



**Children And Youth Major Group (CYMG) written submission on the potential areas for intersessional work compiled by the co-facilitators of the two contact groups, to inform the work of INC-3 (Part B)**

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| Name of the entity   | <b><u>Children and Youth Major Group</u></b><br>(the mandated youth constituency to United Nations Environment Programme)  |
| Contact persons and contact information for the submission | Zuhair Ahmed Kowshik and Gyubin Hwang<br>Global Focal Points<br><br><a href="mailto:zakowshik@gmail.com">zakowshik@gmail.com</a><br><a href="mailto:gyubin.hwang@youthenvironment.org">gyubin.hwang@youthenvironment.org</a> |
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*Children and Youth Major Group to United Nations Environment Programme (CYMG) is the mandated official, formal and self-organized space for children and youth to contribute to and engage in intergovernmental and allied policy processes at UNEP and relevant environmental governance and conservation processes in the broader UN system. CYMG has the role of the official youth engagement mechanism to UNEP. The process of preparing this submission was led by the Plastic Action Working Group, which entailed several weeks of consultations, online meetings and written inputs. We appreciate the voluntary contributions of individuals and member organizations within the youth constituency to UNEP to participate in the submission process.*

*CYMG has co-convened the [Global Youth Coalition on Plastic Pollution](#) with other youth constituencies from different categories of participation in the INC process and beyond to support and enable broader and more effective youth engagement. Through this coalition, we have started facilitating collaboration and partnerships between youth-led organizations to develop collective positions and strategies for eliminating plastic pollution in the environment. Ideas and concepts mentioned in this written submission of CYMG will feed into the collective positions of GYCPP for INC-3.*



## **Input on the potential areas of intersessional work to inform the work of INC-3**

In relation to the guiding questions for **Contact Group - 1**, Children and Youth Major Group to UNEP (CYMG) have the following inputs to submit:

### **1. Important definitions:**

CYMG believes that it is important to define certain terms within the legally binding instrument. Although exact definitions are not suggested, the outline of the term within which deliberation should be held is detailed below:

| <b>Term</b>         | <b>Definition/Scope of what proposed definition should cover</b>  |
|---------------------|---|
| Plastics            | Categorised based on necessity, recyclability, and its hazardous substances level so that its solutions can be addressed more comprehensively and effectively   |
| Producers under EPR | Producers under EPR should be defined to only include big polluters who produce their own plastic, or producers who produce above a certain level of plastic (as may be determined by general consensus). It is important to exclude the small producers of global south countries from the scope of EPR. Additionally, the EPR can also include the responsibilities of the nations that import the biggest amount of plastic. Typically, although a majority of the plastic is consumed in the global north, it is being produced and exported by the global south. Therefore, an additional responsibility/obligation on the importers will equalize the burden that is to be placed on the countries responsible for the demand of the harmful plastic. |
| Big polluters       | To address the aspect of private finance for the legally binding treaty, it is important to identify and define the big polluters of plastic, so as to prevent the small producers of plastic from the scope of the treaty. This identification can be based on criterias set by mutual consensus, or any independent third-party study conducted in this regard.   |

Additionally, we believe that the member states should deliberate or outsource the deliberation of standards for the classification of plastics into various categories. We advocate for the member states to use the most stringent standards to help overcome.



## 2. Information on criteria/categories

CYMG believes that plastic should be segregated based on various factors that will help the member states to come up with immediate, effective and innovative solutions to address them. The criteria for segregation can be the following:

(i) Based on reuse and recyclability: This will help to curb/ban the use of single-use plastics, while limiting the production of necessary future plastics to the materials that can be reused and recycled.

(ii) Based on the hazardous substances level on plastic materials: This will help to ban the use of plastics while creating safer alternatives for extremely hazardous substances existing in plastic materials. The severity and scale of their documented harm to the environment and human health (including the harm during waste-management); and the extent to which they can currently be avoided or substituted

(iii) Based on necessity: CYMG acknowledges that a complete ban on plastic is not just for communities who cannot afford alternatives, or for the differently abled communities for whom plastic is the ideal user friendly material. Additionally, we also acknowledge that the medical industry uses a certain amount of plastic which can be deemed as necessary for humans to thrive. Therefore, categorizing plastic on the basis of dire necessity in this light would help the member states to identify necessary plastics that should not be banned/curbed and for which merely disposal, reuse and recycling methods are needed.

(iv) Based on availability of substitutes: If the alternatives to the plastic used are sustainable, cost-effective and easily available, then the Member States can identify them and encourage it as a regulation to each country so that they can expedite the replacement of such plastic themselves. If the alternatives to such plastic are hard to find, then the member countries can concentrate on the measures in relation to innovation for alternatives to these categories of plastic with various incentives for researchers and/or encouraging Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing of plastics alternatives.



