

Meeting of the Bureau of the ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastics
Group Meeting

Wednesday 15 January 2020, 15:30 to 16:30 (GMT+3)

UNON VC center 1

United Nations Office at Nairobi, Gigiri

MEETING SUMMARY

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.

1. The Chair welcomed Bureau members and the Secretariat to the meeting and the Bureau adopted the draft annotated Agenda.

Agenda item 2: Update on current status of preparation for the 4th meeting of the expert group.

2. The Chair informed the Bureau that she would provide two briefings to member States on the outcome of the 3rd meeting of the expert group during the last week of January:
 - 21 January, briefing to take place in Geneva organized through the Geneva Environment Network.
 - 23 January, briefing for the CPR at the Subcommittee meeting for which a briefing note has been shared with member States.
3. The Secretariat provided an update on the preparations for the next expert group meeting, and highlighted the following key elements:
 - The Secretariat informed the Bureau that member States had been invited to submit inputs in writing online and, while noting that some member States have requested to extend the deadlines, underlined the importance of meeting deadlines to ensure the preparation of timely and high quality documentation for the 4th meeting of the expert group.
 - The Secretariat informed that, to date, the Secretariat has received:
 - 19 submissions through the paper smart portal and 6 from Scientific Advisory Committee members on examples of approaches to analyse effectiveness pursuant to subparagraph 7 (d) in UNEA resolution 4/6;
 - 7 submissions for the stocktaking pursuant to subparagraph 7 (a) in UNEA resolution 4/6; and
 - 1 submission on potential response options pursuant to subparagraph 10 (d) of UNEA resolution 3/7.
 - The Secretariat also announced that on 20 January at 3:30 pm (Nairobi time, GMT+3) a webinar will be held with the aim of providing information on the stocktaking and the survey in particular. The webinar will be recorded and made available for participants who are unable to join.
 - Finally, the Secretariat also indicated that the second advance version of the AHEG-3 report is now available and that it has been sent for clearance by the rapporteur.

4. The Chair requested the Secretariat to summarize these updates in bullet points and share with the Bureau.

5. The Bureau member from the Government of Japan, Mr. Satoru Iino, suggested that all the submissions on examples of approaches to analyse effectiveness from member States and stakeholders are made available online.

Agenda item 3: Discussion on venues, dates and agenda for the 4th and 5th meetings of the expert group.

a) Venues and dates for the 4th and 5th meetings of the expert group

6. The Chair recalled the decision by the expert group to mandate the Bureau to decide, in close consultation with member States, on the dates and venues of the future meetings of the expert group, by 31 January 2020, and confirmed that formal submissions have been made to host the two remaining meetings of the expert group by:
 - The Government of Peru, who has offered to host the 4th meeting of the expert group, to take place from the 4th to the 8th of May 2020.
 - The Republic of Rwanda, who does not specify any priority to host the 4th or the 5th meeting of the expert group, nor any preferred dates.
7. The Chair also reminded that the default option is to host one, or both, of the meetings at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya.
8. The Chair requested the Secretariat to develop more detailed information on the three alternatives, including budgetary and practical considerations, with a view to facilitate taking a decision on this matter at the next meeting of the Bureau scheduled for 29 January. In this context the Chair also suggested that the Secretariat communicates with the Government of Peru and the Republic of Rwanda to find out more details of what their offers include. Members were also asked to get feedback from their regional groups on proposed dates and venue.

b) Draft annotated agenda for the 4th ad hoc open-ended expert group meeting

9. The Chair had no further comments on the draft agenda for the 4th expert group meeting, which was discussed at the 3rd meeting, except one change of order of agenda items, and requested the Secretariat to draft an annotated agenda for the 4th expert group meeting before the next Bureau meeting, as a basis for further discussion. It was suggested to seek agreement within the bureau on a final proposal at its meeting planned for 4 March to ensure timely availability of the draft agenda.

Agenda item 4: Organization of work.

10. The Bureau endorsed the draft roadmap, subject to a change of the date of the meeting planned for 8 April to 25 March, while noting that the roadmap is a living document that will be regularly updated.
11. The Secretariat informed the Bureau that the roadmap for the expert group meetings will be integrated to the general roadmap of the UN Environment Programme governing bodies, available here: <https://www.unenvironment.org/events/subcommittee-meetings/committee-permanent-representatives-subcommittee-meeting-26>

Agenda item 5: Any other matters.

12. The Bureau member from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya, represented at the meeting by Ms. Maxine Khakasa, informed that the African Group has been considering organizing a meeting with the purpose of preparing for the 4th meeting of the expert group. In addition, they proposed linking such a preparatory meeting (approximately 3 days) with a 2-day meeting with “likeminded” member States (Germany, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland), and sought advice from the Bureau and the Secretariat on the matter.

13. The Chair welcomed the initiative but noted that such regional meetings do not fall within the mandate of the AHEG. The Secretariat pointed to the limited financial and human resources within the Secretariat, and advised, as an alternative, to consider a one-day preparatory meeting for regional and other consultations on the day before the opening of the 4th meeting of the expert group.

Agenda item 6: Closure of the meeting.

14. The Chair thanked the Bureau and the Secretariat for an informative and fruitful discussion and closed the meeting.