

## Submission from the Major Group for Children and Youth to UNEP toward

### *Preparatory Meeting of the 4th Meeting of the Ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastics*

- Intervention for Agenda Item 6 -

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Honourable Chair, distinguished delegates

My name is Teresa Oberhauser and I am speaking on behalf of the Major Group of Children and Youth.

We welcome the stage of the work and preparations for UNEA5 and the great research conducted. We thank colleagues from the secretariat for taking the time to engage in capacity building with us.

Children and Youth organisations are already today very involved in environmental protection activities that involve cleaning waterways of plastic and supporting recycling activities and awareness campaigns on the local level. As part of youth engagement on environmental issues, we ask governments to support youth-led groups by providing adequate information and training aimed at strengthening resilience and response among young people.

We suggest the establishment of such youth support programmes organised in the frameworks of governments engagement in regional organisations. The African Regional Meeting in August has shown us the great potential for awareness-raising and youth mobilisation support.

We also recommend that; alternative ways of preservation by way of using degradable materials to package food should be adopted and implemented.

Crude oil exploration has contributed to the high rate of marine pollution thereby hindering the achievement of the SDGs and access to clean water. We suggest taking the synergies between renewable energies and marine health into account when linking the agreements prepared in AHEG to broader environmental law.

We would like to draw attention to the importance of the following points and urge action towards a better understanding of plastic pollution and its impacts:



- 1) There is an urgent need to assess the feasibility of proposed interventions and measures, in order to engage in tangible solutions.
- 2) In order to do so, it is important to prioritize and foster a better understanding of the extent and distribution of ML&MP. To this end, we emphasize the role of quantitative modelling to quantify plastic pollution in our seas.
- 3) We emphasize the importance of binding industry standards. According to Deloitte, 65% of companies procurement leaders have no or limited amount of insights in their products' materials. This information should be mandatory for the protection of unknown material leakage. Producer responsibility should be enhanced further.
- 4) we suggest a standardized monitoring framework for the analysis of mismanaged and abandoned plastics waste. It is in this perspective that we advocate the role of youth and local communities in mapping and tracking plastic debris on beaches and at sea. In particular, the inclusion of citizen science could bring consumers even closer to the issues of plastic pollution and prove beneficial on several fronts. For instance, studies have found that the inclusion of citizens in data collection has reduced their littering behaviours, inspired positive change, and informed decisions about disposal. In addition, the engagement of consumers can overcome some of the gaps derived from the existing lack of data on plastic pollution.

*- submitted on behalf of the constituency by -*

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