

Draft comments on draft outline of a chair's summary by 22nd October – agenda item 6

We would like to express our deep appreciation to the Chair for providing this summary.

We expect the AHEG to summarize our consideration of the potential response options submitted by Member States and Stakeholders, and reflect the convergence of expert opinions in preparing clear recommendations for further work. This should be reflected in a document to be annexed to the Executive Director's report to UNEA-5. The draft outline of the AHEG short summary is a solid starting point for developing this document.

Summarising the entire work of the AHEG across some 23 months of work, four substantial meetings and a number of technical briefings and preparatory meetings is no easy task. We express our sincere thanks to Satoru for your leadership in providing this.

UNEA establishes subsidiary bodies, such as Ad Hoc Open-Ended Expert Groups, to consider specific problems and to make recommendations as per Rule 63, para 1. The UNEA resolutions 3/7 and 4/6 outlines different features regarding the problem of marine plastic litter & microplastics. Recalling the mandate from UNEA resolution 3/7 OP 7 (d) (v), the programme of work of AHEG includes a task to identify potential options for continued work by the United Nations Environment Assembly. That means, we need to identify options for further work at the global level, as the global community's response to the problem.

As such, we must recognize that the UNEA can establish subsidiary bodies to make recommendations for further work. Thus, the AHEG is established to consider, and to make recommendations on, how Member States can respond to this problem through action at UNEA.

The AHEG will fail to deliver on its mandate if the outcome document does not reflect government experts' recommendations of which response options that should be explored further. We therefore strongly support clear recommendations for further work to be provided by to UNEA-5.

As we have stated earlier, the effectiveness analysis is an input to our discussion. However, without identifying the proposed agreements goal, obligations, functions and so on, the assessment of scale, maturity, feasibility, timeline and impact is not transferrable to our discussion. UNEA has requested us as government experts to assess the various options and identify options for further work.

It is crucial that we show to UNEA-5 that we have made progress in our work. Our task as a group is not merely to collect and consider information. Our task is also to analyse and structure the information to highlight some favourable options for further work. These options must distinguish between functions and forms. There is significant support for several global functions. A lot of time and resources has been put in to this process over the past two years. We cannot go to UNEA-5 with a report that does not display this significant convergence. And since UNEA 4 there has been a lot of support growing for one structure that accommodates these global functions – namely a new global agreement.

Moreover, we have three editorial suggestions for point D "Options for future and continued work at global level:"

1. Exchange the term *feature* with *global function*. We believe this is a more precise description of the overlapping elements identified in the AHEG.
2. Include *strengthening monitoring and reporting on national measures* to generate information on global progress towards the goal as a global function.
3. Suggest moving the bullet point referencing the structuring of a *New global instrument* into a separate point. We believe it would be useful to distinguish the possible functions from the possible structures encompassing them. I.e. keep form and functions separate, as we have pointed to in many of our previous interventions.

We would also like to reiterate our previous input on the drafting process. We expect the whole Bureau to take part in developing the draft document that will be discussed at AHEG-4, as well as to finalize the summary after input from Member States and Major Groups and Stakeholders at AHEG-4