Thirteenth Conference of the Contracting Parties (CoP13) to the Convention on Cooperation for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine Environment and Coastal Areas of the Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and Southern African Region (Abidjan Convention)

Virtual Meeting, 13th to 15th December, 2021

DRAFT DECISIONS
Recalling the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which provides the legal framework for all activities in the oceans and seas, and drawing special attention to Part XII of the Convention on the protection and preservation of the marine environment.

Recalling also paragraphs 158-177 (Oceans and Seas) and 178-180 (Small Island Developing States) of the final document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, June 20-22, 2012, entitled «The Future We Want, » which was unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly,

Further recalling paragraphs 162 and 177 of the Rio+20 final document referring to the importance of the establishment of marine protected areas and the urgent need for a decision to launch international talks on a legal instrument for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond domestic jurisdictions,

Recalling the Paris Agreement on Climate Change adopted at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which emphasizes the importance of ensuring the integrity of all ecosystems, including the oceans and the protection of biodiversity,

Also recalling the Marrakech Proclamation for Action on our Climate and Sustainable Development adopted at the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Marrakech, Morocco, in November 2016, which specifically reaffirms the commitment to the implementation of the Paris Agreement adopted in December 2015,

Taking note of General Assembly resolution 70/1, entitled «Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development», paragraph 33 of which concerns the conservation and wise use of the oceans and seas,

Taking into account the considerations of the African Ministerial Conference on Ocean Economies and Climate Change held in preparation for the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties, jointly organized by the World Bank and Mauritius,

Recalling the commitment of the international community to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, which form the ten-year strategic plan adopted by the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2010, and in particular Target 11, to achieve the conservation of 10% of marine areas by 2020, and Strategic Goal B, to reduce direct pressures on biological diversity and promote its sustainable use,

Recalling the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Cancún, Mexico, from 4 to 17 December 2016, including decisions XIII/7, XIII/9, XIII/10 and XIII/12, on the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, marine spatial planning, impacts of marine debris and underwater noise pollution on marine and coastal biodiversity, and ecologically and biologically significant marine areas, respectively,

Also recalling Resolution 2/11 adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its second session, held in May 2016 in Nairobi, on plastic and micro-plastic waste in the marine environment,

Further recalling the African Integrated Strategy for Seas and Oceans to 2050, adopted by the African Union on January 31, 2014, on which it was requested that its principles be reflected in the African Union’s Agenda 2063,

Noting the importance of the United Nations Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socio-Economic Aspects (Regular Process), and taking cognizance of the workshop held in Grand-Bassam, Côte d’Ivoire, from 28 to
30 October 2013, in support of the Regular Process, and further urging Contracting Parties to nominate experts to serve on the Regular Process a group of experts,

Aware of the opportunity offered by the concept of green economy for the socio-economic development of African countries based on a rational development of coastal natural resources,

Taking into account the Abu Dhabi Declaration and the outcomes of the Blue Economy Summit, which took place in Abu Dhabi on January 19-20, 2014,

Aware of the importance of a blue economy approach in that it could provide opportunities for environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive economic growth across the continent,

Recognizing that the United Nations General Assembly has reaffirmed its pivotal role in the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of domestic jurisdictions and has taken note of the work done in this field by States, relevant intergovernmental bodies and organizations and invites them to participate, according to their respective areas of specialization, in the process initiated by the General Assembly under resolution 66/231

Recalling that the General Assembly in «The Future We Want» also reaffirmed the commitment of States to urgently address the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of domestic jurisdictions, including through a decision on the development of an international legal instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,

Recalling also decision CP.12/1 approving the Convention’s work program for the period 2017-2020 and noting with satisfaction the level of accomplishment of the tasks carried out to date

Highly commending the States that have made efforts to pay their contributions to the Convention’s Trust Fund since the tenth Conference of the Parties was held in Pointe-Noire, Congo,

Acknowledging the financial contributions made by the Government of Sweden, the German Environment, Nature Conservation, Construction and Nuclear Security Ministry, the United States Agency for International Development through the West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change Program, the World Bank through the WACA project and the MAVA Foundation, for the implementation of the Abidjan Convention,

