

Marine Environment and Wetlands Division

Department of Environment

Islamic Republic of Iran

With 83 million inhabitants, Iran is the world's 17th most populous country. It is the second largest country in the Middle East by spanning 1,648,195 km². The Caspian Sea is the largest inland water body on the Planet which is not connected with the World Ocean, and is located on the north of Iran. In south of Iran, we have Persian Gulf and Oman Sea.

In Iran, main sources of plastic waste littered are urban solid waste and coastal tourism. Plastic waste generation in Iran is about 3.92 million tons per year and per capita plastic waste generation in Iran is 0.14 kg per person per day. Annual plastic waste littered by coastal populations within 50 kilometers of coastline Iran is 9,526 tons per year.

The Policy frameworks are:

- ✓ Waste Management Law (2004)
- ✓ Waste Management bylaw (2005)
- ✓ The Law of taking taxes for productions that causes creation of dangerous materials: Recently established in 2019
- ✓ Draft of “Guideline for reducing plastic consumption in the country”.
- ✓ Guideline for environmental aspects in packaging, distribution and consumption of mineral plaster and cement products.
- ✓ Guideline for use of biodegradable plastics.

The related Conventions/Protocols, Action plan and Projects are:

- ✓ Protocol for the protection of the Caspian Sea against pollution from land-based sources and activities to the framework Convention for the protection of the marine environment of the Caspian Sea (Tehran Convention) is signed in 2011 but it is not entered into force yet.
- ✓ Protocol for the Protection of the Marine Environment against Pollution from Land-Based Sources (1990) to the Kuwait Regional Convention for Co-Operation of the Marine Environment from Pollution (1978).
- ✓ Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (Basel Convention).

- ✓ London Protocol on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter.

- ✓ Annex V of MARPOL Convention.

The measures are:

- ✓ Prevention and reduction of plastic waste generation
 - ✓ Environmentally sound waste management and cleanup of marine plastic litter
- a) Environmentally sound waste management such as:
- Promotion of Production and Consumption of goods with easy recycling and limitation on production and import of those with difficult Disposal and Recycling
 - Improvement of Production using Recycled Material
- b) Cleanup activities such as:
- Cleanup of the Caspian Sea, Oman Sea and Persian Gulf beaches in line with No Litter Plan
 - Clean Beach activity for all of the coastal cities located in Hormozgan Province with the help of local communities and NGOs on regular basis usually last Friday of the year
 - Nationwide clean-up event during the "Clean Earth Week"
- ✓ Promotion of innovative solutions:
 - Support industries that produce recyclable disposable envelopes and containers
 - ✓ Multi-stakeholder involvement and awareness raising
 - Cleanup the coastal areas of Nayband Bay (Bushehr Province) in collaboration with Nayband Petrochemical Unit
 - ✓ Promotion of international cooperation:
 - (1) Regional project "Addressing Marine litter in Caspian Sea Region"
 - (2) Draft of Regional Caspian Sea Marine Litter Action Plan as a part of above regional project.
 - (3) Risk Assessment Plan for Plastic Waste Accumulated Areas in the North Coasts of the Persian Gulf and Oman Sea (South Coast of the Country): Part of the Macroplastics Monitoring Master Plan, which is co-operating with Oman, India, the United Arab Emirates, Pakistan and Iran that Australia, is head of project.
 - (4) Coastal Cleanup: Caspian Sea Day (12 August) 2019 in IRAN

The national barriers are:

- Legislative gaps in combating land-based and sea-based litter and microplastic, such as:
 - ✓ Lack of strategy framework for marine pollution;
 - ✓ Mandate reporting of gear loss and facilitate sharing of this information to reduce gear conflict ;

- Weak enforcement of existing legislation
- Lack of proper information and reporting from land-based sources :disposed to coastal environment
- Technology: Such as satellite monitoring systems like Clean Sea Net focus primarily on detecting oil discharges, lack of proper technologies to replace plastics and microplastic to environmental friendly materials.
- Financial: Lack of adequate financial resources to combat different items of litters and microplastic originated from land or sea.

What do we need to do at National level?

- Carrying on, in a national bases, identification of waste composition, sources effect, fate and control of marine litter and microplastic ;
- Develop and implement marine litter and microplastic national action plan;
- Improve dumping and dumping sites with best available techniques or technologies;
- Replacement of plastic with environment friendly material such as biodegradable material textile bags and so on;
- Cleaning up of plastic floating in sea water via employing advance collecting devices and new machinery ;

The Proposed response options are:

- Evaluation of effectiveness of the existing best practices of the national/regional level action plans on marine litter and microplastics is highly recommended;
- The AHEG should consider differences between Developed and developing countries in all aspects;such as financial, technical, Data and so on.
- The AHEG should also consider developing guidelines for the circular economy on the basis of improving the economic mechanisms in the field of waste management;
- We would like to propose that the AHEG 4 and 5 should focus its work on:
 - Financial support to developing countries;
 - Financial resource & Mechanism;
 - Facilitate training and capacity building for requesting countries;
 - Implementation & Compliance Mechanism;

- Harmonized monitoring system;
- Development of life-cycle impact assessment methodologies;
- Last but not the least, focusing on how the outputs of the scientific studies could turn into a practical marine plastic and microplastic waste management

Also

- We believe that the response options should be developed on all the levels national level, regional level and global level at the same time with a long-term outlook; They are more or less have the same importance
- For example in case of our country in Iran, we planned to develop action plan at national level, as I mentioned in my previous slid, and for regional level we in the Caspian sea with all the littoral countries border in the Caspian Sea, and with the help of Tehran Convention secretariat, we prepared a draft of regional action plan for combating and controlling marine litter.
- And we recommended to the secretariat of Kuwait Convention to have marine litter action plan at regional level for Persian Gulf and sea of Oman/ ROPME sea area
- So, we recommend AHEG for playing a coordinating role between the regions/countries that have not yet developed any action plan on marine litter or not entered into force yet.
- Finally, we believe that, international warning & international bans could be helpful.

To conclude,

As the problem of the marine litter is a global challenge, we strongly believe that a coordinated action is necessary at global level and so there is a need to establish a new international agreement on it. However, since there already exists some global instruments that somehow are relevant to the waste and other material which end up in the seas and oceans, in order to avoid repetitive measures, we firstly need to have a comprehensive assessment on all the existing frameworks.

After we did the assessment and gone through gap analysis, we will have a better understanding on what we need and what to do.

So I would like to propose that in our document providing to UNEA, although we are not decide on the options of strengthening existing instruments or establishing a new one, we put our emphasis on the need to have a comprehensive assessment on what we already have. We don't need any duplication and any complication.

