

Norwegian comments to the presentation of case studies on the analysis of effectiveness of existing and potential response options and activities on marine litter and microplastics at all levels to determine the contribution in solving the global problem

1. We thank the Secretariat and the consultant for arranging a virtual presentation of the progress on the effectiveness analysis.
2. From the presentation, it is apparent that the analysis is conducted as a broad and ambitious exercise, incorporating several aspects of the response options. Gathering information on the various efforts undertaken and assessing their contribution to the overall goal is a highly complicated and challenging exercise that requires a lot of time and effort, which the presentation of the effectiveness analysis clearly illustrates.
3. Nevertheless, it is clear that it is currently not possible to assess to what degree the different response options contributes to reduce the volume of plastic waste that ends up in the marine environment. Put simply, we do not have the necessary data and information available.
4. To perform a quantitative assessment of an instrument, it is necessary to have information of the current state of the problem, in this case plastic in the environment, before and after the instrument that should be assessed - at given points in time. Today, such data is very limited, and hence this analysis is not achievable. This is also pointed out in the first background paper to the effectiveness analysis (UNEP/AHEG/2020/4/4, point 24-25).
5. As such, the methodology developed is a useful input for discussions at a later stage, but we should not spend more of the valuable time of the AHEG applying this methodology to additional response options.
6. Instead, we need to develop a monitoring and reporting framework that will enable harmonized data collection, and a scientific mechanism that may feed this data into more rigorous assessments of different response options to determine their actual contribution in solving the problem.
7. The present analysis describes effectiveness qualitatively by identifying the characteristics of the different response options and outlining possible content of an instrument. However, this does not give any information on the actual contribution towards the goal.
8. We are of the opinion that continuing the analysis by examining more response options will not lead to any results that will add significant knowledge to what we already know. Existing response options are not sufficient, as plastic litter in our ocean is rapidly increasing.
9. We therefore strongly suggest finishing the analysis at this point and to document the results in a concise and intelligible report, preferably in time before the planned AHEG meeting in November.

10. As UNEA5 is approaching, we would like to recall our submission on potential response options, dated February 5th, in which we point out important questions we suggest that the AHEG focus on both at the next meeting and in the remaining time before UNEA5.