Taking into consideration the financial rules and regulations governing the funds entrusted to the United Nations and the fields in which specific financial procedures would apply,

Concerned about the continued degradation of coral reefs, seagrass beds and mangrove ecosystems, taking into account the core functions they perform in the conservation of marine biodiversity and recognizing the need to forge partnerships to develop knowledge about these ecosystems,

Recognizing the need to assess and update the Plan of Action for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment and Coastal Areas of the West and Central African Region since its adoption in 1981,

Also recognizing the need to strengthen the implementation mechanisms of the Convention at the regional level through the participation of the different stakeholders and institutions so as to protect marine and coastal areas,

Further recognizing the importance of strengthening South-South cooperation in the protection of the oceans, their resources and marine biodiversity,
Recalling the Guide to the Blue Economy in Africa, prepared by the Economic Commission for Africa, in particular its provisions aimed at assisting, step by step, African Member States to better incorporate the blue economy into their national strategies, policies and legislation,

Taking note of the recommendations of the International Conference on the IllegaL use of and Trade in Wild Flora and Fauna in Africa, held in Brazzaville on April 30, 2015, aimed in particular at formulating a common African strategy to combat such a trade,

Recalling the African Strategy on Combating Illegal Use and Illegal Trade in Wildlife in Africa, adopted in 2015, including its provisions on illegal trade in fisheries products and other marine species,

Also recalling the Lomé Charter on Maritime Safety, Security and Development in Africa, adopted in 2016 by African Heads of State, which aims to ensure the development of the blue economy through various means, including the preservation of the marine environment, and maritime safety and security,

Recognizing the enormous economic potential of the African coastline and the awareness-raising role that parliamentarians and local elected officials play in the process of socio-economic development of the Atlantic coast of the continent,

Recalling the Integrated Maritime Strategy of the Economic Community of West African States, which defines the Strategic Framework for Strengthening Maritime Governance, Marine Environmental Management, Safety and Security of the Maritime Domain in West Africa,

Acknowledging the role of the project to support the Regional Network of Parliamentarians and Local Elected Officials in support of integrated management of the coastal and marine area of West African coastal countries on the topics of fisheries, hydrocarbons and mangroves,


Noting the importance of the topics discussed as part of the Mediterranean Action Plan, namely governance, land and marine pollution, biodiversity and ecosystems, land-sea interactions and processes, integrated coastal zone management and sustainable consumption and production,

Aware of the negative effects of coastal erosion on the socio-economic viability of the West African coastline as well as the efforts made by the World Bank to curb this scourge,

Taking into account the Dakar Declaration, adopted on May 18, 2011, on the establishment of a West African coastal observation mechanism for the reduction of coastal risks and impacts of coastal erosion,

Hereby decide:

a. Draft Decision CP13/1 on the implementation of COP12 decisions
In particular:
   1. To congratulate the Secretariat of the Abidjan Convention for the efforts made to implement the COP 12 decisions.
   
   2. To request the Secretariat, considering available resources, to continue the implementation of the following decisions:
      CP.12/7: Integrated Coastal and Ocean Management Policy
      CP.12/14: Illegal trade in marine and coastal wildlife
CP.12/13: Control of invasive marine and coastal plants
CP.12/15: Sustainable management of lagoons
CP.12/17: Management of coastal cities
CP.12/18: Ocean energies
CP.12/19: Alliance of Parliamentarians and Local Elected Officials of the coastal zones of the Abidjan Convention

