

## Second Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution Side Event

### Microplastic: understanding the challenge and its impacts

**Date and time:** Wednesday, 31 May 13:30-14:45 CEST

**Venue:** UNESCO Headquarters Hall 8, Paris, France

#### **Description:**

From mountain tops to ocean floors, in our drinking water and in our bodies, small plastic particles (<5 mm) called microplastics (which include nanoplastic) are found in almost every corner of life. Though the science on its prevalence in the environment and impacts on animal and human health has rapidly advanced, the policies to reduce microplastic leakage have lagged. The diversity of microplastic shapes, sizes, plastic types, the ability to absorb chemicals in their surfaces as well as the leaching of additives and co-formulants makes regulation a challenge, while funding to support research and development to reduce microplastics remains limited. This side event will highlight the current understanding on microplastics, the knowledge gaps, and the innovation and policies necessary to assess and prevent microplastic pollution and its negative effect on our own health.

The session will bring together speakers representing civil society, government, public and private research bodies to share insights on the potential solutions to the growing microplastic problem from each of their respective fields, and key considerations for the INC process to prevent further microplastic pollution. The event will also provide an opportunity for participants to share their perspectives on microplastics to inform the development of the global treaty.

#### Objectives of the session:

- Provide an overview of the state of microplastic leakage into the environment and the movement of microplastics across ecosystems
- Share the challenges of regulating the release of microplastics, such as defining toxicity limits and financing for research and development
- Illustrate current actions to combat microplastic pollution across geographic scales, from national policies to global partnerships

Event outline

Time	Speaker	Presentation
13:30 - 13:35	Leah Mupas Segui, Principal Associate, The Pew Charitable Trusts	Opening remarks
13:35 – 14:20	Leah Mupas Segui, Principal Associate, The Pew Charitable Trusts	“Painting the town plastic”: Research reveals bigger scale of global microplastic emissions than previously reported
	Margaret Spring, Chief Conservation and Science Officer, Monterey Bay Aquarium and Dr. Stefano Aliani, Senior Scientist, National Research Council of Italy	Ubiquity and Risks of Micro- and Nano-plastic particles: Marine-atmospheric micro- and nano-plastics cycle, transport and exchange
	Alessio Gomiero, Senior Researcher, NORCE -Norwegian Research Centre	Microplastic particles: Knowledge constraints limiting effective regulatory actions
	Maria Westerbos, Founder & Director, Plastic Soup Foundation; Co-founder, Plastic Health Council and Sian Sutherland, Co-founder, A Plastic Planet; PlasticFree, Plastic Health Council	What are the proven impacts of micro-plastics and its chemical additives on human health? Announcement of the Plastic Health Council
	Marc Metian, Research Scientist, International Atomic Energy Agency	Fostering international research activities and technological improvements through a global initiative
14:20 - 14:43	Discussion and Q&A	
14:43 - 14:45	Leah Mupas Segui, Principal Associate, The Pew Charitable Trusts	Closing remarks