

Intergovernmental Negotiating Session – fifth session

AUSTRALIA – OPENING STATEMENT

Australia thanks the Republic of Korea for their gracious hospitality in hosting the fifth Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-5) meeting. We also thank the INC Chair, Ambassador Luis Vayas Valdivieso, and the Secretariat for their hard work preparing for this INC.

Australia remains committed to negotiating an ambitious legally binding instrument by the end of 2024. At UNEA 5.2 in 2022, all Members collectively agreed to a compressed timeframe to finalise the instrument's text because we recognise that plastic pollution is a crisis needing a global solution now. We do not have any time to waste.

We encourage delegates to reflect on the constructive and optimistic spirit that brought us to this point and draw on that same spirit to guide our progress this week, with the goal of finalising ambitious instrument text.

We thank the Chair for providing Non-Paper 3 and we look forward to negotiating in good faith, using this non-paper to guide our discussions.

Australia considers the following elements are essential to ensure the instrument is robust, effective and provides the necessary foundation to end plastic pollution:

- Global obligations to phase out problematic plastic products and problematic chemicals in plastic products.
- Global obligations for harmonised design standards for plastic products, supported by life-cycle analyses, and labelling and transparency requirements.
- Global obligations to restrain and reduce primary plastic production to sustainable levels, to be achieved through sector-based approaches.
- Global obligations for countries to remediate existing plastic pollution, both individually and in cooperation with others.
- A financial mechanism that mobilises finances from all sources to support the instrument's successful implementation.

We seek an agreement that meets the needs of our region, particularly Pacific Island countries who are disproportionately impacted by the adverse impacts of plastic pollution.

We look forward to working with all INC Members at INC-5 to achieve the goal of finalising an ambitious legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution.