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**United Nations
Environment Assembly of the
United Nations Environment
Programme**

**Ad hoc open-ended expert group
on marine litter and microplastics
Fourth meeting**

Online, 9–13 November 2020

Item 2 (c) of the provisional agenda¹

Organizational matters: organization of work

**Scenario note for the fourth Ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter
and microplastics**

Note by the Acting Chair of the expert group

1. The present scenario note, which I have prepared in consultation with the Bureau and with the support of the Secretariat, sets out our plans and general expectations for the fourth ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastics (AHEG), which will take place virtually 9-13 November 2020. The purpose of the note is to assist Member States and other participants in preparing for the meeting to enable us to reach a successful conclusion of our current mandate, as established in UNEA resolutions 4/6 and 3/7.
2. Meeting agenda and all supporting meeting documentation has been made available on the dedicated papersmart meeting portal.²

Timing and format of the fourth meeting

3. The fourth meeting of the expert group will open on Monday, 9 November 2020 at 1 p.m. (EAT), and close on Friday, 13 November 2020 at 5.30 p.m. (EAT). The meeting will be serviced by the online platform "Interprefy" which will offer interpretation in all six UN languages. All delegates are encouraged to make full use of the opportunities to test their connections to this platform in advance of the meeting to facilitate connectivity and engagement. Testing opportunities will be organised Friday 6 November at 8 a.m. (EAT) and

¹ UNEP/AHEG/4/1

² <https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/working-docs-fourth-adhoc#>

- 4 p.m. (EAT). It will also be possible to connect up to two hours in advance each day of the meeting, i.e. 11 a.m. (EAT) 9-13 November to test connections, sound and video.
4. To join the training as well as the AHEG-4 meeting, a 2-way authentication process will be applied, whereby delegates will need to type in the email address that was used to register, then click “submit”. Delegates will then immediately receive an automatic email with 4-digit password from norereply@interpret.world. The password will expire within a few minutes (kindly check the spam folder in case you cannot find the email). Type in the 4-digit password. Delegates are requested to stay logged in during the breaks to avoid having to re-validate to access the meeting.
 5. Delegates are requested to use an ethernet cable (LAN) and a headset connected to the computer to allow for secure connectivity. Further technical guidance has been made available on the Papersmart portal <https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/Fourth-adhoc-oeeg>.
 6. To facilitate participation in the online AHEG-4 meeting, the Secretariat will provide internet allowances upon request to delegates from developing countries and economies in transition who are able to attest that they will not be able to join the virtual meetings without UNEP’s financial assistance. Eligible delegates who require allowances for data bundles please contact hellen.ojiambo@un.org and john.gakunya@un.org by 8 November 2020. Please note that allowances will be processed once the meeting has concluded in accordance with UN financial rules and regulations and will be based on full attendance.
 7. The connection link for the AHEG meeting will be sent by individual email to all registered participants. For questions or problem-solving related to the link please contact the Secretariat at unep-gpmarinelitter@un.org as soon as possible. In addition, we will provide a helpline number for you to call in case you face any difficulties login on to the Interprefy platform. The helpline will be open on Monday 9 November from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. and Tuesday to Friday (10-13 November) from 12.30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the following number: +41 22 518 07 51.
 8. Delegates are invited to make use of the time before and after the sessions to allow for regional consultations and possible interregional discussions. The Secretariat may be able to provide technical assistance in facilitating such consultations, upon request by the Bureau member from the region one day in advance of the meeting at the latest. Delegates are also encouraged to use the Interprefy private chat to connect for bilateral discussions.

Progress made at the third AHEG meeting and during the intersessional period

9. At our third meeting, we made good progress in a number of areas, and an outcome document³ which summarized key discussions from the meeting, and informed the work of the expert group in 2020 was adopted by the meeting.
10. Pursuant to subparagraph 10(d) of UNEA resolution 3/7, and the outcome document of AHEG-3 held in November 2019, a letter was sent on 11 December 2019, inviting Member States and stakeholders to provide [Submissions on potential response options, pursuant to subparagraph 10 \(d\) of UNEA resolution 3/7](#); [Voluntary inputs to the report on stocktaking, pursuant to subparagraph 7\(a\) of UNEA resolution 4/6](#); and [Voluntary inputs on examples of approaches to analyse effectiveness, pursuant to subparagraph 7 \(d\) of UNEA resolution 4/6](#) through the AHEG web portal.
11. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the bureau decided to postpone the planned meeting scheduled for May 2020, to November 2020, and to organize the meeting in a virtual format.

