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**Intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop  
an international legally binding instrument on plastic  
pollution, including in the marine environment  
Fifth session**

Busan, Republic of Korea, 25 November–1 December 2024  
Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**Preparation of an international legally binding instrument on  
plastic pollution, including in the marine environment**

**Information submitted by the Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations**

**Note by the secretariat**

1. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has submitted relevant information contained in the annex to this document, providing a technical background that could be of relevance to the fifth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee.
2. The information is presented as received and has not been formally edited.

## Annex

# Information submitted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

### I. Background

1. Over the last 70 years, the use of plastics in agrifood systems and food value chains has become pervasive. FAO estimated that every year 12.5 million tonnes of plastics are used in plant and animal production, and an additional 37.3 million tonnes in food packaging. The crop production and livestock sectors are the largest users, accounting for 10 million tonnes per year (2.8 percent of the global plastic production), followed by fisheries and aquaculture with 2.1 million tonnes, and forestry with 0.2 million tonnes<sup>1</sup>. Agricultural plastics have both positive and negative impacts on food security, food safety and nutrition, as well as on social and economic dimensions of sustainability. The widespread use of plastic products in agriculture, coupled with lack of systematic collection and of sustainable management, leads to their accumulation in soils and aquatic environments, with potential for harm to human, animal, plant, and environmental health - impacting all domains of One Health. This calls for the development of appropriate policies and instruments at multiple levels.
2. In September 2024, during its 29th session, the FAO Committee on Agriculture (COAG)<sup>2</sup>:
  - a. welcomed the work of FAO; considered with appreciation the proposed Voluntary Code of Conduct on the Sustainable Use and Management of Plastics in Agriculture (VCoC)<sup>3</sup> in response to the recommendations of the 28th Session of COAG; recommended [the explanation of the position to be found in the Appendix D<sup>4</sup>] the continuation of the process to further develop the proposed document, in consultation with Members, including after the adoption of a legally binding agreement on plastic pollution, for further consideration and endorsement at a future Council session, while acknowledging Members' decisions to utilize the proposed VCoC in their national contexts, in the meantime, if they wish to do so; and invited FAO to support Members, upon their request, to provide technical assistance on the sustainable use of plastics in agriculture;
  - b. acknowledged the scientific and evidence-based assessments undertaken by FAO to address knowledge gaps on plastics used in agriculture, and recommended FAO to address remaining knowledge gaps; and to support Members, upon request, with the development of policies and programmes to advance the sustainable use and management of plastics in agriculture; and
  - c. encouraged FAO to continue engaging, as an observer and within its mandate, with the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) in their deliberations to develop an "International legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment" (ILBI) established by the United Nations Environment Assembly Resolution End plastic pollution: Towards an international legally binding instrument (UNEP/EA.5/Res.14) by providing guidance on the issues of plastics used in agriculture.

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<sup>1</sup> FAO. 2021. Assessment of agricultural plastics and their sustainability – A call for action. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb7856en>

<sup>2</sup> FAO. 2024. Report of the 29th Session of the Committee on Agriculture. <https://www.fao.org/governing-bodies/technical-committees/committee-on-agriculture/coag-2024/en>

<sup>3</sup> The proposed text of the Voluntary Code of Conduct on the Sustainable Use and Management of Plastics in Agriculture (VCoC) is available as Annex I to the document COAG/2024/8: FAO's work on the use and management of plastics in agriculture and the Voluntary Code of Conduct on the Sustainable Use and Management of Plastics in Agriculture. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/f096bbd7-5f57-4f18-930c-f43b9386c484>

<sup>4</sup> Argentina and Brazil are able to join consensus on endorsing the conclusions for this Agenda item, with the understanding that the draft Voluntary Code of Conduct on the Sustainable Use and Management of Plastics in Agriculture was not endorsed by the Committee on Agriculture in its 29th Session. The current version of the draft Voluntary Code of Conduct and any future amendments do not set any kind of precedent for the deliberations of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) in charge of developing an internationally legally binding instrument (ILBI) on plastic pollution, including the marine environment, established by the United Nations Environment Assembly Resolution UNEP/EA.5/Res. 14.

