

Norway's input to the draft outline of the 2017 Environment Assembly's background document on Pollution

- Norway welcomes the opportunity to provide written comments to the draft outline and recognizes the broad consultative process by the Secretariat. We believe this will ensure ownership by all stakeholders and we hope this make the document both relevant and accessible for decision-makers – also beyond the UNEA-family.
- It is our understanding that this outline will provide the necessary guidance to the authors and experts who will write the final document. We have therefore also provided specific comments to the different sections of the outline using track changes (see attached document).
- Norway thinks that there is great benefit in addressing pollution at a systemic level and highlighting the impact of pollution on the health of both human and ecosystems. The document could also consider global mega-trends and systems and their impact on environmental pollution.
- The GEO-6 regional assessments are an important source of information and we encourage the authors to have a look at how the issues of pollution are addressed in these reports.
- The relationship to climate change should be clarified in the document. Climate change is also in many ways a result of pollution, but given the need for a global focus on other types of pollution we see that it is beneficial to focus on these. At the same time the report should highlight that many forms of pollution also have considerable effects on climate change such as soot and ozone depleting gases. Equally, addressing pollution will also be an indispensable contribution to ensuring healthy ecosystems and biodiversity.
- As the structure stands now, there is a greater focus on addressing pollution through a list of major industrial accidents than on the impact of chemicals in products and other sources of daily exposure. While accidents are of grave concern and should be avoided at all costs, Norway is of the view that there is a need to emphasize the risks posed vis-à-vis everyday exposure to chemicals. Such daily exposure is also a major health threat and a threat to ecosystems and is a more urgent concern. Large industrial events are few and rare, thankfully, and the total impact on the environment and human health somewhat limited. The focus should be to address issues of a systemic nature and of global concern. Large accidents tend to get media attention, much more that the daily exposure to chemicals in products, poor waste management, chemicals in drinking water and air pollution, among key areas of concern.
- We note with appreciation that chemicals and waste is listed as a cross-cutting issue affecting human health and ecosystem health.
- Norway believes that UNEA-3 offers an important opportunity to address the issue of marine litter including plastic and microplastics. We take note of the interest of other Member

States to take this issue forward. As a number of the efforts required to deal with the issue of marine litter requires actions related to improved waste management on land, it might make sense to consider this issue also in relation to waste and chemicals. However, microplastics should also be considered alongside chemicals as many of the required actions to be taken to combat microplastics are similar to those needed for chemicals and production.

- On an overarching level, the report should provide a good overview of the existing governance systems on pollution – and also identify gaps. This overview would also reflect the ongoing Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) post 2020 process. This overview could also give guidance on how to most appropriately address these questions inside the existing structures.
- Emerging issues related to pollution that require more attention from the global society should also be highlighted in the report. This includes issues such as e-waste and antimicrobial resistance for instance.
- Norway is supportive of the idea of pledges being made as part of the outcome of UNEA-3. We also support the proposal made by others that such pledges also could be made by other stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society and other major group participants. How to best communicate this in a manner which will reach a broad range of people beyond policy makers and interested major groups so as to enhance the impact of UNEA-3 remains a key concern for us. We remain convinced that a negotiated outcome document (without prejudice to its format og length) remains the most effective means of doing this.