

**6<sup>th</sup> UN Environment Assembly**  
**Statement by the Hellenic Republic**  
**Mr. Petros Varelidis**  
**Secretary-General for Natural Environment and Water**  
**Hellenic Ministry of Environment and Energy, GREECE**

Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates and colleagues,

In line with the UNEA 6 theme that focuses on the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, as well as on the interlinkages between them, let me share some key elements of the comprehensive policy Greece's is promoting towards sustainable development.

With regard to **climate change**, Greece remains firmly committed to the Paris Agreement targets. We strongly believe that all countries have to adopt NDCs to achieve the 1,5 degrees °C target.

In our National Climate Law, adopted in 2022, we have set ambitious targets for 2030 and 2040 (55% and 90% respectively reduction of our GHG emissions compared to the reference year of 1990) towards climate neutrality by 2050, starting by decommissioning all lignite powered plants by 2028. We have already cut our coal use by over 80%.

Based on our National Energy and Climate Plan, Greece will surpass the target attributed to us by the EU legislation for 2030 by 23%. By 2030, 80% of our electricity will be produced by RES. Already the RES penetration has reached about 50%.

Our Climate Law also supports adaptation mainstreaming to all related strategies and action plans also through nature-based solutions and green infrastructure.

Special focus is given on greening our numerous **islands** by securing funds for their decarbonization.

With such an extended coastline, we are considerably affected by **plastic marine litter**. Thus, we are committed to reduce plastic litter by 50% and microplastics by 30%, by 2030. To achieve this, we need to apply the source-to-sea approach.

Let me also stress the need to respect the rule of international law. And the cornerstone of the international law as regards the sea is **UNCLOS**.

Greece has decided to declare 10% of the Greek territorial waters as no-take reserves by 2030. We have adopted by law the target to protect at least 30% of our sea areas by 2030 and to rehabilitate 30% of specific marine habitat types by 2030.

Before closing, I would like to draw your attention to the upcoming **9th Our Ocean Conference**, hosted by Greece, on 16-17 April this year.

The Conference will highlight important aspects for ensuring the sustainable management and conservation of the seas and oceans and their resources, by focusing, particularly on: sustainable tourism; green shipping; the reduction of plastic & microplastic pollution; and the Green transition in the Mediterranean, as a horizontal element across the Conference's standard areas of action.

We urge all countries, intergovernmental organisations, non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders to actively participate and to submit ambitious voluntary commitments that can practically contribute to ocean governance and the protection of the unique marine environment, the cornerstone of life on earth.

Thank you. \_\_