



Distr.: Limited  
23 May 2016

Original: English



**United Nations  
Environment Assembly of the  
United Nations Environment Programme**

**United Nations Environment Assembly of the  
United Nations Environment Programme  
Second session  
Nairobi, 23–27 May 2016**

**Marine plastic [[debris] (NOR, USA del) (PAK, AUS keep)  
Litter (NOR, USA) (PAK reserve) and (PAK)] (EU reserve to  
keep one agreeable word) (Change throughout the resolution)  
and microplastics\***

**Proposed and/or sponsored by Australia, Chile, Indonesia and Norway**

*The United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme,*

**PREAMBLE**

1. *Recalling* the concern reflected in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, “The future we want”, that the oceans and marine biodiversity are negatively affected by marine pollution, including [[marine debris,] (USA, NOR del) (PAK, AUS keep) and (PAK) marine litter (USA, NOR) (PAK reserve)] (EU reserve to keep one agreeable word) especially plastic, persistent organic pollutants, heavy metals and nitrogen-based compounds, from numerous marine and land-based sources, and the commitment to reduce such pollution,
2. *Recalling* the Manila Declaration on Furthering the Implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities which highlighted the relevance of the Honolulu Strategy and the Honolulu Commitment for the prevention and management of marine debris and called for the establishment of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, which was subsequently launched at the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and hosted by the Global Programme of Action, (Agreed at ICPR)
3. [Noting the increased knowledge regarding the levels, sources, negative effects of, and possible measures to reduce marine plastic debris and microplastics in the marine environment, as summarized in, among other sources, the 2016 study report on marine plastic debris and microplastics, mandated by the Environment Assembly in its resolution 1/6,] (TAN, ZIM, NOR reserve)
4. *Noting* that the report of the first World Ocean Assessment points to the emerging issue of the smallest microplastic particles, which are nano-sized, and expresses concern about the ability of microplastics to enter marine food chains and the potential risk for the environment and human health, (Agreed at ICPR)

---

\* Draft resolution from cluster 3 as prepared by the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme.

5. *Noting with concern* that plastic and microplastics **may be transported through freshwater [bodies] (USA del) systems such as rivers (USA) (SWI) (IRAQ Reserve) and** are found in all compartments of the marine environment; that their input is rapidly increasing; that the plastic to a large degree [will be there indefinitely] (EU, USA del) **can persist for (USA) up to hundreds of (USA) years (EU, USA) (IRAQ Reserve) if not removed; can (EU, USA) (PAK reserve, seeks clarification on 'can' and 'up to hundreds of years')** contain[s] or attract[s] chemicals, in particular persistent organic pollutants, and can contribute to their [spreading] **distribution (USA)** and the spread[ing] (USA del) of harmful organisms; and has negative effects on marine life, **ecosystem [functioning] (USA del) functions (USA) (EU)** and ecosystem services including fisheries, maritime transport, recreation and tourism as well as local [societies] (USA del) **society (USA)** and economy,

6. *Recalling* Sustainable Development Goal 14, target 1, "[b]y 2025, [to] prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution"; and other relevant Sustainable Development Goals including targets 6.3, 6.5, 12.4 and 12.5, **as well as the Aichi target, (SWI) (NOR requests for specific reference to the Aichi target)**

**6 alt. Reaffirming** General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, by which the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and recalling Sustainable Development Goal 14, target 14.1, contained therein, which seeks, by 2025, to "prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution"; and recognizing the importance of other relevant Sustainable Development Goal targets for effective implementation [, including inter alia targets 6.3, 6.5, 12.4 and 12.5], (AUS reserve on singling of SDG targets. To discuss with COL) (COL, AUS)

7. [Noting that the General Assembly in 2015 in resolution 70/235 of 23 December 2015, on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, expressed concern regarding the negative effects of marine debris and microplastics and urged States to take action,] (TUR reserve)

