

Meeting of the Bureau of the ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastics  
Wednesday 6 May 2020, 15:30 to 16:30(GMT+3)  
Online meeting  
United Nations Office at Nairobi

## **Background Document for Agenda Item 2: Consideration of a draft roadmap for intersessional work for the ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastic**

### **A. Introduction**

The Bureau of the Ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastic (AHEG) decided in its meeting of 25 March 2019<sup>1</sup>, to postpone the fourth session of the AHEG (AHEG-4) initially scheduled for 4-8 May 2019. This decision was taken due to the current situation with the COVID-19.

The Bureau took note of the suggestions proposed by the Secretariat for the intersessional period which included:

- To improve the quality and ownership of the working documents through a set of webinars and by encouraging additional Member States submissions, with regards to stocktaking (resolution 4/6 subparagraph 7a) and the inventory of technical and financial resources or mechanisms (resolution 4/6 subparagraph 7b). As for the methodology for analysis of the effectiveness (resolution 4/6 subparagraph 7d), additional webinars would offer an opportunity to discuss the pilot studies requested as part of the documentation. With regards to response options (resolution 4/6 subparagraph 10d), up to three webinars could be organized to offer an opportunity for submitters in different time zones to present their submissions.
- That the Chair may wish to develop a non-paper outlining potential elements of emerging consensus that could then be subject to written inputs by Member States experts, in preparation for the next expert group meetings.

The Bureau agreed to provide guidance on the draft working documents by 3 April, particularly focusing their feedback on the thematic compilation of submitted potential response options, pursuant to subparagraph 10d of UNEA resolution 3/7. Further consideration was to be given to the proposal for the Chair to prepare a non-paper outlining potential elements of consensus.

The Bureau tasked the Secretariat to develop a Roadmap for the intersessional period until such time as the AHEG-4 can be held to ensure that progress can be made, and work can continue via other means. To this end, the Secretariat has developed the below Intersessional Roadmap for consideration by the Bureau.

It should be noted that the uncertainties around the evolving COVID-19 situation may require regular revisions of the proposed roadmap.

The Secretariat would welcome guidance from the Bureau of the ad hoc expert group on marine litter on this draft intersessional roadmap.

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<sup>1</sup> Link to meeting: <https://www.unenvironment.org/events/expert-group-marine-litter-bureau-meetings/meeting-bureau-ad-hoc-open-ended-expert-group-2>

## **B. Proposed Roadmap**

### **1. Exploration of alternative meeting formats for virtual consultations to engage all participants**

This would include additional creative solutions for virtual consultations to further discussions and encourage more interaction amongst members of the expert group. The Secretariat would circulate a short survey (multiple choice questions) to AHEG members via the UNEP AHEG website portal and/or via email communication with the objective to:

- i. Assess and promote access to the UNEP one-stop-shop website on marine litter<sup>2</sup>;
- ii. Improve the Secretariat's understanding of possible accessibility challenges to ensure that proposed solutions cater for various situations as many experts are working from home and may e.g. have limited internet access; and
- iii. Invite experts to share ideas and approaches on tried and tested virtual solutions for online meetings based on their own experiences.

The Secretariat is already exploring various options for virtual meetings; however, the results of such a survey would allow the Secretariat to further fine-tune the approach with a view to propose concrete solutions for the organization of interactive meetings by the end of May 2020. The aim is for such solutions to include the options for simultaneous interpretation to all UN languages and/or pre-recorded presentations prepared in advance of meetings to allow for voice-over translation.

### **2. Invitation to experts to provide additional written submissions of potential response options**

To promote the widest possible inputs, in particular with regard to response options, the Chair may invite experts to provide additional submissions through the online portal. Such submissions would need to be submitted at least 2 weeks before the webinars mentioned under point 3 below and should include pre-recorded powerpoints.

