

AGENDA ITEM 1 UK

The UK would like to congratulate the Chair on his appointment and welcomes the work undertaken by the Chair and the Secretariat of the AHEG and thanks them both for ensuring that the important work of the AHEG can continue during the COVID-19 pandemic. The UK believes that the work of the AHEG has progressed well and hopes that the mandate of the AHEG will have been completed in full by the end of this meeting. We look forward to an ambitious resolution on marine litter and microplastics at UNEA 5.

The UK is committed to protecting the marine environment from all stressors, and we are taking tangible action to tackling marine litter.

In 2018, the UK Government launched the Commonwealth Clean Ocean Alliance with our co-chair Vanuatu, which has now grown to 34 members, over half of the Commonwealth's 53 countries.

The Commonwealth Clean Ocean Alliance encourages member states to pledge ambitious action on plastics to stop plastic waste entering the ocean in the first place. To support the ambitions of the Commonwealth Clean Ocean Alliance, the UK has committed up to £70 million which includes providing expertise to deliver technical assistance to developing countries to support CCOA ambitions.

And the UK has committed to establish a £500 million Blue Planet Fund that will support developing nations to protect the marine environment and reduce poverty. Financed by UK Aid, the Blue Planet Fund will help eligible countries protect their marine resources from key human-generated threats including climate change, marine pollution such as marine litter, overfishing and biodiversity loss.