

**Meeting of the Subcommittee of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP
(Nairobi, 12 September 2019)**

Agenda Item 5: Implementation of the UN Environment Programme Marine Strategy

Comments by the EU and its Member States

**The Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment
from Land-Based Activities (GPA)**

- The EU and its MS take note of the progress and timeline of actions leading up to the decision on the future of the Intergovernmental Review (IGR) and GPA and stress that there should be no unnecessary delays in this process.
- The EU and its MS recognise that there is value in exchanging experience and developing partnerships based on inter-governmental cooperation and involving all relevant stakeholders with a view to address issues of common interest in relation to the protection of the marine environment from land-based sources of pollution, in particular marine litter, nutrients or waste water.
- Reiterate that streamlining of activities and decision-making processes within UNEP will only contribute to better follow-up to UNEA Resolutions, which is why the EU and its MS continue to believe that the three GPA streams (marine litter, nutrients and waste water) should be clearly and fully integrated into the UNEP's Programme of Work and Budget to be decided by UNEA.
- This would mean that the Intergovernmental Review (IGR) should stop meeting and the GPA should be discontinued.
- However, while transferring the governance of those activities from the Intergovernmental Review to UNEA (which would indeed require an IGR decision, but no further IGR would be necessary afterwards, as the guidance would be provided by UNEA to UNEP), it must be guaranteed that a certain number of thematic issues will be continued. These include i.a. the negative impacts on the marine environment from sewage, persistent organic pollutants, radioactive substances, heavy metals, oils (hydrocarbons), nutrients, sediment mobilization, litter, and physical alteration and destruction of habitat, topics and respective activities that are currently carried out under the GPA in UNEP in particular within the three partnerships on marine litter, nutrients and waste water.
- The EU and its MS would like to hear about the outcomes of the informal consultations and any possible further considerations given by the regional representatives

Implementation of UNEP/EA.4/Res.6: Marine plastic litter and microplastics

- The EU and its MS would appreciate a timely circulation of the agenda and documents for the next AHOEEG meeting, which is taking place in Bangkok 18-22

November.

- We would like to ask about the progress regarding the need for a strengthened science-policy and global coordination, cooperation and governance.
- We would also appreciate an update on the multi-stakeholder platform that was supposed to be established within UNEP as a follow up to the Resolution (OP3) while reiterating our understanding that this platform was a first step in subsuming the GPA work under UNEP

Implementation of UNEP/EA.4/Res.11: Protection of the marine environment from land-based activities

- The EU and its Member States would like to reiterate the importance of the Regional Seas Conventions as many of them have their Land-Based Sources (LBS) of Pollution Protocols and Action Plans. This makes Regional Seas Conventions very strong implementation mechanism for addressing the issue of LBS at the global level.

Implementation of UNEP/EA.4/Res.14: Sustainable nitrogen management

- The EU and its MS stress that sustainable nitrogen management is of **key importance** for the sake of reducing and preventing nitrogen pollution in air and water, which has adverse effects on human health and the environment, for the protection of soil and related food security/agricultural crop yields and for climate change objectives.
 - We stress the need for a coherent, scientifically underpinned and **evidence-based** policy and measures that reduce and prevent nitrogen pollution and ensure sustainable nitrogen management. The analysis and scientific work already done in the area should be taken into account, notably the already well developed expertise within the **UNECE Air Convention**, including the existing guidance documents produced by its Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen.
 - Any new *global strategy on integrated sustainable nitrogen management* should also build on and liaise closely with already existing initiatives, **avoiding duplication** of efforts and ensuring a **cooperative approach** with the relevant international platforms such as WHO, UNECE, UNEP, FAO, CBD, etc.
 - Any global strategy should also include a better understanding of the way in which nitrogen **impacts specific locations**.
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