³ https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/uploads/ahег_3_outcome_document_0.pdf

- Subsequently, the Bureau prepared a Scenario Note⁴ for the intersessional period through a consultative process, with a view to ensuring solid preparations for AHEG-4. Several webinars, interactive technical briefings and two informal virtual preparatory meetings were organised to present and discuss key studies and activities mandated under paragraph 7 of UNEA resolution 4/6. An online AHEG forum was also created to allow for informal exchanges in writing of technical information amongst experts.
12. Regional online consultation meetings were organised by the Asia Pacific Group, African Group and Latin American and Caribbean Group, to facilitate regional consultations with Bureau Members and share information on progress made and on ongoing work of the AHEG intersessional work.
 13. Overall, the intersessional period has provided several opportunities for interested AHEG experts to engage interactively in the preparations for AHEG-4, including at the second informal virtual preparatory meeting held on 20-22 October.

Preparing for the fourth meeting

14. I would like to emphasize the need for delegations to prepare carefully for the fourth meeting, which will be the last meeting to deliver our mandates as set out in UNEA resolutions 3/7 and 4/6.
15. I strongly encourage all participants to arrive at the fourth meeting with a clear understanding of the working documents⁵, as well as the zero draft summary that I drafted in consultation with the Bureau.
16. The programme of work⁶ reflects the need to address all points under our mandate including preparations for UNEA-5,
17. I strongly encourage you to undertake the necessary consultations nationally and regionally, both before and during the meeting, and to take the opportunity to consult with other regions and delegations, as you consider appropriate. Good preparation for the meeting will enable us to make greater progress.

Organization of work at the fourth meeting

18. The fourth meeting will span over five days, with four meeting hours per day, amounting to, in total, 20 hours in plenary. Given the limited amount of time available, it is important to ensure that the meeting is conducted in an efficient manner. Delegates are therefore encouraged to be well prepared for the meeting, and apply flexibility with regard to possible technical and procedural challenges.
19. Delegates are in particular drawn to their attention that the following organizational and administrative matters will be addressed on day 1:
 - a. The meeting will at its opening proceed to elect a Chair, since the expert group, following the resignation of the previous Chair from New Zealand, is currently led by an Acting Chair
 - b. Proceed to adopt the agenda⁷.

⁴<https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/33641/Final%20Scenario%20Note%20for%20AHEG%202%20sept.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

⁵ <https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/working-docs-fourth-adhoc#>

⁶ https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/uploads/inf_1.pdf

⁷ https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/uploads/unep_ahег_4_1_english.pdf

20. With regard to substantive matters, delegates are encouraged to focus on the work remaining prior to finalization of the mandates of the two UNEA resolutions, and to work cooperatively and effectively to maximize the opportunities for discussion and make maximum progress within the available time. Such mandates include identification of potential options for continued work, for further consideration at the fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5). The range of views received by the Secretariat have been outlined in working document UNEP/AHEG/2020/4/5⁸. The expert group may wish to consolidate its work to ensure that the input provided to UNEA is as concise as possible within the given mandates.
21. With a view to ensuring efficient use of time, all delegates are encouraged to submit their written statement to the secretariat at unep-gpmarinelitter@un.org in advance of the meeting, for upload to the Papersmart meeting portal.
22. Delegates are also requested to limit their remarks to 3 minutes for individual delegations and 5 minutes for regional and political groups, for every intervention.

Expected outcomes of the fourth meeting

23. In addition to the meeting report of AHEG-4, I have prepared a draft summary of the entire work of the expert group, in accordance with the mandates provided in paragraph 10(d) of UNEA resolution 3/7 and paragraph 7 of UNEA resolution 4/6, and taking into account inputs from experts throughout the AHEG process. The scope of this summary should not go beyond the mandate of the AHEG.
24. The summary will be finalized in consultation with Member States at the fourth session of the expert group, with the understanding that such consultations are not to be seen as formal negotiations. The draft of the summary has already been made available online⁹ and delegates are encouraged to review the draft constructively, in a spirit of flexibility, cooperation and inclusivity. Please be advised that additional discussion on substance is not expected under agenda 6 when the group is expected to discuss how to summarize the outcome of the group. All substantive interventions should be made under each agenda item prior to Agenda 6.
25. In conclusion, all delegates are encouraged to be well prepared to conclude the work of the expert group in a constructive and flexible manner, taking into account that the meeting is organized virtually. I very much look forward to working closely with all delegates, to ensure a fruitful and successful outcome of the fourth meeting of the expert group.