3. Request the Secretariat to report on progress at the 14th Conference of the Parties.

b. Draft Decision CP13/2 on the 2022-2024 Work Programme

1. To approve the 2021-2024 Work Program;
2. To note that the said Work Program for the period 2021-2024 is based on the same theme areas as in the 2015-2017 Work Program, namely:
   a) Valuation of goods and services provided by coastal and marine ecosystems and habitats;
   b) Management for the implementation of programs and activities to reduce or prevent degradation of the marine environment and coastal areas;
   c) Coordination and legal considerations, including the amendment and updating of the Abidjan Convention, improved coordination of activities and information sharing, and institutional strengthening for the implementation of the Convention;
   d) Communication, awareness, information and education with an emphasis on community information sharing and advocacy, community empowerment and capacity building;
   e) Cross-cutting and emerging issues and funding strategies;
3. To urge the Secretariat to continue to include in the 2021-2024 work program the elements of cooperation with partners active in the field of marine and coastal environmental management in the region, such as the GRID-Arendal Center, the United States Agency for International Development, the World Bank, the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations, the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (Potsdam), the Alliance of Parliamentarians and Local Elected Officials for the Protection of the West African Coastline, the World Conservation Union, Wetlands International, the World Wildlife Fund, the Regional Partnership for the Conservation of the Coastal and Marine Zone in West Africa, the sub-regional fisheries commissions, the OSPAR Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic, the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the Convention on Biological Diversity, BirdLife International, UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, AFRICOM, the Private Sector, Sustainable Seas Trust- SST on plastics issues, BRs, the Nairobi and Barcelona Conventions, the African Business and Professional Network and other relevant regional organizations;

c. Draft Decision CP13/3 on Financial Matters

Notes the critical and disturbing level of unpaid contributions and
1. Expressly requests the Contracting Parties that are not up to date to pay their arrears in contributions, so as to ensure the financial viability of the Secretariat of the Convention;

2. Calls particularly on the largest debtors to honor their commitments: Angola, Cameroon, DR Congo, Congo, Gabon, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo;

3. Empowers the Secretariat of the Convention to impose the penalties provided for in Procedure 4 (see doc. ABC-WACAF/COP12/. inf.3) to Members that fail to pay their contributions at the next COP 13;

4. Urgently launch a final appeal to preserve the gains of the Abidjan Convention and commit themselves to support the Secretariat as part of the recovery of unpaid contributions from the non-paying Members;

5. Recommends the establishment of a high-level Ad Hoc Committee, chaired by the Vice President of the Bureau, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, to assist in the recovery of arrears;

6. Recommends that the Secretariat diversify the mechanisms for raising funds;

d. Draft Decision CP13/4: Amendment of the legal instruments of the Abidjan Convention

1. To encourage governments to ask the Secretariat to hold the meeting of plenipotentiaries as soon as possible for the adoption and signature of the amended constitution of the Abidjan Convention.

e. Draft Decision - CP 12/5: on the development of a Protocol Additional on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

1. To request the Secretariat to take all necessary steps to provide the Convention with a Protocol Additional on marine protected areas and wildlife in the Abidjan Convention area.

2. Encourage the Secretariat to assist Member States in creating new Marine Protected Areas, including transboundary ones, or in operationalizing existing Marine Protected Areas.

3. Urge the Secretariat to work with regional networks to promote good practices in terms of identifying, managing and evaluating the effectiveness of MPAs.

4. Encourage the Secretariat to develop guidelines for MPA management, including knowledge sharing (best practices) for monitoring and surveillance.

f. Draft Decision CP13/6 on the implementation of SDG14 in the countries of the Abidjan Convention

1. To accept the Sustainable Development Goals Center for Africa (SDGC/A) conference entitled «Implementing the SDGs in Africa - Considerations on a Three-Year Journey» held at the Kigali Convention Center from June 12-14, 2019 in Kigali, Rwanda, which
called for strengthening the coordination of the implementation and dissemination of the SDGs results in Africa;

2. Encourage States Parties to establish an SDG 14 group within their existing national frameworks for SDG implementation and monitoring.