### **3. The organization of online webinars**

The Secretariat proposes to organize a several webinars (see also Annex 1 and 2) which aim to provide experts of the expert group with updates on progress made on activities under resolution 4/6 subparagraph 7 and resolution 3/7 subparagraph 10d), encourage experts to provide additional submissions and input for ongoing work, and increase the understanding of already submitted potential response options. Bureau members and regional coordinators may be invited to encourage and facilitate participation from all regions. To allow for broad participation, these webinars will:

- Be organized at different times (e.g. 8 AM and 4 PM Nairobi time) to take into account different regional time zones.
- As far as possible, provide the opportunity to listen to presentations and/or engage in the discussions in different UN languages (which may be regionally tailored) by way of formal or informal means.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://environmentassembly.unenvironment.org/expert-group-on-marine-litter>

- Be recorded and made available after the meeting through online the ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastics one-stop-shop website.
- Allow for written comments from experts submitted up to two weeks after the webinar to promote for further reflection and discussions amongst expert group members.
- Prepare Secretariat responses to frequently asked questions, upon request (such FAQ already exist for the Stocktaking already which could be updated and translated.

#### **4. Online exchanges via the expert group one-stop-shop website on potential response options**

Pre-recorded presentations the submitted response options prepared by the submitters will be posted on the UNEP marine litter [submissions page](#), after which experts will be invited to submit questions in writing to the submitters who would be encouraged provide responses directly through the portal.

Where possible and relevant, submissions of questions on the different response options could be done in different UN Languages with UN staff facilitating translation, upon request.

#### **5. The preparation of a guidance note by the by Chair**

The Chair may wish to prepare a guidance note to the expert group, which could outline, for example, a reflection on the different response options, and/or elements of possible emerging consensus or convergence. Experts may be invited to provide comments in writing on the guidance note, to allow for an iterative process aiming to identify possible areas of agreement in view of further consideration at the next expert group meeting.

Such a guidance note may also include an analysis of how the papers on stock-taking and effectiveness, financial and technological resources may feed into the work on future response options and how the next expert group meeting could be structured. It could also draw on the outcomes of the thematic webinars, and provide guidance to the finalization of the Secretariat working documents for the next meeting of the expert group.

#### **6. Organization of virtual regional meetings/briefings in close collaboration with the Bureau members**

To better facilitate regional views and accommodate differences in time zones, virtual regional discussions and briefings may also be useful. Such meetings may for example be organized as follows:

- 1) Regional meetings i.e. to facilitate regional preparations, before the next meeting of the expert group, possibly led by relevant member of the Bureau; and/or
- 2) Virtual briefings for specific constituencies e.g. in Geneva, Nairobi, New York, Bangkok. Should the COVID-19 situation stabilize in a specific location, in-person meetings may be considered. The main aim of such meetings would be to provide a progress update and allow for questions and answers.