## II. The work of FAO on plastics used in agriculture

### *Plastics used in terrestrial agriculture*

3. Recent research reveals widespread and progressive plastic pollution in agricultural soils, negatively impacting soil health and fertility. While the impact on marine and freshwater aquatic environments has been known for some time, soil pollution from agricultural plastics is emerging as a major concern and area of expanding research efforts. Bio-based and plastics with biodegradable properties used in agriculture, despite having advantages in some applications, are lacking sufficient risk assessment and verifiable sustainability data.<sup>5</sup>
4. In December 2021, FAO released the report *Assessment of agricultural plastics and their sustainability: A call for action*.<sup>6</sup> This is the first global assessment on plastics used in agriculture.
5. FAO continues investing in furthering the knowledge base to better understand benefits and trade-offs of using plastics in agriculture. The Organization contributed to several global studies and assessments on the distribution and impacts plastics,<sup>7</sup> criteria for problematic plastic products and practices,<sup>8</sup> scientific and technical gaps,<sup>9</sup> and microplastics.<sup>10</sup> FAO continues working on the assessments of national and international frameworks and systematic mapping of the existing knowledge gaps. In 2024, the Organization published the reports *Analysis of stakeholder submissions towards the development of a Voluntary Code of Conduct on the Sustainable Use and Management of Plastics in Agriculture*,<sup>11</sup> and *A short overview of regulatory and market-based instruments for the management of plastics used in agriculture*.<sup>12</sup>
6. FAO is also executing the GEF FARM Project, with the aim of improving agrochemicals and agriplastics waste reduction and management in Uruguay and Kenya.<sup>13</sup> In 2023, the FAO and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) jointly launched a 5-year Coordinated Research Project (CRP) to assess the fate and environmental impact of plastics and microplastics in agricultural soils using isotopic techniques.<sup>14</sup>

### *Prevention and reduction of abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG)*

7. Fishery and aquaculture gear, including those comprised of plastic polymers, are hazardous and problematic when lost, abandoned, or discarded to the marine environment (GESAMP, 2021).<sup>15</sup>ALDFG

<sup>5</sup> Hofmann, T., Ghoshal, S., Tufenkji, N. et al. 2023. *Plastics can be used more sustainably in agriculture*. Comm Earth Environ 4, 332. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s43247-023-00982-4> and Scientists' Coalition for an effective Plastics Treaty. 2024. Policy brief: Impacts of plastics across the food system. [https://ikhapp.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/SciCoa\\_Policy\\_brief\\_Food\\_System.pdf](https://ikhapp.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/SciCoa_Policy_brief_Food_System.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> FAO. 2021. *Assessment of agricultural plastics and their sustainability – A call for action*. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb7856en>

<sup>7</sup> UNEP. 2022. *Plastics in agriculture – an environmental challenge*.

[https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/40403/Plastics\\_Agriculture.pdf](https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/40403/Plastics_Agriculture.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Nordic Council of Ministers. 2024. *Global criteria to address problematic, unnecessary, and avoidable plastic products*.

<https://www.norden.org/en/publication/global-criteria-address-problematic-unnecessary-and-avoidable-plastic-products>

<sup>9</sup> N.K. Haindongo, C. J. Breen, and L. Neretin, 2023. Chapter 18 - *Emerging contaminants related to plastic and microplastic pollution* Editor(s): Michael E. Knowles, Lucia E. Anelich, Alan R. Boobis, Bert Popping, Present Knowledge in Food Safety, Academic Press, pp 270-280, <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-819470-6.00050-0> and Tartiu, V. E., Hurley, R., Baann, C., Briassoulis, D., Schettini, E., Convertino, F., Le Moine, B., Martinelli, A., Vernet, L., Geissen, V., Huerta Lwanga, E., Beriot, N., He, D., Thompson, R. H., Carcasci, G., & Nizzetto, L. (in press). *Addressing the environmental sustainability of plastics used in agriculture: a multi-actor perspective*. Cambridge Prims: Plastics.

<sup>10</sup> Nordic Council of Ministers. 2022. *Addressing microplastics in a global agreement on plastic pollution*.