## OPERATIVE PART

1. [[Recognizes that **the presence of (USA)** plastic debris and microplastics<sup>1</sup> in the marine environment is a global, rapidly increasing and serious issue of global concern that needs an urgent global response, **one (USA)** taking into account a life-cycle approach and **adapting measures (EU, NOR) in accordance with the magnitude of the problem, resources available at the national, regional and global levels (PAK)** [acknowledges that the levels and sources of marine plastic debris and microplastic, and resources available, can vary between regions, and that measures need to be adapted as **appropriate (USA)**] (EU, NOR del) to local and **national (USA, NOR)** and regional situations];] (BRA keep original text) or as **appropriate to national circumstances (BRA) (ARG del of OP or move to PP)**

2. *Recalls* its resolution 1/6, "Marine Plastic debris and microplastics", and urges all States that have not yet done so to implement fully all its relevant recommendations and decisions, including by national measures and regional, international and cross-sectoral cooperation [as appropriate]; (EU del) (BRA, AUS keep)

3. *Welcomes* the activities of other relevant United Nations bodies and organizations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Maritime Organization, the **Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (CHL)**, the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection and the Global Partnership on Marine Litter; to prevent and reduce marine litter and microplastics; encourages the active contribution of all stakeholders to their work; and acknowledges the importance of cooperation between the United Nations Environment Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Maritime Organization; and the cooperation under the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, on this matter; (Secretariat to provide further text)

4. *Acknowledges* the regional action plans on marine litter under the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic and the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area; welcomes the ongoing development of such plans for the Black Sea and the Caribbean and under the Action Plan for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Northwest Pacific Region, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme and the Kuwait Regional Convention for

<sup>1</sup> Plastic particles smaller than 5 mm, including nano-sized particles.

Cooperation on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Pollution; welcomes further the Group of Seven<sup>2</sup> action plan to combat marine litter; and urges other Governments and regions to collaborate to establish such action plans, where relevant; **(Agreed at OECPR)**

5. *Welcomes* the work under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the International Whaling Commission and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals on impacts of marine debris on marine biological diversity and under the Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region on pollution from vessels and from land-based sources and invites the coordination of that work with other relevant work under the Global Partnership on Marine Litter; **(Agreed at OECPR)**

6. *Welcomes* the report<sup>3</sup> of the UNEP Executive Director on marine plastic debris and microplastics, as mandated in its resolution 1/6; takes note of Executive Director's recommendations and urges their evaluation and possible implementation as relevant and appropriate, including through strengthened national, regional and international measures, cooperation and action plans, prioritizing important sources and impacts and cost-effective measures, cooperation with industry, civil society and other stakeholders to reduce the input, level and impact of plastic debris and microplastics in the oceans; **(Agreed at OECPR)**

7. *[[Agrees] (CAN del) Stresses (CAN) that prevention is key to long-term success in combating marine pollution, including marine plastic debris and microplastics [waste prevention on land] (USA del), including (EU) source reduction (USA), [waste collection and [treatment,] (EU, USA del) [and environmentally sound management of [landfills] (USA del) (EU del) are] (ARG del) the environmentally sound management of waste is (ARG) essential in this regard and urges Governments to establish and implement the necessary strategies, (ARG) policies, regulatory frameworks and measures to that end; recommends that preventive measures implemented should at a minimum include the development and use of separate waste collection systems in particular from municipal waste (EU) segregation at source, (ARG) collection systems and basic [waste treatment] (ARG del) with a view to recovering waste and avoiding landfill to the extent possible (EU) disposal (ARG); and invites the exploration of a broad range of innovative waste (EU) segregation (ARG), containment and [collection] (EU del) waste recovery (EU) systems, as well as supporting structures and tools;] (NOR, CAN, AUS reserve)*

**7 alt. [Stresses that prevention is key to long-term success in combating marine pollution, including marine plastic debris and microplastics, and that environmentally sound management of waste is essential in that regard, and [urges] (IRAQ del) calls on (IRAQ) Governments to establish and implement necessary policies, regulatory frameworks and measures to that end, recommends that they should at a minimum include collection, sound treatment and disposal and avoid landfill to the extent possible.] (NOR) (AUS reserve) [In this context Member States stress the importance of providing capacity-building, technology transfer, and financial assistance to developing and least developed [member states] (ARG del) countries (ARG) (EGY) for the realization of these objectives]; (PAK, EGY, ARG) (EU, NOR reserve suggests moving to OP 3) (EU placeholder on crosschecking of language on resolution on chemicals)**

