

## **Papeete Declaration for Ocean Resilience and the Preservation of Cultures :**

### **A Joint Commitment in the Pacific for the BBNJ Agreement**

**Australia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, French Polynesia, New Caledonia, and Wallis and Futuna, supported by the French government,**

**Recognizing the urgency to act to protect marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), a foundation for oceans sustainability and resilience,**

**Welcoming the historic adoption in 2023 of the BBNJ Agreement, which establishes an international legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity of these areas,**

**Acknowledging that our economies, cultures, and ways of life in the Pacific region are directly dependent on the health and resilience of the ocean,**

**Reaffirming our commitment to the principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Goal 14 ("Life Below Water"), and the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, as well as our joint mobilization for the 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) in Nice,**

**We, the undersigned of this declaration, express the following :**

#### **1. Support for the Effective Implementation of the BBNJ Agreement**

We commit to working together to accelerate the ratification and implementation of the BBNJ Agreement in our respective jurisdictions.

- We underline that its entry into force is conditioned on the ratification, acceptance or accession by 60 States, and we call on all countries to expedite this process to ensure the Agreement becomes operational as quickly as possible.
- We hope that the initial steps of its implementation can be highlighted at UNOC3 in Nice.

#### **2. Promotion of Regional and International Cooperation**

We strongly support regional cooperation mechanisms that strengthen the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction, including through initiatives such as:

- Coordinating efforts, including scientific efforts to map and monitor marine ecosystems in a manner that respects existing international obligations and regulatory frameworks, with results to be shared at UNOC3.
- Protecting marine areas of ecological or biological significance while recognizing established mandates and jurisdictions, to be integrated into discussions at UNOC3.

#### **3. Inclusion of Indigenous Peoples, Local Communities and their Traditional Knowledge**

We affirm the importance of the participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and their traditional knowledge in the implementation of the BBNJ Agreement. Traditional knowledge and cultural practices in marine management will be highlighted at UNOC3 as a model for inclusive ocean governance.

#### **4. UNOC3: A Crucial Step for the Oceans**

We consider the 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) in Nice an essential opportunity to:

- Showcase the progress made through the BBNJ Agreement.
- Encourage non-signatory States to ratify and adhere to this historic agreement.
- Strengthen regional and global partnerships for integrated ocean management.
- Mobilize targeted initiatives and specific actions for the protection of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.
- Consider the special circumstances of small island developing States, including through the provision of capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology.

**Done at Papeete, Tahiti, French Polynesia, on December the 13<sup>th</sup> 2024**

**Signatures:**

**For Palau :** Steven VICTOR, Minister

**For the government of New Caledonia :** Jérémie KATIDJO-MONNIER, Member of the government by delegation of the president of the government of New Caledonia

**For French Polynesia :** Taivini TEAI, Minister

**For Nauru :** Delvin THOMA, Deputy Minister

**For Federated States of Micronesia :** Carson SIGRAH, Ambassador

**For Australia :** Greta WHYTE, Consul General

**For Wallis and Futuna :** Mikaele KULIMOETOKE, Senator

**For the High Commissioner of the Republic in French Polynesia :** Etienne de la FOUCHARDIERE, Deputy Secretary General of High Commissioner