<https://www.norden.org/en/publication/addressing-microplastics-global-agreement-plastic-pollution>

<sup>11</sup> Karasik, R., Baann, C., Howell, D., Nizzetto, L. and Carcasci, G. 2024. *Analysis of stakeholder submissions towards the development of a voluntary code of conduct on the sustainable use and management of plastics in agriculture*. Rome, FAO.

<https://doi.org/10.4060/cd2593en>

<sup>12</sup> FAO. 2024. *A short overview of regulatory and market-based instruments for the management of plastics used in agriculture*. Environment and Natural Resources Management Working Paper, No. 102. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd2610en>

<https://www.greenpolicyplatform.org/initiatives/gef-farm>

<sup>14</sup> IAEA. Assessing the Fate, and Environmental Impact of Plastics in Soil and Crop Ecosystems Using Isotopic Techniques | IAEA <https://www.iaea.org/projects/crp/d15021>

<sup>15</sup> GESAMP. 2021. *Sea-based sources of marine litter* (Gilardi, K., ed.) (IMO/FAO/UNESCO-IOC/UNIDO/WMO/IAEA/UN/UNEP/UNDP/ISA Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection). Rep. Stud. GESAMP No. 108, 109 p. <http://www.gesamp.org/site/assets/files/2213/rs108e.pdf>

not only pollute the oceans and inland waters, but can also continue to catch and ensnare target and non-target species, as well as other marine wildlife (commonly referred to as “ghost fishing”); ingested by target and non-target species and other marine wildlife; represent hazards to navigation and safety at sea; damage marine habitats; and is often associated with complicated and expensive ALDFG recovery and clean-up. The resulting microplastics from the discarded gear can cause multiple health issues in aquatic animal species, such as neurotoxicity, growth retardation, and behavioral abnormalities<sup>16</sup> in fish, in humans via food, and in aquatic plants if excessive accumulation of microplastics (including through the abrasion of fishing rods and nets of active fishing gear) on their surfaces reduces light penetration or hinders nutrient absorption.<sup>17</sup> Drifting Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs), which remain in the environment become marine debris and can sink or drift onto beaches, coral reefs or mangroves. The deeper the tail of the drifting FAD extends into the sea, the higher the possibility of it reaching the seabed and grounding.

8. The wide range of ALDFG impacts calls for a tailored governance system for this type of marine plastic pollution. The 2019 *FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Marking of Fishing Gear* (VGMFG)<sup>18</sup> provide guidelines to support the development and implementation of fishing gear and FAD marking systems as a key tool to combat, minimize and eliminate ALDFG as well as to facilitate its identification and recovery. With a view to further provide expert stewardship, since 2022, the FAO has published two supplements to support the implementation of the VGMFG: Suppl. 1 *A framework for conducting a risk assessment for a system on the marking of fishing gear* (2023);<sup>19</sup> Suppl. 2 *Manual for the marking of fishing gear* (2023);<sup>20</sup> and a FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular entitled *Operationalization of FAO Voluntary Guidelines for the Marking of Fishing Gear in the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) area of competence* (2022).<sup>21</sup> It is also worth mentioning the recent publication by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) on the *Catalogue of fishing gear in the Mediterranean and Black Sea region* (2023).<sup>22</sup> This catalogue aims to provide an overview of fishing gear used in the region, considering regional, national, and local specificities. Understanding gear functionality can help mitigate bycatch of vulnerable species, juvenile fish mortality, discards, carbon footprint through energy-efficient gear, develop innovative gear for marine litter removal, and reduce ALDFG<sup>23</sup>.
9. Other work related to the prevention and reduction of ALDFG include the collaboration between FAO and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on the GloLitter Partnerships project and the Regional Litter (RegLitter) project, which both support developing countries to prevent and reduce sea-based sources of marine plastic litter from the shipping and fisheries sectors, at the global (GloLitter) and regional (RegLitter – Asia-focused) scales. This includes the development of knowledge products

<sup>16</sup> Bhuyan, M. S. 2022. *Effects of microplastics on fish and in human health*. *Frontiers in Environmental Science*, 10, 827289. <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/environmental-science/articles/10.3389/fenvs.2022.827289/full>

