Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

I am very pleased to welcome you all to this side-event on food from the ocean.

First of all, many thanks to the organiser of the Ocean Conference for giving us this opportunity to address this very important topic.

As a leading seafood nation, Norway has a particular responsibility to put the issue of sustainable food from the ocean on the agenda.

We know that this is an important issue for many of you here today. The fact that four UN organisations are present highlights the fact that this is a cross sectorial issue.

Food from the ocean can help us to address both present and upcoming challenges – if these resources are properly managed. This means that we must take an ecosystem based approach – [meeting human needs at the same time as safeguarding the ecosystems that we all depend on.]

Sustainable Development Goal no.1 calls for an end to poverty. Food from the ocean is a source of income and livelihoods for millions of people. But this is not all. Food from the ocean is highly nutritious. Good nutrition enables people to earn more and increases their mental performance. This in turn promotes economic and social growth. The nutrients commonly found in seafood are especially important in the 1000-day window from when a woman becomes pregnant to her child reaching the age of two. This nutritional ’window of opportunity’ can have a huge impact on a child's growth, learning, and ability to rise out of poverty.

SDG 2 is to end hunger. More food will be needed to feed the worlds growing population. This is not just a question of *enough* food; we must also ensure the *right kind of food*, with the right nutrients and a small environmental footprint.

Reducing food loss and waste is by far the cheapest and most environmentally friendly way to increase food supply. A total of 1.3 billion tonnes of food is wasted every year. Less food loss and waste will make more food available without increasing pressure on the environment, including the ocean.

We should encourage people to enjoy a healthy and nutritious diet based on sustainably produced food. Food from the ocean can be a part of the solution, if these resources are well managed and we keep our oceans clean. Marine debris and microplastics are a serious threat in this respect.

I understand that we will learn more about the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition here today. I am pleased to inform you that Norway would like to play an active part in this initiative and that we will establish an action network on sustainable food from the oceans. We hope you will join us!

Thank You.