3. Request the Secretariat to cooperate with other regional seas programs, the African Union, and other institutions and partners in the development of a regional framework to implement SDG 14 and other ocean-related SDGs that allows for a collective approach to the implementation of the SDGs in the Abidjan Convention countries;

4. Encourage States Parties, UNEP and other Abidjan Convention partners to provide the necessary resources to promote and facilitate the implementation of SDG 14 in Abidjan Convention countries;

5. Request the Secretariat, within available resources, to organize broad regional consultations to agree on a final version of an integrated regional framework for the implementation of SDGs 14, 17 and other ocean-related SDGs in the Abidjan Convention area and present the results of the consultations for consideration and adoption at COP 14.

g. Draft Decision CP13/7 on Ocean Acidification

1. Invite states to take part in the UNESCO international symposium on this topic: «The Ocean in a Too Acidic World» which is held every four years. This interdisciplinary forum aims to evaluate the knowledge acquired on ocean acidification and to define priorities for future research.

2. Encourage Member States to take into account the importance of the ocean in sustainable development strategies and plans to the extent possible:
   - Creating more forest reserve parks that can help absorb CO2 from the atmosphere.
   - Restoration of mangroves (planting degraded areas).
   - Stop gas flaring by oil producing companies (non-compliance should result in loss of operators’ licenses).
   - Establishment of an ocean food chain monitoring center: - Water and environmental quality (temperature, pH, carbon load and nutrients), phytoplankton diversity and community structure, fish diversity, community structure and migratory patterns.
   - Creation of a reference research center to develop and transfer technologies to combat desertification.

3. To request the Secretariat and its partners to assist Member States in developing and implementing strategies to combat ocean acidification within available resources.

h. Draft Decision CP13/8 on the governance of coastal and marine areas in the Abidjan Convention area.

1. Recognize the need for an integrated approach that ensures consistency between the different sectoral strategies and takes into account their impact on ecosystems;
2. Request the Secretariat to engage the African Ocean Governance Panel to continue its efforts to provide guidance for the alignment of existing relevant mechanisms; and to develop, jointly with regional and international partners, including the African Union and the International Ocean Institute, a comprehensive ocean governance capacity building programme;

3. Urge the Contracting Parties to strengthen the coordination of activities at national levels, in particular between the national focal points and other respective national and regional sectoral institutions, including NGOs, so as to ensure better inclusion, sustainable use of resources and sharing of information with a view to strengthening the Convention, its impact and visibility in the countries and the region;

4. Invite the Contracting Parties to actively participate in the Decade of Ocean Sciences for Sustainable Development led by the IOC of UNESCO.

i. Draft decision CP13/9 for the adoption of a regulation or a provision implementing Community law for the incorporation of the Protocols Additional into national laws

The States Parties to the Abidjan Convention and signatories of its Protocols Additional, without prejudice to the ratification processes underway in many States Parties to the Abidjan Convention and given the urgency of this incorporation;

1. Empower the Secretariat to formalize its cooperation with the Regional Economic Organizations of its geographical coverage through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding;

2. Invite the regional economic cooperation organizations to adopt regulatory acts for the direct incorporation of the Protocols Additional into the national legal systems of the States parties to the Abidjan Convention and the States signatories to the said protocols;

3. Invite the Regional Organizations, African Union Agency-NEPAD as well as other partners to support the Contracting Parties and the Secretariat of the Abidjan Convention, in the process of ratification of the Protocols Additional and the implementation of the action plans of the said protocols;

4. Invite the Secretariat to report on implementation at CoP 14.

j. Draft Decision CP13/10 on the preparation of a report on the state of the marine and coastal environment in the Abidjan Convention area.

1. To congratulate the Secretariat for assisting some Contracting Parties in the preparation of their first Status Report of the Marine and Coastal Environment

2. To invite the Contracting Parties to prepare and/or update their Status Report of the Marine and Coastal Environment

3. Request the Secretariat and partners to assist in the development of a regional report on the State of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Abidjan Convention area.

k. Draft Decision CP13/11 on cooperation with other regional seas conventions in Africa
1. *Encourage* the Secretariat to forge partnerships with the Barcelona, Jeddah and Nairobi Conventions to strengthen regional cooperation and to cause the Africa of regional seas to begin see light at the end of the tunnel.

2. *To invite* the Secretariat to take the necessary initiatives to harmonize continental viewpoints in international debates on seas and oceans.

