

May 21 stocktaking and inventory webinar

- The United States urges that stocktaking not go beyond the scope outlined under UNEA resolution 4/6 paragraph 7(a), which does not include “desired” response options, measuring impact, identifying gaps, or identifying best practice case studies or policy recommendations. Our understanding is the AHEG is mandated with compiling existing activities and actions from a variety of entities. We would like to remind the Secretariat that we and other members noted at AHEG-4 that submissions to the stocktaking survey were not intended to be exhaustive. As an example, the presenter noted that the stocktaking exercise was to identify "primary actions", however there is no delineation between types of actions in the mandate and we suggest removing this type of prioritization from the stocktaking exercise (AHEG-3 outcome document, paragraph 5). We suggest the Secretariat work with the consultant and members to focus on capturing activities from the variety of entities listed in paragraph 7(a).
- We urge the Secretariat to use metrics related to response rates in each category to encourage members and other entities to respond, and note such information should not be used in any type of analysis that is beyond the mandate in paragraph 7(a). The point of the stocktaking is to gather information on what actions are being employed and how they can be utilized to address marine litter. Different States are at different stages of development or advancement in dealing with marine litter and the stocktaking and effectiveness studies can be harnessed to identify practical solutions for a range of conditions, levels of advancement, types of problems, etc. We are concerned that this concept was not well-articulated in the presentation and therefore may not be incorporated into the stocktaking. For example, we view "laws and regulations" as important actions that should be included directly and not combined with other actions.
- We recall the proposal for interviews to follow up on submissions to the stocktaking survey. The United States seeks clarity on how and when the stocktaking interviews will be conducted and how those interviews will be incorporated into the stocktaking report. We would also like to reiterate our suggestion that Member States be contacted if information regarding their activities is obtained through desk research (UNEP/AHEG/2020/4/2 paragraph 10) and considered for inclusion in the stocktaking exercise. Member States should have an opportunity to clarify any relevant details and align the activities discovered through desk research with their submissions to the stocktaking survey.
- The United States would like to confirm with the AHEG Secretariat that the U.S. online survey submissions were received and included in the draft analysis of initial stocktaking inputs that was presented during the webinar. According to the stocktaking input website - <https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/stocktaking-submissions> – the U.S. submission for voluntary inputs to stocktaking only includes the G20 template submission from the United States, but it is not clear that the U.S. submissions via the online survey have been received and utilized.

- The Secretariat assured that the webinars and the powerpoint presentations given during the webinars will be available through the AHEG web portal - <https://environmentassembly.unenvironment.org/expert-group-on-marine-litter>. As of 5/26/20, it does not appear that either webinar or presentations are available. It would have been helpful for us and potentially other members to be able to access these recordings when providing comments on this webinar.