8. *Recognizes* that surface runoff, rivers and sewage outfalls are important pathways for litter transfer from land to the sea; also recognizes the need for measures against the littering of freshwater courses, including measures to adapt to extreme storms, flooding and other relevant climate change effects; and encourages international cooperation on transboundary watercourses in that regard, where relevant; **(Agreed at OECPR)**

9. *Also recognizes* that education, capacity-building and knowledge transfer regarding sources, negative effects of and measures to reduce and prevent marine plastic debris and microplastics, and environmentally sound waste management systems and clean-up actions, is crucial; requests the Executive Director *[[within existing resources]] (USA) (BRA, ARG, COL, TAN reserve) (ZIM del) as appropriate (ZIM) to assist Governments, especially those from developing countries, including small island developing States and least developed countries, upon their request, in the development and implementation of national or regional measures and action plans; [invites Governments in a position to do so to support such action] (USA del) (NOR, BRA keep); and recognizes that targeted measures in regions that are the largest sources of marine litter are especially important for the global reduction of marine plastic debris and microplastics; (US suggests having one additional OP reflecting all comments e.g. resources etc.)*

<sup>2</sup> Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

<sup>3</sup> UNEP/EA.2/5.

10. *Further recognizes* the need to identify [spreading] **(USA del) transport and distribution (USA)** pathways and hotspots of marine litter, to cooperate regionally and internationally on clean-up actions of such hotspots where appropriate and to develop systems and methods for such removal and sound disposal of marine litter; stresses that removal is urgent in areas where it poses an immediate threat to sensitive marine and coastal ecosystems or marine-based livelihoods or local societies; and recognizes that removal actions as far as possible should be risk-based and cost-effective, following best available techniques and environmental practices and the polluter-pays approach;

11. *Encourages* Governments at all levels to further develop partnerships with industry and civil society and the establishment of public-private partnerships, including with regard to environmentally friendly alternatives to plastic packaging and deposit refund systems, to raise awareness of the sources and negative effects of and possible measures for reducing marine plastic debris and microplastics, to promote individual and corporate behaviour change and to cooperate on the prevention and clean-up of marine plastic debris and invites in that regard initiatives for the development of sustainable tourism, including through the United Nations Environment Programme **Sustainable Tourism Programme and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism;** **(Agreed at OECPR)**

12. *Recognizes* the work of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and regional fisheries bodies and management organizations to mitigate and clean up abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear and encourages Member States and Governments at all levels to include such measures in national and regional action plans against marine litter, as relevant, noting that cost-effective technologies and practices are available; **(Agreed at OECPR)**

13. *Underlines* the need for the sharing of knowledge and experience on the best available techniques and environmental practices for reducing littering from the fishing industry and aquaculture and to implement pilot projects where appropriate, including in respect of deposit schemes, **voluntary agreements and recovery, in particular through prevention, reduction (ARG, COL) recycling (EU) and reuse (ARG, COL), taking into the account the expertise of the Food and Agriculture Organization;** **(Secretariat to assist in improving consistent use of language)**

14. *Recognizes* the role of the International Maritime Organization in mitigating marine littering, recalls [the general prohibition on the discharge of garbage into the sea under] **(USA del) (INDO, BRA, AUS, EU, NOR keep)** annex V of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto, [and that garbage and waste from ships in general must be delivered to port reception facilities] **(USA del) (INDO, NOR keep)** and [encourages all Governments to employ systems in which the costs **related to the disposal of garbage and waste (NZ)** are included in [harbour fees] **(AUS del)** [and are independent on the amount delivered]; **(AUS, NOR del)] (EU open to consider alternative language from AUS)**

