

Call for written submissions – Proposed response template on the potential options for elements towards an international legally binding instrument

On 9 December 2022, the Executive Secretary of the INC Plastic Pollution Secretariat sent a notification inviting written submissions from members of the committee and from observers. The template below is intended to provide guidance to members of the committee and observers in structuring the written submissions.

As requested by INC-1, written submissions will inform the secretariat in the preparation of a document with potential options for elements towards an international legally binding instrument, for consideration at the second session of the INC, without in any way prejudging what the committee might decide regarding the structure and provisions of the instrument. The document is to be based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastics as called for by UNEA resolution 5/14, including identifying the objective, substantive provisions including core obligations, control measures, and voluntary approaches, implementation measures, and means of implementation.

The template below is meant to assist Members and Observers to prepare their written submission as a guide. A number of documents prepared for INC-1 are of relevance, notably UNEP/PP/INC.1/5 on 'Potential elements, based on provisions in paragraphs 3 and 4 of United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 5/14, including key concepts, procedures and mechanisms of legally binding multilateral agreements that may be relevant to furthering implementation and compliance under the future international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment'.

The template is divided into three sections:

- I. Substantive elements
- II. Implementation elements
- III. Additional input

All written submissions must be sent to unep-incplastic.secretariat@un.org. The statements received will be compiled and made available the INC webpage.

Please note that it is not required for all fields to be answered in the template for submission.

Deadline for submissions:

- 6 January 2023 for written submissions from observers.
- 10 February 2023 for written submissions from Members of the Committee.

TEMPLATE FOR SUBMISSIONS

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| Name of country (for Members of the committee) | The Russian Federation |
| Name of organization (for observers to the committee) | |
| Contact person and contact information for the submission | Mr. Dmitry Kornilov, Deputy Head of the Division, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment |
| Date | 17/02/2023 |

I. Substantive elements

1. Objective(s)

a) *What objective(s) could be set out in the instrument?*

Proposed Objective:

The objective of this Agreement is to protect the environment, including the marine environment, from plastic pollution.

(optional additional point to be discussed: The goal of the Agreement is to protect human health and the environment, including the marine environment, from plastic pollution.)

Explanatory Text:

It is important to emphasize that the goal of the Agreement is not to eliminate the production or use of plastic or impede international trade, but to resolve the issue of polluting the environment with plastic waste.

The Russian Federation reserves the right to alter the goal by adding protection of human health after broader internal discussions.

2. Core obligations, control measures and voluntary approaches

a) *What core obligations, control measures and voluntary approaches would provide a comprehensive approach to addressing plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, throughout the full life cycle in line with the future objective(s) of the instrument?*

The proposed core obligations under the current Agreement:

1. To monitor plastic pollution based on the methods of qualitative and quantitative determination of the amount of plastic in the environment, agreed upon by the Parties to this

Agreement.

2. To raise public awareness about the dangers of uncontrolled disposal of plastics and the methods of effective management of plastic waste.
3. To evaluate risks caused by plastic pollution for human health and the environment.
4. To develop the best available technologies for the disposal and recycling of plastic waste.
5. To develop and promote mechanisms of extended responsibility of producers and importers for their goods and packaging.
6. To cooperate in and promote the development and distribution of plastic collection and recycling technologies.
7. To take into account the needs of the least developed countries and to provide them with necessary technical assistance.
8. To implement modern/ innovative wastewater treatment mechanisms.

Explanatory text:

There are three major points, emphasized in the text above, apart from the other types of core obligation.

The Russian Federation is of the view that the Parties to the Agreement must elaborate mutually agreed scientific methods for the identification of plastic and its elements in the components of the environment, because currently there are no universally recognized methods of such identification.

Secondly, extended responsibility of producers and importers for their goods and packaging is needed, and currently this is the trend that the Russian Federation follows. The limits of such responsibility is for the Parties to determine.

Thirdly, we must ensure that the needs of the least developed countries are taken into consideration, and to that end we must provide them with technical assistance and facilitate technological exchange.

The Russian Federation reserves the right to supplement this section with information on control measures at a later stage.

II. Implementation elements

1. Means of Implementation

With respect to means of implementation, document UNEP/PP/INC.1/5 covers the following elements: capacity-building, technical assistance, technology transfer on mutually agreed terms and financial assistance.

a) *What measures will be required to support the implementation of the instrument?*

1. Development of national action plans, as well as guidelines for the development of national action plans taking into account national circumstances
2. Submission of periodic reports on the domestic implementation of the Agreement (once every three years)
3. Facilitating the creation and improvement of plastic collection and recycling infrastructure.
4. Creating favorable conditions for the development of international scientific cooperation in the fields of:
 - evaluation of the scale of plastic pollution,
 - evaluation of threats for human health and the environment as a result of plastic pollution,
 - development of new technologies for cleaning the environment from plastic pollution.

Explanatory text:

National action plans is a universal instrument of implementation of MEAs, therefore we consider it applicable in the case of combatting plastic pollution.

As for national reports on the domestic policies and other measures to implement the Agreement, we propose three-year intervals.

III. Additional input

Please provide any other relevant proposals or priorities here (for example introductory elements; awareness-raising, education and exchange of information; research; stakeholder engagement; institutional arrangements and final provisions).

1. Organization of cooperation with other international multilateral agreements.
2. The Agreement should promote cooperation, coordination and complementarity of relevant regional and international conventions and treaties aimed at resolving the issue of plastic pollution, while ensuring that the provisions of the Agreement do not conflict with the obligations of the Parties under such conventions and treaties, as well as any other international agreements.
3. Organization of events on the sidelines of the Conference of the Parties to the Agreement on the exchange of best practices.

Explanatory text:

It is important in our view to organize proper communication and cooperation with the secretariats of other Multilateral Environmental Agreements and to avoid duplication of obligations. Furthermore, the coherence between obligations under the Plastic Pollution Agreement and obligations under other international and regional treaties should be ensured.

Principles of the Agreement:

1. The implementation of the Agreement shall be based on the principles of transparency, economic efficiency, as well as sound science and verifiability of the measures taken to implement the Agreement and their results.
2. The Parties to the Agreement must be free to choose the appropriate measures for the implementation of this Agreement provided that such measures are not discriminatory. Measures under the Agreement aimed to tackle the problem of plastic pollution should be developed taking into account national circumstances and capacities of the Parties.
3. The implementation of the Agreement should contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, taking into account their integrated and indivisible nature, as well as the need to ensure the balance of the social, economic and environmental components of sustainable development.

Explanatory text:

The Russian Federation considers it necessary to supplement the template with the section on principles, which we decided to place in the “Additional Inputs”, since there was no special part for them in this template.

Apart from those principles that are mentioned above, we would like to emphasize that the Russian Federation will strive to implement the principles indicated in the Rio Declaration of 1992, but will not support the potential inclusion into the Agreement of the so-called “universal principles of environmental cooperation”.