functioning transport routes, in part by ship, and permanent, sustainable, and safe geological storage infrastructure.