

Regional Statement by the Asia Pacific Group

For delivery at INC-2 Agenda Item 4. Preparation of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment

The Asia Pacific Group (APG) is pleased to join the Second Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-2) towards an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. We express our sincere gratitude to the Government of France for hosting this important meeting and to the INC Chair and the INC Secretariat for their hard work in preparing for the meeting, especially for proposing the potential Options Paper.

Our region is home to widely diverse countries, but we share in common, the sense of urgency to tackle this global and transboundary issue. This meeting is at a critical juncture of our negotiations. We are looking forward to discussing constructively with our colleagues and we encourage all to approach the process with an open mind and a willingness to find a mutually agreeable ground, without prejudice to our views on the Options Paper. We will strive towards reaching a consensus on mandating the preparation of a zero-draft prepared well in advance of INC-3.

The Group wishes to highlight the following points to take into consideration when discussing the potential options for elements of

the instrument:

- We cannot emphasize enough the need for making decisions based on consensus.
- The focus of this instrument is on ending plastic pollution, which can have many dimensions including, among others: promoting recycling and environmentally sound waste management, sustainable consumption and production, reducing plastics already in the environment, and appropriately addressing concerns regarding the use of additives.
- We support setting concise and clear objectives supported by an overarching goal for ending plastic pollution through nationally determined actions. Such a goal will provide a clear direction for countries to work towards.
- Provision of support by adequate financial, technical and technological assistance and capacity building is a prerequisite for the realization of the objectives and goals.
- Targeted outreach efforts to tackle the root causes of plastic pollution including ineffective management of waste, and lack of public awareness to influence and encourage behavioral change is needed.
- The life-cycle approach is essential. The instrument should address plastic pollution throughout the entire life cycle of plastics, from product design to disposal, in a well-balanced manner, that includes reducing the discharge of mismanaged plastic litter by improved waste management infrastructure and

innovative solutions including the application of local wisdom and knowledge, while recognizing the critical role of plastics for society. It is critical that we strive for a just and smooth transition towards a circular and sustainable plastic economy.

- We should be well-informed by the latest technical and scientific knowledge and best practices, including development of various recycling technologies and results of relevant scientific research. As a related matter, we welcome the adoption of the “Technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of plastic wastes” under the Basel Convention at its recent COP earlier this month.
- Furthermore, we need to interact and involve various stakeholders from the informal sector, producers, scientist, and other relevant civil society, while respecting the party-driven nature of negotiations.
- The instrument must be realistic, action-oriented, and allow for innovative approaches and plans with nationally determined elements, to fulfill the mandate of the UNEA Resolution 5/14 which calls for a combination of both binding and voluntary approaches.
- Thus, it is vital that we distinguish the mandatory features from voluntary ones in the core obligations. Among others, we see that developing, implementing and periodically updating National Action Plans (NAPs) an important topic for core obligations.
- Furthermore, we believe that the collective effort by the

international community through common, binding core obligations and control measures across the lifecycle of plastics, provides a fair and just transition.

- The instrument must develop an enabling environment. Flexibility is a key feature, since there are various approaches to end plastic pollution. Taking into account national circumstances and capabilities must be accounted for when considering the implementation and compliance of the whole instrument.
- The instrument should achieve net environmental benefit without problem-shifting or inadvertently leading to harmful environmental outcomes. It should also be socially inclusive and ensure to leave no one behind, specifically vulnerable communities, in full integration with the SDGs.
- We will strive to reach a solution that is fair, equitable, and in the best interests of all parties involved. By working together and being respectful of each other's perspectives, we can achieve a positive outcome.

I wish to reiterate that the APG is ready to work with all countries and stakeholders. We believe that an effective and progressive instrument is essential to address the global issue of plastic pollution and to preserve a healthy ocean and environment for future generations.

Last but not least, the Asia Pacific Group welcomes and fully supports the offer by the Republic of Korea to host INC-5 in 2024,

and looks forward to its decision by the INC at this session.

We look forward to productive discussions ahead of us this week here in Paris.

Thank you Chair.