<sup>17</sup> Ceschin, S., Mariani, F., Di Lernia, D., Venditti, I., Pelella, E., & Iannelli, M. A. 2023. *Effects of Microplastic Contamination on the Aquatic Plant Lemna minuta*. *Plants*. <https://www.mdpi.com/2223-7747/12/1/207>

<sup>18</sup> FAO. 2019. *Voluntary Guidelines on the Marking of Fishing Gear* <https://www.fao.org/responsible-fishing/resources/detail/en/c/1470106/>

<sup>19</sup> He, P. & Lansley, J. 2023. *Voluntary Guidelines on the Marking of Fishing Gear – A framework for conducting a risk assessment for a system on the marking of fishing gear*. Suppl. 1. Rome, FAO. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cc4084en>

<sup>20</sup> Einarsson, H., He, P. & Lansley, J. 2023. *Voluntary Guidelines on the Marking of Fishing Gear – Manual for the marking of fishing gear*. Suppl. 2. Rome, FAO. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cc4251en>

<sup>21</sup> He, P. & Lansley, J. 2022. *Operationalization of FAO Voluntary Guidelines for the Marking of Fishing Gear in the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) area of competence*. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular No. 1261. Rome, FAO. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cc4251en>

<sup>22</sup> Lucchetti, A., Petetta, A. Bdioui, M., Gökçe, G., Saber, M., Sacchi, J., Ozbilgin, H., Carlson, A. & Carpentieri, P. 2023. *Catalogue of fishing gear in the Mediterranean and Black Sea region*. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Technical Papers, No. 695. Rome, FAO. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cc7260en>

<sup>23</sup> Sala, A. & Richardson, K. 2023. *Fishing gear recycling technologies and practices*. Rome, FAO and IMO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc8317en>

produced by FAO in collaboration with IMO<sup>24,25,26,27</sup> as part of the ongoing GloLitter Partnerships project.<sup>28</sup> A variety of other related guidance documents that broadly support ALDFG management, from national to regional levels, such as guidance documents around the development of national action plans to address sea-based marine plastic litter (SBMPL) from fisheries and shipping sectors, and guidance around provisions for port waste reception facilities and port waste management plans to address SBMPL, among others, can be found in the GloLitter Partnerships project Resource Library.<sup>29</sup>

10. In collaboration with the IMO, FAO is developing a guidance document on how to incorporate provisions of the VGMFG, the *International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships* (MARPOL) Annex V on the *Prevention of Pollution by Garbage from Ships* and the *Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter* (i.e., London Convention/London Protocol) into national legal and regulatory frameworks, as well as associated e-learning courses to support these instruments.

### *Plastics and food safety*

11. Plastic food packaging extends product shelf-life, quality, and safety during transport and storage, and provides space for nutritional information. However, single-use plastic packaging lacks proper collection and end-of-life management and is a major source of plastic pollution.<sup>30</sup>
12. *Thinking about the future of food safety – A foresight report* explores how to integrate plastic food packaging into a circular economy approach and its food safety implications.<sup>31</sup>
13. *Food safety in a circular economy*. The report and accompanying communication materials, provide an analysis of current and emerging evidence on food safety risks in circular food production systems, examining four major concerns – water scarcity, food loss and waste, food packaging waste, and land use efficiency.<sup>32</sup>
14. *Microplastics in food commodities: A food safety review on human exposure through dietary sources* compiles information on microplastics and plastic-related substances in food products, evaluates dietary exposure, and offers insights into potential human health impacts.<sup>33</sup>
15. *The impact of microplastics on the gut microbiome and health – A food safety perspective* report examines microplastics' impact on the gut microbiome, associated health concerns, effects on microbiome composition, diversity, and function, health implications of microplastic-microbiome interactions, and the microbiome's influence on microplastic biodegradation. It cites alterations in animal gut microbiota and highlights critical knowledge gaps regarding human health, underscoring the importance of comparative medicine.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Hodgson, S. 2022. *Legal aspects of abandoned, lost, or otherwise discarded fishing gear*. Rome, FAO and IMO. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cb8071en>

<sup>25</sup> Drinkwin, J. 2022. *Reporting and retrieval of lost fishing gear: recommendations for developing effective programmes*. Rome, FAO and IMO. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cb8067en>