Satoru Iino

Acting Chair

Annexes:

1. Annotated provisional agenda
2. Proposed Programme of Work

⁸ https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/uploads/english_-_identification_of_potential_options.pdf

⁹ https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/uploads/draft_aheg_chair_summary.pdf#overlay-context=Fourth-adhoc-oeeg

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EP

UNEP/AHEG/4/1/Add.1



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**United Nations
Environment Assembly of the
United Nations Environment
Programme**

**Ad hoc open-ended expert group
on marine litter and microplastics**

Fourth meeting

Online, 9–13 November 2020

Item 2 (c) of the provisional agenda*

Organizational matters: organization of work

Annotated provisional agenda

Item 1

Opening of the meeting

1. The fourth meeting of the ad hoc open-ended expert group established by the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) at its third session,¹⁰ whose mandate was extended at the Assembly's fourth session,¹¹ will be opened at 1 p.m. Nairobi time (UTC + 3) on Monday, 9 November 2020. Working documents for the meeting will be provided in all official languages of the United Nations, while information documents will be provided in English only. Interpretation into all United Nations official languages will be provided during all plenary sessions of the meeting.

* UNEP/AHEG/4/1.

¹⁰ UNEP/EA.3/Res.7.

¹¹ UNEP/EA.4/Res.6.

Item 2

Organizational matters

(a) Election of officers

2. Pursuant to the relevant rules of procedure of the Environment Assembly, Member States will be invited to elect a Chair for the Bureau of the ad hoc open-ended expert group.

(b) Adoption of the agenda

3. The Chair will introduce the provisional agenda for the meeting (UNEP/AHEG/4/1) and invite participants to adopt it.

(c) Organization of work

4. The Chair will invite the secretariat to present the programme of work for the meeting, as outlined in document UNEP/AHEG/4/INF/1, and the list of documents contained in document UNEP/AHEG/4/INF/2 for consideration and approval by the ad hoc open-ended expert group.

5. The Chair will invite the secretariat to outline the logistical arrangements for the meeting.

Item 3

Progress in relevant work pursuant to United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 4/6 on marine plastic litter and microplastics

6. The secretariat will provide an update on work undertaken as mandated by the Environment Assembly in its resolution 4/6. The progress report will cover the following areas:

(a) Draft assessment on sources, pathways and hazards of litter, including plastic litter and microplastics pollution (UNEP/AHEG/4/INF/3);

(b) Establishment of a digital multi-stakeholder platform for marine litter and microplastics (UNEP/AHEG/4/INF/4);

(c) Provisional mapping of all United Nations agencies, programmes, initiatives and other sources of expertise relating to marine litter, including plastic litter and microplastics (UNEP/AHEG/4/INF/5).

7. The ad hoc open-ended working group may wish to take note of the work undertaken.

Item 4

Consideration of paragraph 7 of United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 4/6

(a) Taking stock of existing activities and action (resolution 4/6, para. 7 (a))

8. The ad hoc open-ended expert group will be invited to consider paragraph 7 (a) of resolution 4/6, by which it is requested to take stock of existing activities and action by governments, regional and global instruments, international organizations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other relevant contributors to reduce marine plastic litter and microplastics with the aim of the long-term elimination of discharge into the oceans, on the basis of documents UNEP/AHEG/4/2 (“Summary of the stocktake of existing activities and action towards the long-term elimination of discharges into the oceans to reduce marine plastic litter and microplastics”) and UNEP/AHEG/4/INF/6 (“Report on the stocktake of existing activities and action towards the long-term elimination of discharges into the oceans to reduce marine plastic litter and microplastics”).

9. The ad hoc open-ended expert group may wish to take note of the findings of the stocktaking activities and consider them in its deliberations under agenda item 6.

(b) Identification of technical and financial resources or mechanisms (resolution 4/6, para. 7 (b))

10. The ad hoc open-ended expert group will be invited to consider paragraph 7 (b) of resolution 4/6, by which it is requested to identify technical and financial resources or mechanisms for supporting countries in addressing marine plastic litter and microplastics, on the basis of documents UNEP/AHEG/4/3 (“Identification of technical and financial resources or mechanisms for supporting countries in addressing marine plastic litter and microplastics”) and UNEP/AHEG/4/INF/7 (“Report on the inventory of technical and financial resources or mechanisms for supporting countries in addressing marine plastic litter and microplastics”).

11. The ad hoc open-ended expert group may wish to take note of the findings of the stocktaking activities and consider them in its deliberations under agenda item 6.

