



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

Remarks

By

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**At the 6th Ministerial Conference of the
Benguela Current Convention (BCC)**

09 November, 2017

Windhoek, Namibia

- Chairperson of BCC, Hon. Bernhard Esau, Minister of Fishery and Marine Resources
- Mr. Carlos Martinol Secretary of Fisheries and Sea
- Mr. Bruno Carvalho Cabinet of the Secretary of Fisheries and Sea
- Hon. Tommy Nambahu, Deputy Minister of Environment and Tourism
- Hon. Kornelia Shilunga, Deputy Minister of Mines and Energy
- Hon. Edna Molewa South Africa Minister for Environmental Affairs
- His Worship the Mayor of Windhoek Councillor Muesee Kazapua
- H.E. Manuel Alexandre Rodrigues Kito, Angolan Ambassador
- H.E. Mavivi Myakayaka Manzini, South Africa High Commissioner
- Ambassador Jana Hybaskova, Head of the Delegation of European Union
- H.E. Christian Mathias Schlaga, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany
- BCC Commissioners from Angola, Namibia and South Africa,
- Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
- Colleagues from the UN and Development Partners,
- Representatives of the Fishery Associations and Interest Groups,
- Members of the Media,
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning,

I am pleased to be here with so many distinguished participants for the opening session of the sixth Ministerial Conference on the Benguela Current Convention (BCC).

Allow me to start by expressing appreciation to both the BCC Secretariat, and to Honourable Minister Bernhard Esau, our respective hosts for the day.

I am informed that the Headquarters Agreement will be signed between Namibia (the host country) and the two other Members States of the BCC today. In accordance with the Vienna Convention, this signing will give the BCC full diplomatic status in Namibia. The Benguela Current Convention was officially registered with the UN Secretary General in July 2016; thus, it is a fully recognized independent International Governmental Organisation (IGO) and the signing countries must be congratulated.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The BCC is truly a successful model of sustainable ocean governance.

Through the Benguela Current Convention Angola, Namibia and South Africa have achieved what no other countries have managed to achieve: namely to create a multi-sectoral, inter-governmental organization, dedicated to the sustainable management and utilization of their Large Marine Ecosystem resources.

The BCC is also unique, as all major sectors in this region, utilizing the ocean -- namely, fisheries, environment, transport, and mines & energy – make joint management decisions, regarding the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem.

Today's meeting will allow the BCC to continue trail blazing by reviewing its Strategic Action **Program**? (SAP) and how it has turned commitment into action and impact on the ground.

Honourable Ministers,

UNDP played a catalytic role in the creation of the BCC and has enjoyed a strong partnership with the BCLME over the last two decades.

UNDP continuously shares knowledge, experience, and practice emanating from the BCLME Programme, through our national, regional, and international networks.

Through UNDP, the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) has recently committed another 11million USD to facilitate continued coordination around conservation, protection and the sustainable use of the BCLME.

We are proud of, and value, our partnership with the signatories and partners of the BCC.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Globally, almost 800 million people still live in poverty, and according to UNICEF 22,000 children die 'quietly' every day due to poverty. Over 800 million people go to bed hungry daily; this number is rising.

Oceans are, and will continue to be important to our economy and our lives and indeed solving these global challenges.

Nations and industries are increasingly looking to the ocean for more economic opportunities; more food; and more extractives. The world is going farther and deeper into our seas to extract, living and non-living marine resources.

-Currently, the global market value of marine and coastal resources and industries is estimated at \$3 trillion annually, 5% of global GDP¹.

¹ <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/oceans/>

-Marine and coastal resources of the BCLME contribute an estimated \$269 billion a year to the economies of the region².

-90% of goods globally are transported through maritime transport³.

-The oceans are the largest CO₂ reservoir, slowing down the negative impacts of climate change on our planet.

However, 40% of world oceans are 'heavily affected' by human activities⁴, including pollution, depleted fisheries, and the loss of coral reefs.

-More than half of global fisheries are exhausted, and a further third are depleted due to overfishing; while 3 billion people depend on fish for their intake of animal protein⁵.

-70% of coral reefs are threatened; and 20% have already been destroyed with no hope for recovery⁶.

The challenges are daunting.

² UNDP (2016) *International Waters – Delivering Results*

³ UNDP (2012) *Catalyzing Ocean Finance Volume I: Transforming Markets to Restore and Protect the Global Ocean*

⁴ <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/oceans/>

⁵ <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/oceans/>

⁶ UN Dept of Public Information (2016) *Life below Water: Why It Matters?*

http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/14_Why-it-Matters_Goal-14_Life-Below-Water_3p.pdf

And as we grapple with how to ensure responsible and sustainable use, of our oceans, Ocean Governance Initiatives such as the BCC serve as best practice on how to promote a sustainable Blue Economy that maintains and restores the health of our oceans.

Ladies and Gentleman,

The Global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development agreed by UN Member States in 2015, accords primacy to people, the planet, and prosperity in partnership and peace.

SDG 14, Life Below Water is dedicated to the oceans and is considered one of the most ambitious SDGs. As I near the end of my remarks, allow me to say a word about SDG 17, **partnerships**.

International, regional and national levels strengthened partnerships such as the BCC are needed if our common development goals are to be achieved.

Partnerships are what brought us all here today. Partnerships will be needed if we are to build stronger institutions that can safe guard our oceans for future generations.

Partnerships will be required if the oceans are to continue employing and feeding people as well as growing our economies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to conclude my remarks by paraphrasing Peter Thomson (UN SG's Special Envoy for the Ocean)⁷:

“Through the oxygen it sends us to breath, and the bounty of its resources; through the clouds it sends us with life-giving rain, the rivers, and the watered land that give us our daily bread the Ocean sustains us.

On this one blue planet, the Ocean unites us all, thus when it comes to caring for Ocean, we are all in this together.”

Thank you very much!

⁷ Letter sent from Peter Thomson to all those who submitted Voluntary Commitments, dated 3 Oct 2017