

Meeting of the Bureau of the ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastics
Wednesday 22 July 2020, 15:30 to 16:30 (GMT+3)
Online meeting

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY

Agenda and background documentation is available on the [meeting portal](#).

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

1. The Acting Chair opened the meeting and the agenda was adopted.

Agenda item 2: Discussion on the feedback received from Member States and Stakeholders on the revised draft Scenario Note and deliberation on the way forward to deliver the AHEG outcome.

2. The acting Chair opened the second agenda item and outlined the changes made at the request of the Bureau in the revised draft Scenario Note, including with regard to:
 - Further clarification on the expected outcome of the expert group;
 - More clarity on the content and purpose of the online platform - which is to provide an interactive online forum for discussions, comments and interactions among experts on the studies mandated under subparagraph 7a, 7b and 7d of UNEA resolution 4/6;
 - Reduced number of online technical briefings, and increased time in between activities to allow for participants to prepare well ahead of the meetings and provide substantive feedback;
 - Additional guidance and information on the proposed virtual working groups and organisation of regional consultations.
3. The Secretariat presented a brief summary of comments received on the draft Scenario Note, including with regard to the outcome of AHEG, the scheduling and format of different online meetings, the proposed elements paper, the virtual platform, and the need to expand the period covered by the roadmap.
4. The Bureau noted the questions related to language barriers and challenges concerning regional outreach and ownership, and called for a combination of different participation tools/platforms for the virtual meetings as well as interpretation services.
5. The Secretariat explained that it is exploring various options for language services for the different activities and meetings subject to available resources and technical solutions to promote language inclusivity as far as possible throughout the process. It was also highlighted that online interpretation of UN meetings in the era of covid-19 is a challenge for the UN as a whole and will need solutions that are UN-wide. The Secretariat also informed the Bureau that the UN compound in Nairobi was closed until further notice due to the covid-19 pandemic, and that it remains unclear when the meeting facilities will be opened.
6. Following an exchange of views, and taking into account the uncertainties relating to the covid-19 pandemic, the Bureau agreed to organize only one additional formal meeting of the ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastic before UNEA-5, and that this fourth meeting of the expert group should take place virtually from 9-13 November 2020. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to reflect this decision in the revised draft Scenario Note and to develop a detailed proposal for how the meeting can take place virtually, taking into account e.g. formal requirements, interpretation and different time zones. The Secretariat was also requested to inform members of the

expert group of the decision, as well as the two countries that have generously offered to physically host the fourth ad hoc expert group meetings.

7. The Bureau reiterated that regional consultations in advance of the next expert group meeting may be useful to promote effective preparations, while noting that such initiatives should be demand-driven and tailor-made, and that all regions may not be equally interested. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to support such initiatives, subject to available resources and possible time constraints, including with regard to meeting organization, virtual platforms, possible interpretation, technical briefings and presentations, and background documentation.
8. The Bureau took note of plans to organize a regional consultation meeting for the Asia Pacific region on 25-26 August with 3 hours of meetings daily. Furthermore, other regional consultations could be organized upon requests.
9. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to further revise the draft Scenario Note taking into account the guidance provided by the Bureau. The revised Scenario Note will be shared with Bureau members for final review with the view of adoption by silent procedure.
10. The Bureau also requested the Secretariat to remind the expert group of the upcoming technical briefing on response options taking place on 29 July and to inform the expert group of the outcome of the Bureau meeting held on 22 July.

Agenda item 3: Any other matters.

11. No other matters were raised.

Agenda item 4: Closing of the Meeting.

12. The acting Chair thanked the Bureau and the Secretariat for an informative and productive discussion closed the Meeting. The date for the next bureau meeting will be set at a later stage, following consultations between the Chair and the Secretariat.