

Outline for a draft resolution from UNEA-3 on marine litter and microplastics to be considered by UNEA-3

Proposal by Norway

There is a clear emerging consensus among Member States that **UNEA-3 should focus on a limited number of resolutions, that are focused** that are action-oriented as well as solution-oriented. The resolutions should be global in nature and clearly linked to the theme of pollution, encouraging all stakeholders to take action and as appropriate outline concrete steps and outcomes.

Such a resolution will build on the momentum from the UN Oceans Conference in New York in June and other recent global efforts, where marine litter and microplastics have been acknowledged as a serious form of marine pollution that must be prioritized. We believe that such a resolution must be concrete, action-oriented, and a solution-oriented contribution from UNEA-3. This issue has captured the attention of a broad audience and a stand-alone resolution on this issue will be an important means of communicating the specific concrete action being taken on this. It would a lost opportunity for UNEA-3 not to capitalise on the broad-based interest on marine litter and microplastics.

We further believe that a draft resolution presents a unique opportunity to act on the recommendations from the study on international regulatory frameworks, agreement and governance strategies, as mandated in the resolution adopted at UNEA-2. The report will identify possibilities for a stronger international commitment to address this issue. Norway has noted the concerns raised by some Member States as to a third resolution on marine litter and microplastics, and fully agree that it is important that this resolution is value-added to the previous resolutions.

The draft resolution could include elements such as:

- Consider concrete action on the recommendations from the UNEA-2 study, including on the need for an improved governance framework and appropriate institutional arrangements to secure stronger international commitment to combat marine litter and consider a process for addressing these recommendations
- Aim to strengthen implementation of SDG 14.1 where we have committed to «By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution», on a national and regional level. This could include the setting of national, sub-regional or regional reduction targets to meet/operationalize the 2025 “considerable reduction” target – this could include both mitigation measures related to legislative interventions (national inventories), addressing most critical point-source pollution sites following identification, and risk-based assessment hotspots,
- Encourage Member States to review their sources with a view to identifying the most effective measures at all levels, given the growing recognition that the sources of marine litter and microplastics are different in different countries and in different regions.
- Initiate a specific process led by the UN Environment Programme in collaboration with experts from *inter alia* the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission UNESCO, the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection

GESAMP and others would be beneficial. Both the UNEA-1 and UNEA-2 resolutions acknowledged that an important component of demonstrating real progress and action on addressing marine pollution and marine litter as a significant type of marine pollution requires a robust measurement system. Such a system must include international guidelines, harmonized definitions and standards for mapping and monitoring of marine litter and microplastics. inter alia

- Call for the development of incentives to phase-out micro plastics from key sources identified. There is also a recognition that primary microplastics, that is microplastics in cosmetics, paint and other products, is likely to require a different set of measures apart from strengthening waste management and waste prevention.
- Give political support to new initiatives, decisions and commitments from other fora can benefit from a global acknowledgement at UNEA-3 and could therefore be included, such as the Ocean conference in NY, G20/G7 Action, 4th Intergovernmental Review of Global Programme of Action for the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities, where its coordinating unit lies within UN Environment, Global Partnership on Marine Litter, the recent decision under the Basel-convention and others.
- The resolution could consider how best UNEA-3 can bring these efforts together. This resolution will underline UNEA's leadership role in addressing the issue globally, as we believe that UN Environment is well placed in addressing this issue in partnership with others, at the interplay of land-based activities, freshwater, coastal zones and the ocean, and to bring about cost-effective and environmentally sound solutions.
- Underline the need to further strengthen our knowledge on the connections between human health, marine litter and microplastics and in particular the possible effects of nano-sized plastic particles. These are minuscule plastic particles which are capable of crossing cell walls, and warrant more attention as identified in the UNEA-2 report "Marine plastic debris and microplastics – global lessons to inspire action and guide policy change"

We welcome the cooperation and input from all delegations as we move forward with the preparations of the draft resolution.