

November 10, 2020  
Written submission

#### AHEG-4

### Item 3: Progress in relevant work pursuant to UNEA resolution 4/6

On Behalf of the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), OceanCare, the Center for Oceanic Awareness, research, and Education (COARE), and the Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL), we would like to submit written comments on the following points on Item 3:

- a. *Draft assessment on sources, pathways and hazards of litter, including plastic litter and microplastics pollution (UNEP/AHEG/4/INF/3);*
  - We consider this assessment is really important to measure the degree of consensus on knowledge and science on marine plastic litter and microplastic pollution.
  - It will be key to ensure that the Section 2 of the assessment (Pathways and Sources) includes recent scientific information, such as:
    - [White and wonderful? Microplastics prevail in snow from the Alps to the Arctic](#) (July 2019)
    - [Atmospheric transport is a major pathway of microplastics to remote regions](#) (14 July 2020), on airborne transmission, including dust;
    - [The United States' contribution of plastic waste to land and ocean](#) (30 Oct 2020).
- b. *Establishment of a digital multi-stakeholder platform for marine litter and microplastics (UNEP/AHEG/4/INF/4);*
  - We welcome the presentation of the digital platform rationale explained, which aims to provide the digital arm of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML).
  - As highlighted by Switzerland and a number of other member states, for quality control purposes, it will be necessary to make sure that the platform ensures careful monitoring to avoid greenwashing and does not endorse false solutions, and that it includes alternative delivery systems, zero waste solutions, etc. Please refer to the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA) [Fact Sheet on false solutions](#) that can be used.
- c. *Provisional mapping of all United Nations (UN) agencies, programmes, initiatives and other sources of expertise relating to marine litter, including plastic litter and microplastics (UNEP/AHEG/4/INF/5)*
  - It is interesting to observe that 31% of UN entities are directly involved in addressing marine litter and microplastics. This shows the degree of concern that States are facing, with a growing number of technical assistance requests.
  - Further, as was mentioned during the oral Intervention from the Center for Oceanic Awareness, Research, and Education (COARE) the mapping does not reflect the Basel Convention: Adoption of plastic amendments and changing the status of plastic waste under the Basel Convention, which will enter into force in January 2021.
  - Finally we suggest the inclusion of regional political declarations and action plans calling for action regarding a global binding agreement to combat plastic pollution, for

instance, the [Pacific Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter 2018-2025](#), which was endorsed by Pacific leaders through the Kainaki II Declaration and includes implementation activities such as “*Support the development of a global legal framework to address marine litter and microplastics*”.

*Thank you,*