Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) statement to INC-4 Ottawa

(23 April 2024)

Thank you Chair. I speak on behalf of the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia, or ERIA.

At first, please allow me to provide brief introduction of ERIA. Since its establishment in 2008, ERIA has supported ASEAN and East Asia region in their economic and social development by providing knowledge and research outcomes. ERIA created the Regional Knowledge Centre for Marine Plastic Debris in 2019, to assist the ASEAN+3 countries in their policymaking processes specifically to combat plastic pollution.

ERIA would like to remind distinguished delegates that multiple efforts to combat plastic pollution in this region have been undertaken. ASEAN Member States adopted the Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in 2019, as well as the ASEAN Regional Action Plan for Combating Marine Debris in 2021. In addition to those regional initiatives, 6 ASEAN Member States have already adopted their national action plans, outlining national-level strategies and commitments.

To achieve the high ambitious target to address plastic pollution, there remains challenges to strengthen the capacities, infrastructure and resource development.

One of the challenges is to reduce the amount of mismanaged plastic waste. Effective countermeasures include improvement in data availability across the plastic value chain, prevention of plastic leakages from recycling processes, reduction of Single-Use-Plastics consumption, and adoption of EPR schemes suitable for different countries’ socio-economic circumstances. ERIA currently offers in-depth analysis, or practical guidelines and toolkits in all of those fields.

ERIA supports the INC process and the establishment of a legally binding instrument to respond to plastic pollution. While the revised Zero-Draft covers a wide range of issues, ERIA would like to emphasize the importance of focusing on practical and pragmatic solutions. This is particularly important to keep the momentum of countries with high aspirations, and to allow them to better navigate through the inevitable challenges.

Thank you very much, Chair.