<sup>26</sup> Giskes, I., Baziuk, J., Pragnell-Raasch, H. and Perez Roda, A. 2022. *Report on good practices to prevent and reduce marine plastic litter from fishing activities*. Rome and London, FAO and IMO. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cb8665en>

<sup>27</sup> Sala, A. & Richardson, K. 2023. *Fishing gear recycling technologies and practices*. Rome, FAO and IMO. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/3818db5d-128d-467c-b916-fc7294698709>

<sup>28</sup> FAO. GloLitter Partnerships Programme <https://www.fao.org/responsible-fishing/markings-of-fishing-gear/glolitter-partnerships-programme/en/>

<sup>29</sup> GloLitter Partnerships project Resource Library <https://glolitter.imo.org/resources>

<sup>30</sup> Nordic Council of Ministers. *Towards Ending Plastic Pollution by 2024* <https://pub.norden.org/temanord2023-539/temanord2023-539.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> FAO. 2022. *Thinking about the future of food safety – A foresight report*. Rome. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cb8667en>

<sup>32</sup> FAO. 2024. *Food safety in a circular economy*. Food Safety and Quality Series, No. 29. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd1789en>

<sup>33</sup> Garrido Gamarro, E. & Costanzo, V. 2022. *Microplastics in food commodities – A food safety review on human exposure through dietary sources*. Food Safety and Quality Series No. 18. Rome, FAO. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cc2392en>

<sup>34</sup> FAO. 2023. *The impact of microplastics on the gut microbiome and health – A food safety perspective*. Food Safety and Quality Series, No. 21. Rome. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cc5294en>

16. FAO's assessments on microplastics in food commodities<sup>35</sup> and in fisheries and aquaculture<sup>36</sup> have highlighted the need for having standard reference material for the identification and quantification of microplastics and the evaluation of their composition in food commodities. The 19th Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) Sub-Committee on Fish Trade requested FAO to play a role in the recognition of standards for testing microplastics to ensure inter-comparability of testing results<sup>37</sup>. Having standardized testing methods determining the exact number, size, and shape of the particles and the type of polymers and additives present in microplastics is critical for toxicological studies and assessments.
17. The 42nd Session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling agreed to keep under review analytical techniques for microplastics identification and determination and could consider recommending analytical methods once more information becomes available.<sup>38</sup> The recently released *ISO Standard 24187:2023 on Principles for the analysis of microplastics present in the environment*<sup>39</sup> could support this work.

### III. Considerations relevant to the development of the international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment

18. FAO engaged as an Observer in all the four meetings of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. Its contributions aim to ensure the new instrument balances benefits and trade-offs and sustainability aspects of plastics used in the food and agriculture sector and reflects upon perspectives of relevant stakeholders, including smallholder farmers, and that the crucial topics of agriculture, food safety, and food security are included in the INC discussions and decisions. FAO's submissions towards the meetings of the INC are available online<sup>40,41,42,43,44</sup>.
19. Addressing plastic pollution within agrifood value chains should be an integral part of the transformation of agrifood systems to be more efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable. Through meetings with delegations and official submissions, FAO supported the negotiations with information on sector-specific approaches for agricultural sub-sectors, including fisheries and aquaculture.
20. Taking into account the specificity of plastics' use in agriculture, the Organization advocates for appropriate consideration of sector-specific approaches to prevent and reduce plastic pollution, while safeguarding food security and nutrition, food safety, considering the One Health approach, and improving sustainability.
21. It is important to emphasize the new Instrument should build upon the existing international instruments, frameworks, and sectoral bodies, including international organizations and their mandates and work. It should be strengthened by considering internationally agreed rules, standards, and recommended practices and procedures, including those developed by FAO and IMO, particularly addressing ALDFG such as the

<sup>35</sup> Garrido Gamarro, E. & Costanzo, V. 2022. Microplastics in food commodities – A food safety review on human exposure through dietary sources. Food Safety and Quality Series No. 18. Rome, FAO. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/14b07c0a-3b3e-42e6-b34d-44e990700a2f>