(c) Encouragement of partnerships that undertake activities in relation to the prevention of marine litter (resolution 4/6, para. 7 (c))

12. The ad hoc open-ended expert group will be invited to consider paragraph 7 (c) of resolution 4/6, by which it is requested to encourage partnerships that undertake activities such as the development of source inventories, the improvement of waste management, awareness-raising and the promotion of innovation in relation to the prevention of marine litter, including plastic litter and microplastics, on the basis of document UNEP/AHEG/4/INF/8 (“Initial case studies on partnerships that undertake activities in relation to the prevention of marine litter, including plastic litter and microplastics”).

13. The ad hoc open-ended expert group may wish to take note of the findings of the stocktaking activities and consider them in its deliberations under agenda item 6.

(d) Analysis of the effectiveness of existing and potential response options and activities (resolution 4/6, para. 7 (d))

14. The ad hoc open-ended expert group will be invited to consider paragraph 7 (d) of resolution 4/6, by which it is requested to analyse the effectiveness of existing and potential response options and activities with regard to marine litter and microplastics at all levels, to determine the contribution that they make to solving the global problem, on the basis of documents UNEP/AHEG/4/4 (“Summary of the analysis of the 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”) and UNEP/AHEG/4/INF/9 (“Analysis of the 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 and selected case studies”).

15. The ad hoc open-ended expert group may wish to take note of the findings of these stocktaking activities and consider them in its deliberations under agenda item 6.

Item 5

Consideration of submissions on potential response options pursuant to paragraph 10 (d) of United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 3/7 on marine litter and microplastics

16. Pursuant to paragraph 10 (d) of resolution 3/7, the open-ended ad hoc expert group will be invited to consider and identify response options for continued work on the basis of documents UNEP/AHEG/4/5 (“Identification of potential options for continued work for consideration by the United Nations Environment Assembly”) and UNEP/AHEG/4/INF/10 (“Submissions on potential options for continued work for consideration by the United Nations Environment Assembly”).

Item 6

Preparations for the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly

17. The ad hoc open-ended expert group will be invited to consider a summary based on the input provided by experts during the various stages of its work. The summary will be annexed to the report of the meeting as well as to the report by the Executive Director of UNEP to the Environment Assembly at its fifth session on the progress achieved in the implementation of resolution 4/6.

Item 7

Other matters

18. The ad hoc open-ended expert group may wish to consider any other matters related to its work.

Item 8

Adoption of the report of the meeting

19. The ad hoc open-ended expert group will be invited to consider and adopt a draft report of the meeting with the understanding that the report will be finalized by the Rapporteur, with the assistance of the secretariat, after the meeting.

Item 9

Closure of the meeting

20. The expert group is expected to conclude its work by 5.30 p.m. Nairobi time on Friday, 13 November 2020.

UNEP/AHEG/4/INF/1 Proposed programme of work for the Fourth meeting of the ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastics 9-13 November 2020

	Monday 9 November 2020	Tuesday 10 November 2020	Wednesday 11 November 2020	Thursday 12 November 2020	Friday 13 November 2020
13:00 – 15:00 15:30- 17:30 (GMT+3)	<p><u>Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting</u></p> <p><u>Agenda item 2: Organizational matters</u></p> <p>a) Election of Officers b) Adoption of the agenda c) Consideration of the organization of work</p> <p><u>Agenda item 3: Progress update on relevant work pursuant to United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 4/6</u></p> <p><u>Agenda item 4: Consideration of paragraph 7 of the United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 4/6 entitled marine plastic litter and microplastics:</u></p> <p>a) Stocktaking of existing activities and action (UNEA resolution 4/6 subparagraph 7a); b) Identification of technical and financial resources or mechanisms (UNEA resolution 4/6 subparagraph 7b); c) Encouragement of partnerships that undertake activities in relation to the prevention of marine litter (UNEA resolution 4/6 subparagraph 7c);</p>	<p><u>Agenda item 4 (continued):</u></p> <p>Consideration of paragraph 7 of the United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 4/6 entitled marine plastic litter and microplastics:</p> <p>d) Analysis of the effectiveness of existing and potential response options and activities (UNEA resolution 4/6 subparagraph 7d).</p> <p><u>Agenda item 5:</u></p> <p>Consideration of potential response options pursuant to subparagraph 10 (d) of United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 3/7</p>	<p><u>Agenda item 5 (continued):</u></p> <p>Consideration of potential response options pursuant to subparagraph 10 (d) of United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 3/7</p>	<p><u>Agenda item 6:</u></p> <p>Preparations for the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly</p>	<p><u>Agenda item 6 (continued):</u></p> <p>Preparations for the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly</p> <p><u>Agenda item 7: Other matters</u></p> <p><u>Agenda item 8: Adoption of the meeting report</u></p> <p><u>Agenda item 9: Closure of the meeting</u></p>