

## **Italy**

### **Statement on ISBA/25/A/5-6-L.2**

#### **Speaker: Marzia Rovere**

Thank you Mister President. With this comment, Italy expresses full appreciation of the Report of the Secretary General on the High-Level Action Plan. We acknowledge the extensive work the Secretariat conducted for identifying and defining a wide range of High-Level Actions and developing the associated Performance Indicators. We also wish to thank the contribution of some Member States and stakeholders to the consultation on the High-Level Action Plan opened in May 2019 and all the member states and stakeholders that have provided or are providing relevant input to the High-Level Actions, especially those that have to be accomplished by the end of 2019.

The High-Level Action Plan indeed captures well all the mandates of the Authority and contributes to its participation to the development of a Global Ocean Governance under the auspices of the United Nations, therefore Italy supports the adoption of the Action Plan by the Assembly.

We will not go much into the detail of the Action Plan, but we would like to offer few comments.

As a first remark, we encourage the Commission to develop the recommendations for contractors for mining tests in their exploration areas as a matter of priority, as indicated in Action 3.4.2 of document ISBA/25/A/L.2. We also suggest to open the recommendations to a public consultation, before adoption.

We are pleased to see Action 5.4.1 of the document mentioned above “Compile summaries of the status of environmental baseline data”, because we strongly advocate that this is quite a crucial action to achieve the information that will be needed in an Environmental Impact Assessment frame, where will be defined minimum environmental requirements. We do not have to recall that a comprehensive baseline, made of physical, chemical and biological components of a specific deep-sea area, represents the key pre-requisite for achieving the effective protection of the marine environment. In fact, the impacts deriving from exploitation activities, as well as the targets of the environmental monitoring, will be assessed against this base reference scenario. For this reason, we value the importance of Action 5.4.1 not only in relation to Strategic Direction 4 “Promote and encourage marine scientific research in the Area”, but even more importantly to Strategic Direction 3 on the Protection of the Marine Environment.

In respect to the Performance Indicators, Italy believes that their correct definition represents the key tool to effectively monitoring and measuring that the Actions will reach the goals of the Strategic Directions, as also addressed by the distinguished delegate of Jamaica.

For their specific role of control, Italy believes that an effort should be made to systematically assess a few selected Performance Indicators ability to fulfil their tasks and to periodically review them. Indeed, the number of Performance Indicators developed, although proportionate to the number of High-Level Actions, may be too large and not well sorted. In particular, some indicators are characterized by variable weighting factors in terms of relevance to the Strategic Directions, while others might not provide objective evidence of progress.

For this reason, we suggest that the Secretariat starts to develop an open evaluation process of the Performance Indicators efficacy and adequateness, in order to rationalize their number and maximize their use, bearing in mind that to achieve a set of optimized Key Performance Indicators is often necessary a continuous iterative process. To facilitate this, it could be appropriate that the Secretariat will provide in the next session an updated table with a reference to the document or activity that accomplished the related actions of 2019.

Thank you very much Mr President