#### **Annexes:**

1. Proposed timeline of meetings
2. Summary of key dates

## Annex 1. Proposed timeline of meetings

### A) Descriptive timeline

Relevant dates	Activity	Background documentation	Comments
<b>MAY</b>			
<b>Early May</b>	<p>Invitation for member States and Stakeholders that have submitted response options to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review summary and confirm accuracy of content</li> <li>2. Submit pre-recorded presentations<sup>3</sup> on their respective submissions for <b>response option</b> (7-10 min per presentation)</li> </ol> <p>Secretariat will provide support if needed to demonstrate how PPT can be used to make recordings for the 11 submitters.</p>	<p><a href="#">Draft outline of summary of submissions on potential response options for continued work for consideration by the United Nations Environment Assembly</a></p> <p>Received submissions on potential response options <a href="#">Link</a></p>	<p>Confirm summary to allow for further comparison (if Bureau wishes)</p> <p>Support submitters in their recording efforts</p>
<b>15 May 2020</b>	<p>Deadline for submission of pre-recorded presentations<sup>4</sup> on <b>potential response options</b> by relevant member States and Stakeholders for upload.</p>	<p>Received submissions on potential response options <a href="#">Link</a></p> <p>Pre-recorded presentations should be sent to:  <a href="mailto:stephanie.vanderpoel@un.org">stephanie.vanderpoel@un.org</a>            Cc: <a href="mailto:unenvironment-gpml@un.org">unenvironment-gpml@un.org</a></p>	<p>Promote further understanding of submissions made by member States and Stakeholders</p>
<b>Mid/end May 2020</b>	<p>Secretariat will upload received files in English and arrange for recordings of interpretation for the submitted presentations in other UN languages.</p>	<p>Received files will be posted here: <a href="#">Link</a></p>	<p>Provision of language versions of potential response options</p>
<b>18 May 2020</b>	<p>Webinar on <b>selected case studies</b> using the <b>revised</b> methodology for analysis of the <b>effectiveness</b> of existing and potential response options and activities in contributing towards long-term elimination of discharge of marine plastic litter and microplastics into the oceans.</p> <p>Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT)</p>	<p><a href="#">Draft revised methodology to analyse the effectiveness of existing and potential response options and activities on marine litter and microplastics at all levels to determine the contribution in solving the global problem</a></p> <p>Received submissions on approaches to analyse effectiveness <a href="#">Link</a></p> <p>Comments to be sent to  <a href="mailto:stephanie.vanderpoel@un.org">stephanie.vanderpoel@un.org</a>            Cc: <a href="mailto:unenvironment-gpml@un.org">unenvironment-gpml@un.org</a></p>	<p>Summarize input received and discuss the preparation of pilot case studies</p> <p>Welcome additional comments to the webinar up to 2 June 2020</p>

<sup>3</sup> The Secretariat will provide a “how-to” guide to facilitate participants to record their presentations.

<sup>4</sup> The Secretariat will provide a “how-to” guide to facilitate participants to record their presentations.

<p><b>21 May 2020</b></p>	<p>Webinar on <b>Stocktaking</b> of existing activities and action to reduce marine plastic litter and microplastics and <b>technical and financial resources or mechanisms</b> for supporting countries in addressing marine plastic litter and microplastics</p> <p>Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT)</p>	<p><a href="#">Draft Provisional summary of the stocktake of existing activities and action towards the long-term elimination of discharges into the oceans, to reduce marine plastic litter and microplastics</a> and <a href="#">Draft Provisional summary of the Inventory of technical and financial resources and mechanisms for supporting countries in addressing marine plastic litter and microplastics</a></p> <p>Received narrative submissions: <a href="#">Link</a></p>	<p>Provide an update on submissions</p> <p>Welcome additional comments and questions on the webinar up to 26 May 2020 after which Q&amp;A will be updated</p> <p>Encourage additional submissions until July 31.</p>
<p><b>26 May 2020</b></p>	<p>Webinar: Identification of various elements for further discussion based on the submissions made on <b>potential response options</b></p> <p>Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT)</p>	<p><a href="#">Draft outline of summary of submissions on potential response options for continued work for consideration by the United Nations Environment Assembly</a></p> <p>Received submissions on potential response options <a href="#">Link</a></p>	<p>Potential response options webinars to be chaired by AHEG Chair (TBC)</p> <p>Elements will be presented by the Chair of the AHEG Bureau</p> <p>Introduce/agree on next steps</p>
<b>JUNE</b>			
<p><b>10 June</b></p>	<p>Virtual Townhall: “Nature for oceans management – how can we “turn the tide” on marine litter?”</p>	<p>Specific background documentation to be developed</p>	<p>This is part of a larger “Act #For Nature” Online Forum, organized by UNEP and the Norwegian UNEA Presidency, 7-10 June</p>
<p><b>15 June 2020</b></p>	<p>Webinar: Presentation of <b>case studies on the analysis of effectiveness</b> of existing and potential response options and activities in contributing towards long-term elimination of discharge of marine plastic litter and microplastics into the oceans.</p>	<p><a href="#">Draft revised methodology to analyse the effectiveness of existing and potential response options and activities on marine litter and microplastics at all levels to determine the contribution in solving the global problem</a></p>	

	Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT)	Received submissions on approaches to analyse effectiveness <a href="#">Link</a>  Comments to be sent to <a href="mailto:stephanie.vanderpoel@un.org">stephanie.vanderpoel@un.org</a> Cc: <a href="mailto:unenvironment-gpml@un.org">unenvironment-gpml@un.org</a>	
<b>23 June 2020</b>	Webinar: Presentation of non-paper / identification of various elements for further discussion based on the submissions made on <b>potential response options</b>  Time: 8:00 – 10:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 – 6:00 pm (EAT)	The submitted response options are available here: <a href="#">Link</a>	Further discussions on response options
<b>JULY</b>			
<b>10 July 2020</b>	<b>Webinar: Presentation of case studies on the analysis of effectiveness</b> of existing and potential response options and activities in contributing towards long-term elimination of discharge of marine plastic litter and microplastics into the oceans.  Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT)	<a href="#">Draft revised methodology to analyse the effectiveness of existing and potential response options and activities on marine litter and microplastics at all levels to determine the contribution in solving the global problem</a>	
<b>16 July 2020</b>	Webinar: <b>Feedback on non-paper/</b> Identification of various elements for further discussion based on the submissions made on <b>potential response options</b> .  Time: 8:00 – 10:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 – 6:00 pm (EAT)	The submitted response options and relevant documentation will be available here: <a href="#">Link</a>	
<b>28 July 2020</b>	Webinar: Presentation of <b>case studies on the analysis of effectiveness</b> of existing and potential response options and activities in contributing towards long-term elimination of discharge of marine plastic litter and microplastics into the oceans.  Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT)	<a href="#">Draft revised methodology to analyse the effectiveness of existing and potential response options and activities on marine litter and microplastics at all levels to determine the contribution in solving the global problem</a>	
<b>30 July 2020</b>	Webinar: Identification of various elements for further discussion based on the submissions made on <b>potential response options</b> .  Time: 8:00 – 10:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 – 6:00 pm (EAT)	The submitted response options and relevant documentation will be available here: <a href="#">Link</a>	

<b>AUGUST</b>			
<b>28 August 2020</b>	<p>Webinar: <b>Stocktaking</b> of existing activities and action to reduce marine plastic litter and microplastics and <b>technical and financial resources or mechanisms</b> for supporting countries in addressing marine plastic litter and microplastics.</p> <p>Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT)</p>	Link to documentation will be shared before the webinar	
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>			
<b>2 Sep 2020</b>	<p><b>Webinar:</b> Identification of various elements for further discussion based on the submissions made on <b>potential response options</b>.</p> <p>Time: 8:00 – 10:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 – 6:00 pm (EAT)</p>	The submitted response options and relevant documentation will be available here: <a href="#">Link</a>	
<b>10 Sep 2020</b>	<p>Webinar: Presentation of <b>case studies on the analysis of effectiveness</b> of existing and potential response options and activities in contributing towards long-term elimination of discharge of marine plastic litter and microplastics into the oceans.</p> <p>Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT)</p>	Link to documentation will be shared before the webinar	
<b>15 Sep 2020</b>	<b>Updated Roadmap introduced</b>		