15. *Acknowledges* the findings of the [report of the UNEP Executive Director on marine plastic debris and microplastics<sup>4</sup>] (study pending) on the most important global sources and possible measures for avoiding microplastics entering the marine environment and recognizes that Governments need to further identify the most significant sources and important and cost-effective preventive measures at the national and regional levels, invites Governments to undertake such prioritized measures nationally and through regional and international cooperation and in cooperation with industry, as appropriate, and to share their experiences, and urges the phasing-out of primary microplastic particles in products, including wherever possible products such as personal care-products, industrial abrasives and printing products, and their replacement with organic or mineral non-hazardous compounds; **(Agreed at ICPR)**

16. *Recognizes* the need for the revision of international standards for product content labelling for microbeads and for improved **segregation at source and (ARG)** [separate collection of plastics designed to be biodegradable and other plastics, to avoid mixing and compromising] **(USA delete) recovery and (ARG) recycling of plastic waste]; (EU del)**

**16 alt. [Encourages product manufacturers to consider the lifecycle environmental impacts of products containing microbeads and compostable polymers, including possible downstream impacts that may compromise the recycling of plastic waste]; (USA) (NOR, EU reserve)**

---

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

17. *Encourages* the establishment of a harmonized international size definition and terminology and compatible standards and methods for the monitoring and assessment of marine plastic debris and microplastics, as well as the establishment of and cooperation on cost-effective monitoring, building as far as possible on ongoing related monitoring programmes and considering alternative automated and remote sensing technology where possible and relevant; **(Agreed at OECPR)**

18. *Underlines* that, while research already undertaken provides sufficient evidence for immediate action, (NOR placeholder re study), more research is needed on marine plastic debris and microplastics, including associated chemicals, and especially on environmental and social, including human health, impacts, pathways, fluxes and fate, including fragmentation and degradation rate, in all marine compartments and especially in water bodies and sediment deposits of the coastal and open ocean and impacts on fisheries, aquaculture and economy; and urges Governments at all levels and Member States in a position to do so to support such research; **(Agreed at OECPR)**

19. *Stresses* the importance of cooperation between the United Nations Environment Programme, the secretariats of the [Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal] **(USA reserve)**, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the [(coming into force) Minamata Convention on Mercury] **(USA reserve)** and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), to prevent and minimize pollution, including microplastics and associated chemicals, and its adverse effects on human health and the environment; **(PAK suggests changing language of the para.)**

**19 alt.** Stresses the importance of cooperation between the United Nations Environment Programme, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Especially as Waterfowl Habitat, and the [Marine Pollution Convention]; **(JPN)** **(COL del)** **(EU suggests merge of OP 19 and 20)**

20. *[Requests* the Executive Director, in close cooperation with other relevant bodies, to undertake an assessment of the effectiveness of relevant international regulatory frameworks and other relevant instruments to combat marine plastic debris and microplastics, [including their implementation and enforcement,] **(CAN del)** **(NOR, EU reserve)** to identify possible gaps and options for closing them, including through enhanced synergies and regional cooperation, [and to present the [assessment] **(NOR reserve)** to the Environment Assembly at its [third] **(EU reserve)** session, subject to the availability of funding for that purpose;] **(ZIM, BRA del).**] **(ARG del)** **(PAK suggest changing language of para.)** **(EU, NOR keep)**

21. *Welcomes* the United Nations Environment Programme massive open online course on marine litter and that the United Nations World Ocean Day and the [United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea in 2016] **(ARG reserve)** will focus on marine litter and microplastics; **(Move to PP 7/end, COL, NOR, EU support move)**

22. *[Requests* the Executive Director to forward a proposal to the General Assembly on the establishment of a United Nations Marine Litter Day, if possible on the same date as **the civil society driven (USA)** international coastal clean-up day, but with a broader scope, including prevention[,] [and] awareness building [and clean-up actions in sea areas]; **(USA further clarification);**] **(AFR, EU del)** **(NOR, CHL keep)**

23. *[Invites* those in a position to do so to provide financial and other support for follow-up on the present resolution;] **(USA del)** **(NOR keep)**

24. *Requests* the Executive Director to report to the Environment Assembly at its [third] (to be considered) session [, in 2017,] on progress in the implementation of the present resolution.