<sup>36</sup> FAO. 2017. Microplastics in fisheries and aquaculture: status of knowledge on their occurrence and implications for aquatic organisms and food safety <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/98cc7c65-f933-4c37-9118-09bad76e087b>

<sup>37</sup> FAO. 2023. Report of the 19th Session of the Sub-Committee on Fish Trade <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/0a122116-925d-4750-9f4f-5256546dda66/content>

<sup>38</sup> FAO. Codex Alimentarius International Food Standards <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/meetings/detail/en/?meeting=CCMAS&session=42>

<sup>39</sup> ISO Standards <https://www.iso.org/standard/78033.html#lifecycle>

<sup>40</sup> FAO. 2022. Submission to INC-1. [https://resolutions.unep.org/resolutions/uploads/fao\\_submission\\_to\\_the\\_intergovernmental\\_negotiating\\_committee\\_inc.pdf](https://resolutions.unep.org/resolutions/uploads/fao_submission_to_the_intergovernmental_negotiating_committee_inc.pdf)

<sup>41</sup> FAO. 2023. Submission to INC-2. [https://resolutions.unep.org/resolutions/uploads/230106\\_food\\_and\\_agriculture\\_organization\\_of\\_the\\_united\\_nations\\_0.pdf](https://resolutions.unep.org/resolutions/uploads/230106_food_and_agriculture_organization_of_the_united_nations_0.pdf)

<sup>42</sup> FAO. 2023. Submission to INC-3 – template A: [https://resolutions.unep.org/resolutions/uploads/fao\\_15082023\\_a.pdf](https://resolutions.unep.org/resolutions/uploads/fao_15082023_a.pdf)  
template B: [https://resolutions.unep.org/resolutions/uploads/fao\\_15082023\\_b.pdf](https://resolutions.unep.org/resolutions/uploads/fao_15082023_b.pdf)

<sup>43</sup> FAO. 2023. Information submitted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/43797/FAO.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> FAO. 2024. Submission to INC-4. [https://resolutions.unep.org/incres/uploads/fao\\_statement\\_to\\_inc-4\\_final.pdf](https://resolutions.unep.org/incres/uploads/fao_statement_to_inc-4_final.pdf)

- MARPOL Convention, London Convention and its Protocol, FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, Voluntary Guidelines on the Marking of Fishing Gear, and the work of Regional Fisheries Management Organizations to address and mitigate the impacts of fishing gear made of plastic.
22. FAO informed each session of INC about the development of the Voluntary Code of Conduct on the Sustainable Use and Management of Plastics in Agriculture (VCoC). The VCoC could play an important role in supporting the implementation of the Instrument in the agrifood sector by offering guidelines, best practices, and indicators specific to the agricultural sector for all stakeholders; as well as providing perspectives from the food and agriculture sector that may also be applicable to other sectors.
  23. Since INC-1, Members have increasingly acknowledged the significance of including agriculture (encompassing crop and livestock production, forestry, fisheries, and aquaculture), especially ALDFG, among high-impact sectors or product groups. This recognition is reflected in the Zero Draft of the ILBI, which proposes establishing dedicated programs of work to support the implementation of the future instrument. Many Members have recognized the importance of sectoral approaches through multiple proposals in the Zero Draft of the ILBI. These proposals include using sector-specific reduction targets for polymer production and supply; establishing criteria for product design and performance; setting targets for reduction, reuse, refill, and repair; implementing extended producer responsibility; applying best available techniques and best environmental practices to prevent emissions and releases of plastic; establishing requirements for safe and adequate waste management; and developing mitigation and remediation strategies for existing plastic pollution.
  24. Incorporating sectoral approaches into the legally binding instrument is crucial for ensuring effective, tailored solutions that address the unique challenges posed by different sectors. Importantly, this approach could allow for the inclusion of perspectives from key stakeholders in agrifood systems during the implementation of the ILBI. These stakeholders include smallholder farmers, Indigenous Peoples, youth, women, and other vulnerable groups in society whose livelihoods and practices are directly impacted.
  25. By recognizing the importance of sectoral approaches, the new instrument could enhance global efforts to prevent and reduce plastic pollution in a way that safeguards food safety, food security and nutrition, while supporting the transformation of agrifood systems to be more efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable.
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