## Annex 2. Summary of key dates

Orange fields: relating to response options

Green fields: effectiveness

Dates	Activity
<b>MAY</b>	
<b>Early May</b>	Invitation for member States and Stakeholders that have submitted response options to review summary and confirm accuracy of content and submit pre-recorded presentations <sup>5</sup> on their respective submissions.
<b>Early May</b>	<b>Survey:</b> Circulation of survey on accessibility and proposed approaches
<b>15</b>	<b>Deadline:</b> Submission of pre-recorded presentations <sup>6</sup> on <b>potential response options</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Deadline: Survey responses</b> on accessibility and proposed approaches
<b>15-18</b>	Upload of received files in English and preparation of recordings of interpretation for the submitted presentations in other UN languages for upload.
<b>18</b>	<b>Webinar:</b> Proposed <b>case studies</b> using the <b>revised</b> methodology for analysis of the <b>effectiveness</b> of existing and potential response options and activities in contributing towards long-term elimination of discharge of marine plastic litter and microplastics into the oceans. Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT)
<b>21</b>	<b>Webinar: Stocktaking</b> of existing activities and action to reduce marine plastic litter and microplastics and <b>technical and financial resources or mechanisms</b> for supporting countries in addressing marine plastic litter and microplastics. Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT)
<b>26</b>	<b>Webinar:</b> Identification of various elements for further discussion based on the submissions made on <b>potential response options</b> & sharing of results of survey with proposed approaches. Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT) – 2 hours
<b>26</b>	<b>Deadline:</b> Comments on stocktaking and inventory webinar
<b>JUNE</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Deadline:</b> Comments on effectiveness webinar and proposed case studies
<b>9</b>	<b>Deadline:</b> Comments on response option elements
<b>15</b>	<b>Webinar:</b> Presentation of <b>case studies on the analysis of effectiveness</b> of existing and potential response options and activities in contributing towards long-term elimination of discharge of marine plastic litter and microplastics into the oceans. Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT)
<b>23</b>	<b>Webinar:</b> Presentation of non-paper / identification of various elements for further discussion based on the submissions made on <b>potential response options</b> Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT) – 2 hours
<b>30</b>	<b>Deadline:</b> Comments on proposed case studies
<b>JULY</b>	
<b>7</b>	<b>Deadline:</b> Comments for comments on non-paper
<b>10</b>	<b>Webinar:</b> Presentation of <b>case studies on the analysis of effectiveness</b> of existing and potential response options and activities in contributing towards long-term elimination of discharge of marine plastic litter and microplastics into the oceans. Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT)
<b>16</b>	<b>Webinar: Feedback on non-paper/</b> Identification of various elements for further discussion based on the submissions made on <b>potential response options</b> . Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT) 2 hours
<b>17</b>	<b>Deadline: Comments on case-studies</b>

<sup>5</sup> The Secretariat will provide a “how-to” guide to facilitate participants to record their presentations.

<sup>6</sup> The Secretariat will provide a “how-to” guide to facilitate participants to record their presentations.



28	<b>Webinar:</b> Presentation of <b>case studies on the analysis of effectiveness</b> of existing and potential response options and activities in contributing towards long-term elimination of discharge of marine plastic litter and microplastics into the oceans. Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT)
30	<b>Webinar:</b> Identification of various elements for further discussion based on the submissions made on <b>potential response options</b> . Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT) 2 hours
31	<b>Deadline: Submissions for Stocktaking and Inventory of financial and technical resources and mechanisms</b>
<b>AUGUST</b>	
7	<b>Deadline: Comments on case-studies</b>
15	<b>Deadline: Submissions for Response Options – written input</b>
27	<b>Webinar: Stocktaking</b> of existing activities and action to reduce marine plastic litter and microplastics and <b>technical and financial resources or mechanisms</b> for supporting countries in addressing marine plastic litter and microplastics. Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT)
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	
2	<b>Webinar:</b> Identification of various elements for further discussion based on the submissions made on <b>potential response options</b> . Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT) 2 hours
10	<b>Webinar:</b> Presentation of <b>case studies on the analysis of effectiveness</b> of existing and potential response options and activities in contributing towards long-term elimination of discharge of marine plastic litter and microplastics into the oceans. Time: 8:00 am (EAT) and 4:00 pm (EAT)
15	<b>Updated Roadmap introduced</b>