In relation to the guiding questions present in **Contact Group - 2**, Children and Youth Major Group have summarized the inputs collected in the table below:

| Criteria   | Proposed Inputs  |
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| Potential role, responsibilities and composition of a science and technical body | There should be the establishment of a dedicated Scientific and Technical Body which would play a pivotal role in the effective management of plastic pollution. Which involves the creation of subsidiary bodies that are entrusted with the tasks of continuously updating scientific insights, scrutinizing set targets and criteria, and formulating informed recommendations. Central to the credibility of this scientific body is the composition of independent experts, including representatives from Indigenous Peoples and Grassroot communities who possess traditional knowledge. This inclusivity would ensure a holistic approach, combining rigorous scientific methodologies with indigenous wisdom to address the multifaceted challenges posed by plastic pollution. By amalgamating diverse expertise, this body would aim to guide evidence-based decision-making and foster a comprehensive understanding of the intricate dynamics involved in mitigating plastic pollution. |
| Potential scope of and guidance for National Action Plans                        | CYMG believes that strong National Action Plans are the foundation to effective implementation of the treaty. Combating plastic pollution should draw from the Global Plastics Protocol, adapting it to national contexts. Plans should involve collaboration, large-scale pilots, and innovation for domestic plastic reduction. A key goal is to minimize plastic production, with precise criteria for concerning chemicals, traceability mechanisms, and categorization of problematic products. Plans should emphasize circular principles, promoting reuse through clear standards. Integration of a Scientific and Technical Body, including Indigenous representation, ensures informed decision-making. The plans should also draw on the current finance contribution from each Member States to fund related events.  |
| Technology transfer on mutually agreed term                                      | CYMG advocates technological use on plastic materials to reduce plastic pollution utilizing nanotechnology for smart packaging, using bio-based biodegradable polymers, using nano-cellulose for biodegradation, genetic engineering of natural products, and chemical recycling. By using technological advances, the Member States can envision a future where plastic pollution is significantly reduced, if not eradicated entirely.   |



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| <p>Potential financing mechanism</p>         | <p>A strong and independent financing mechanism is one of the crucial factors to the efficient functioning of the treaty. It is important for the financing mechanism to be controlled by the secretariat, appointing the people who are not funded by the big polluters. We believe that the disbursement of finances should be handled by the secretariat, which appoints technical members who are subject matter experts not affected by conflict of interest rather than member countries that prioritize profitability. This mechanism can tap into both public and private sources of finance. The sources can be varied, including but not limited to fines, penalties, sponsorships, donations etc. If the scope of the financing mechanism is expanded to sponsorships and donations, such sponsorships and donations shall give complete autonomy in relation to the decisions of use of such finances to the secretariat or the subsidiary body that is incharge of finances.</p> <p>In pursuit of sustainable funding, a financing mechanism can be established that leverages private sector funds, aligned with the principle that those contributing to plastic pollution should bear the responsibility of its mitigation. Collaborating with corporations through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives could be an avenue to not only secure funding but also hold these entities accountable for their role in reducing plastic pollution, further enhancing the overall effectiveness of the endeavor.</p> |
| <p>Private and innovative finance</p>        | <p>CYMG advocates for the INC to tap into private sources of finance, especially in the form of the GPPF. Besides the financial contributions made by the member states towards addressing plastic pollution, a pollution tax that is imposed on identified big polluters which is in proportion to the plastic that is being produced for them would not only be a major financial influx for the secretariat, but will also act as a deterrent for the big polluters to shift to sustainable alternatives.</p> <p>This private funding can be used for various purposes like capacity building, promotion innovation of alternatives to plastic etc. Moreover, these funds can extend additional financial assistance to developing countries and economies in transition, recognizing their specific challenges in dealing with plastic pollution.</p>   |
| <p>Current funding and finance available</p> | <p>CYMG underscores the importance of harnessing the financial commitments provided by Member States as a pivotal resource in the concerted efforts to combat plastic pollution. Recognizing that effective solutions often require substantial financial backing, CYMG encourages the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to tap into the</p>  |



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|   | <p>financial contributions that Member States have committed to addressing this urgent global concern. By leveraging these funds, the international community can drive targeted initiatives, develop innovative strategies, and implement concrete actions aimed at reducing plastic pollution across the spectrum.</p> <p>Furthermore, CYMG advocates for exploring alternative avenues for financing by tapping into existing instruments that are well-equipped to address environmental challenges. One such avenue is the Global Environment Facility (GEF), a multilateral financing mechanism that supports projects and programs to address global environmental issues. GEF's established framework and expertise in environmental funding make it a potential partner in bolstering efforts against plastic pollution. Similarly, other similar financing mechanisms with a track record of supporting sustainability initiatives could be considered to augment the financial resources available for combating plastic pollution.</p> <p>By tapping into these existing financing mechanisms, the international community can not only allocate resources more effectively but also capitalize on the experience, networks, and institutional structures that these mechanisms provide. This approach allows for a more streamlined and coordinated implementation of strategies, ensuring that financial support reaches the most impactful initiatives. The collaboration between the INC and established financing mechanisms reflects a cohesive and synergistic approach to addressing plastic pollution, maximizing the potential for successful outcomes and tangible progress in the global fight against this critical environmental challenge</p> |
| <p>Capacity building and training needs for each Member</p> | <p>Capacity building needs to be tailored to each stakeholder who is affected by or contributes to plastic pollution. Capacity building should be concentrated towards the most vulnerable communities who are affected by plastic pollution. Such capacity building should help them be aware of their rights and remedies, and what they can do as individuals to prevent the pollution, or to make the reuse and recycling more effective. It should also be concentrated in developing and least developed nations where a huge amount of plastic gets dumped.</p> <p>Capacity building sessions should employ scientific measures in training most affected youths from both disabled and abled communities in research development policy strategy and decision making processes</p>   |