3. *Invite* the Secretariat to factor in these partnerships in the creation of the African forum on oceans.

4. *Invite* the Secretariat to report on implementation at CoP 14.

I. **Draft Decision CP13/12 on the Blue Economy in the context of poverty reduction in Africa**

1. *Recall* the Cape Town Declaration on the Blue Economy for the Sustainable Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West Coast of Africa, adopted on 21 March 2014 in Cape Town, South Africa;

2. *Support and promote* the following marine and coastal sectors to contribute to the development of the blue economy in Africa:
   - new renewable energy sources and their production;
   - Environmentally friendly development of marine mineral deposits, hydrates, oil and gas;
   - Coastal protection activities
   - ocean exploration and scientific research;
   - aquaculture activities;
   - marine biotechnology;
   - maritime transport and port development;
   - Sustainable coastal development, protection, safety, monitoring and surveillance, mitigation and adaptation to coastal and marine hazards;
   - Marine ecotourism.
   - Submarine cables as a major economic activity

3. *Call on* all relevant international organizations, partners and the private sector entities to support Africa’s transition to sustainable marine and coastal growth through intensive capacity building programs for current and future activities to promote the blue economy.

4. *Request* the Secretariat to cooperate with other relevant organizations to draft the Abidjan Convention «Blue Economy Strategy for Poverty Reduction» and analyze the contribution that the blue economy can make to hunger reduction, poverty eradication and sustainable livelihoods; providing a framework for protecting and enhancing the value of marine and coastal systems and services, through an integrated approach to sustained protection and sustainable use of marine-related activities, in the countries of the Abidjan Convention;
   - To produce a guidance note
   - To prepare an action plan on the blue economy
   - To request the Secretariat to set up a working party on the blue economy.
   - To hold regional consultations on the strategy of the Abidjan Convention
   - IUU fishing
To engage the secretariat to support the State parties

5. Request the Secretariat to introduce the draft strategy and analysis for consideration and adoption at COP13.

m. Draft Decision CP13/13 on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of the Biological Diversity of Marine Areas beyond Domestic jurisdictions (ABNJ)

1. To reiterate the call to the Contracting Parties, as part of the Abidjan Convention and in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, to recognize the importance of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of domestic jurisdictions, taking into account the ecological connectivity and socio-economic importance of areas beyond domestic jurisdictions and in particular of the waters adjacent to the Abidjan Convention area;

2. Urge the Contracting Parties through the Abidjan Convention to cooperate and coordinate with other competent and relevant global, regional, sub-regional and sectoral bodies for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond domestic jurisdictions, recognizing the importance of sectoral cooperation within the region;

3. Welcome the progress made at the Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity beyond Areas of Domestic jurisdictions and encourage Contracting Parties to continue their participation in and contribution to the process of finalizing an agreement that provides the means for effective conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond domestic jurisdictions and to work towards the early adoption, national ratification and future implementation of the legally binding instrument;

4. Urge Contracting Parties to strengthen marine scientific research and decision-making capacity at the national and sub-regional levels with respect to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of domestic jurisdictions; and

5. Welcome the progress made in the Abidjan Convention’s Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group on Areas beyond Domestic jurisdictions, established by Decision UNEP/WACAF/CP. 11/10, and related cooperation with partners, including the STRONG High Seas project, and to extend the mandate of this working group beyond 2020 to continue to address issues related to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond domestic jurisdictions, including options for cross-sectoral management approaches such as marine protected area networks and other area-based management tools

n. Draft Decision CP13/14 on the creation of an award of excellence of the Abidjan Convention on Sustainable Coastal and Marine Management

1. To request the Secretariat to institute an Abidjan Convention award to recognize the efforts of natural or legal persons who have distinguished themselves in their commitment to the sustainable management of marine and coastal biodiversity in the Abidjan Convention area.
2. Decide to set up an ad-hoc committee to implement this decision and report back at the next COP.

o. Draft Decision CP13/15 on Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)

