

Feedback on the proposed revised roadmap

In the midst of COVID-19, webinars calling for a holistic roadmap is an excellent way of attracting key experts, countries, major stakeholders and communities etc to deliberate on common platform and build a consensus to combat the global menace of plastic pollution. Promoting the case for reducing plastic pollution holds right in the light of pandemic because as we are fighting the pandemic on one hand, accumulation of plastic-related waste is increasing, witnessed through use of poly-bags for waste disposal and other reasons which gets disposed near water bodies/coasts on the other. Suddenly because of COVID the PPEs have given a new lease of life to plastic which was facing severe scrutiny across the world on environmental grounds. The proper disposal of masks, gloves, PPEs ect is a new challenge and there is need for proper post-usual disposal, treatment and recycling of the discarded plastic gears to safeguard the environment.

The roadmap must rightly ensure that strategies to combat plastic pollution reach large group of people and enhance multi-faceted conversations on the same. Challenges like outreach, qualitative impact, programme effectiveness must be taken note of keeping in view the mandate and desirable outcomes.

Regarding a ‘webinar on Identification of various elements for further discussion based on the submissions made on potential response options’ on 30 July, submissions have been compiled and a presentation on response options have been submitted by India Water Foundation in pursuant to paragraph 10(d) of UNEA resolution 3/7, which we are convinced that our suggestions will add value towards strengthening response actions towards menace of plastic pollution.

The Foundation would like to put forth certain suggestions for incorporation in the **‘Inter-sessional work for the ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and micro plastics’**

- Webinar discussions should enclose cross-cutting measures targeted at source rather than destination to eliminate problematic and unnecessary plastics, to enhance circularity of plastics in the economy, reduce marine plastics and plastic pollution in the environment. For this, focus attention should be paid to ‘system boundaries’ that defines the geographic locations of both the sources of plastics entering riverine and marine environments and their impacts under source-to-sea approach.

- Incorporate cross-cutting enabling conditions including institutions in terms of legal arrangements and policy, research and knowledge, stakeholder engagement and dialogue, financing and capacity development. There should also be call to strengthen collaboration and coordination among relevant stakeholders at national and regional scale; establish national baselines of marine plastics for national priority & target setting and increased investment in innovative solutions, business models and technologies
- More harmonized vision and policies addressing plastic pollution at the global scale where knowledge, best practices & innovative solutions should be shared through webinars to be customized at the national and local levels.
- Assess the potential social, economic and environmental impacts (positive and negative) of the preferred short-listed instruments/actions to combat plastic pollution and the impact that preferred course of action have on different sectors.
- Life cycle assessment of plastics ought to be highlighted during webinars that addresses an efficient and cost beneficiary system of waste management requiring ‘micro planning’ for collection, storage, transportation processing and disposal of plastic waste.
- Roadmap should incorporate common thematic platforms with representation at global, regional, national and local scales for developing, implementing and coordinating action plans to address plastic pollution
- Plastic waste processing and disposal in an environmentally sustainable manner must encompass planning, organization, administration, financial, legal and engineering aspects involving interdisciplinary relationships and focus on adopting principles of economy, aesthetics, energy conservation and pollution control.
- Issues of ‘internal integration’ based on-development and promotion of interdisciplinary knowledge and technologies that unite technical expertise and understanding while improving the quality of solutions must be incorporated
- Focus on opportunities in the field of biodegradable or bio-based plastics, promotion of ecologically sound land development protecting essential ecosystems using these plastics materials, general education and promotion of importance of social equity to overall community sustainability
- A series of upstream solutions on alternative solutions, eco-design, sustainable production, business models developed and tested by plastic producing and consumer goods companies for priority plastics frequently found in the marine environment

- Capacity building of stakeholders should be augmented to accelerate sustainable solutions, empower and mobilize relative sections of society, near the coastal/ocean areas as a potential response towards addressing marine pollution.