

### Guidance on proposed establishment and mandate of the contact groups

As outlined in his scenario note for the fourth session (document UNEP/PP/INC.4/4), the Chair will propose that the committee establish two contact groups to advance the development of the text of the instrument, using the revised draft text contained in document UNEP/PP/INC.4/3 as starting point and basis for textual negotiations, as agreed at the third session.

This document has been developed to support the co-chairs of the proposed contact groups and the co-facilitators of the proposed subgroups to structure the discussions and complements the scenario note prepared by the Chair.

Contact groups are expected to be established under agenda item 4 during the first day of INC-4. Contact groups could start their work in the afternoon of Tuesday 23 April or on Wednesday 24 April. Both groups are expected to complete their work at the latest by the end of Sunday, 28 April. The proposed mandates for the two contact groups are as follows:

- Contact group 1: Consider the elements addressed in parts I and II of the revised draft text contained in document UNEP/PP/INC.4/3, including any relevant proposed annexes, and make recommendations to the committee on streamlining the text;
- Contact group 2: Consider the elements addressed in parts III to VI of the revised draft text contained in document UNEP/PP/INC.4/3, including any relevant proposed annex, and make recommendations to the committee on streamlining the text.

Each contact group will be led by two co-chairs.

Each contact group will be invited to divide its work into subgroups, along the following lines:

Contact Group 1	Contact group 2
<p><u>Subgroup 1.1</u> Part I: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Part II: 12 and 13bis</p>	<p><u>Subgroup 2.1</u> Part III: 1 and 2</p>
<p><u>Subgroup 1.2</u> Part II: 1, 2, 3, 3bis, 4, 4bis, 5, 6, 9(b), 10(a), 13</p>	<p><u>Subgroup 2.2</u> Part IV: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 8bis Part V: 1, 2, 3 Part VI</p>
<p><u>Subgroup 1.3</u> Part II: 7, 8, 9(a), 10(b), 11</p>	

Each subgroup would be led by two co-facilitators.

## **Overall expectations of the contact groups**

The work of the contact groups, including in the subgroups, needs to progress in the development of the draft text of the instrument, with a view to reaching a draft text that is sufficiently advanced to enable it to be finalized at the fifth session of the committee.

## **Conduct of the work in contact groups and their subgroups**

Following the formal introduction of the revised draft text in plenary, both contact groups would start their work with an initial discussion of the revised draft text. This initial discussion should identify potential re-alignments and merging of the elements that might facilitate convergence of options, as well as overall approaches on the different elements of the text in the sub-groups, so that work in these subgroups can start as soon as possible.

At this stage, interventions would be invited to focus on the identification of areas of the text in which the revised draft text may benefit from technical streamlining, including a merger of options where relevant, to facilitate their consideration in the relevant subgroups, and possible ways forward to make progress on specific elements of the text. The group may, based on the discussion, request the co-chairs in consultation with co-facilitators to prepare streamlined elements of text for the consideration of subgroups.

The work could then continue in the subgroups as appropriate, informed by this initial discussion. Further contact group meetings would then take place as needed, including for the report of any outcomes of the work of subgroups before their transmission to plenary.

The Chair will meet regularly with the co-chairs and co-facilitators over the course of the session to discuss expectations for, and progress of the groups

As per practice at past sessions of the committee, observers may be invited to make contributions in the groups following interventions by Members, at the discretion of the co-chairs and co-facilitators.

## **Conduct of the work in the subgroups**

Each subgroup will be expected to advance the development of the text, including through textual negotiation, on the elements within its mandate, taking into account any outcomes of the initial discussion in the relevant contact group.

Each subgroup should aim to identify areas of convergence with a view to narrowing down the text options, and explore possible ways forward in respect of any outstanding points of difference, with a view to developing solutions and bridging proposals.

A subgroup might also provide the opportunity for informal consultations among delegations to advance its work. Any outcomes of such informal consultations shall be reported to the relevant subgroup for its further consideration.

The co-facilitators will determine the order of discussion within their subgroup, and the time required for each issue, in consultation with the group.

### **Scheduling of meetings**

Meetings of contact groups and subgroups will be in-person only, and no filming or recording of the groups should occur. Meetings of subgroups will not overlap with meetings of their respective contact group. No more than three subgroup meetings will be held at the same time. Group meetings will not be scheduled to coincide with plenary meetings.

To assist delegates in their preparations, a tentative programme setting out a proposed schedule for the session, including for contact group and subgroup meetings, will be made available on the INC webpage and updated regularly.

### **Reporting**

Daily meetings will be organised between the Chair and the co-chairs of the contact groups and co-facilitators of the subgroups, to ensure coordinated and parallel progress in the discussions in each group.

Report back plenary meetings will be convened to allow the co-chairs of the contact groups to report on the progress of the work and the proposed way forward, and to identify in this context areas of convergence, outstanding questions, as well as any points of difference and efforts to develop further convergence.

In general, an oral report is sufficient, however if the group has moved to negotiating text changes, revised text should be provided to plenary.

Any outcomes of the contact groups should be made available, including any:

- a. Draft text of elements within their respective mandates resulting from the work conducted in the contact group, including its subgroups, to be forwarded for further consideration by the plenary of the committee; and
- b. Identification of any text that could be forwarded by the plenary to the legal drafting group.

The timing of these meetings will be reflected in the schedule for the INC session to be made available on the INC website.

### **In-session Documents Platform**

During the session, an online in-session documents platform will be available to Members and accredited Observer organizations in attendance at the fourth session to self-upload their textual submissions (see [Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee | Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution \(unep.org\)](#)).<sup>1</sup>

Once registered, the nominated user can access the platform to self-upload from Contact Groups:

- i. Textual submission on behalf of Group of States
- ii. Textual submission by Member
- iii. Statement on behalf of Group of States
- iv. Statement by Member.

### **Conclusion and outcomes of the work in contact groups**

As noted above, both contact groups are expected to complete their work at the latest by the end of Sunday, 28 April, with a view to making any outcomes of their work available in time for consideration by the committee in plenary on Monday, 29 April.

At the last meeting of their respective contact group, the co-chairs should present an oral summary capturing the discussions of the contact group, including the outcomes of work within their subgroups, highlighting areas of convergence and any remaining areas for further work, including potential ways forward for these issues. The co-chairs of both contact groups will also be invited to present their summary to the committee in plenary on Monday April 29, 2024.

---

---

<sup>1</sup> Delegations need to nominate and register one user to access and use the platform on behalf of their delegation. All uploaded documents will be reviewed by the platform administrator prior to being published on the platform and will subsequently be published on the INC-4 website.