1. Congratulate the Secretariat and its Partner GRID Arendal for the efforts made in the implementation of this CoP12 Decision, in particular by organizing training courses on marine spatial planning for the benefit of French and English speaking countries and in particular the countries of the WACA Resip project;

2. Invite the pilot countries that have received funding from the German Ministry of the Environment to finalize the process of developing their Marine Spatial Planning and to continue, in conjunction with the Convention Secretariat, efforts to mobilize resources for the implementation of the plan;

3. To urge the other Contracting Parties to draw on the experience of Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana and South Africa to develop their marine spatial planning systems;

4. In doing so, request that work on marine environmental assessment in the context of large marine ecosystems and deliberate on the description of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas be linked to ongoing marine spatial planning initiatives.


1. Propose to consider the plastics challenge at every stage of the value chain, in schools and with the public and businesses.

2. To invite the use of the developed database and the resulting analyses to develop a common assessment of the current status of waste generation in Africa, the environmental status of the marine waters of the Abidjan Convention area, the economic and social pressures on the system, and the effectiveness of the steps taken to mitigate their effects;

3. Request the Secretariat and its relevant partners to establish a marine litter database that would serve as a basis for strategies developed in the region on marine litter, thereby contributing to well-grounded decisions and policies at municipal, national, sub-regional and regional levels.

4. Request the Secretariat and partners to develop an awareness-raising program on the adverse effects of marine litter and the importance of dealing with it, to be sent to relevant agencies and organizations in the region.

5. Urge the Contracting Parties to affirm their commitment to combat plastic microbeads and to take steps to ban their use in the region, as well as to promote the exchange of know-how, best practices and lessons learned.

6. Advocacy to encourage member states to join the drive for a legally binding international treaty against plastic pollution

7. Assessing the impact of the corona virus pandemic on plastic pollution
q. Draft Decision CP13/17 on the Youth Ocean Ambassadors Network

1. **Encourage** the Secretariat to develop the production and dissemination of ocean information by establishing the network of young ambassadors of the Abidjan Convention.

2. **Invite** the Secretariat to encourage vocations in ocean sciences by involving young students, researchers, artistic performers... whenever possible, in initiatives and activities related to marine and coastal biodiversity in the sub-region.

3. **Encourage** the Secretariat to link the Youth Ambassadors Network to other similar initiatives around the Atlantic Ocean and on the African continent.

r. Draft Decision CP13/18 on the action plans for the implementation of the Protocols Additional to the Abidjan Convention.

1. **To commend** the Secretariat for holding the meeting of plenipotentiaries for the adoption and signature of the Protocols Additional on Integrated Coastal Zone Management; Sustainable Management of Mangrove Ecosystems; Environmental Norms and Standards for Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration and Development and Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities;

2. **To invite** the Secretariat to strive towards the process of developing the action plan to implement these protocols;

3. **Urge** governments, the Secretariat and Partners to develop programs and projects to implement the action plans.

s. Draft decision CP13/19 on the collection, management and sharing of data and information (linkage with the Resource Center and the monitoring and evaluation system)


2. **Request** the Secretariat of the Abidjan Convention to make the Resource Center operational and accessible as soon as possible

3. **Request** UNEP to host the Resource Center and create an administrator position

t. Draft decision CP13/20 on the proliferation of sargassum algae

1. **Conduct** global and regional assessments on innovative methodologies available for early warning and mitigation, for the prevention of harmful algae blooms, with particular emphasis on the influx of sargassum.

2. **Facilitate** the development of policy tools and integration of harmful algae blooms, with emphasis on sargassum, in national legislation in order to ensure coordinated
management of ocean health for future generations and general well-being of the marine environment.

3. Work with Member States and other actors at local, national, regional and international levels, including in the private sector, civil society and academia, to address the problem of the influx of sargassum.

u. Draft Decision CP13/21 on Vote of Thanks to the Government of Congo

Expresses its gratitude and thanks to H.E. the President of the Republic, the Government and the people of Congo for their active participation in the successful hosting of the thirteenth meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention.