

Call for written submissions – Proposed response template on the potential options for elements towards an international legally binding instrument

On 9 December 2022, the Executive Secretary of the INC Plastic Pollution Secretariat sent a notification inviting written submissions from members of the committee and from observers. The template below is intended to provide guidance to members of the committee and observers in structuring the written submissions.

As requested by INC-1, written submissions will inform the secretariat in the preparation of a document with potential options for elements towards an international legally binding instrument, for consideration at the second session of the INC, without in any way prejudging what the committee might decide regarding the structure and provisions of the instrument. The document is to be based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastics as called for by UNEA resolution 5/14, including identifying the objective, substantive provisions including core obligations, control measures, and voluntary approaches, implementation measures, and means of implementation.

The template below is meant to assist Members and Observers to prepare their written submission as a guide. A number of documents prepared for INC-1 are of relevance, notably UNEP/PP/INC.1/5 on 'Potential elements, based on provisions in paragraphs 3 and 4 of United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 5/14, including key concepts, procedures and mechanisms of legally binding multilateral agreements that may be relevant to furthering implementation and compliance under the future international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment'.

The template is divided into three sections:

- I. Substantive elements
- II. Implementation elements
- III. Additional input

All written submissions must be sent to unep-incplastic.secretariat@un.org. The statements received will be compiled and made available the INC webpage.

Please note that it is not required for all fields to be answered in the template for submission.

Deadline for submissions:

- 6 January 2023 for written submissions from observers.
- 10 February 2023 for written submissions from Members of the Committee.

TEMPLATE FOR SUBMISSIONS

Name of country (For Members of the committee)	Tonga
Name of organization (For observers to the committee)	Ministry if MEIDECC/Department of Environment
Contact person and contact information for the submission	mele.tovi94@gmail.com
Date	9.1.2023

I. Substantive elements

1. Objective(s)

a) *What objective(s) could be set out in the instrument?*

Proposed Objective: To address and control the production and consumption of plastic to reduce plastic wastes

Tonga is deeply concerned about the effects of plastic pollution at every stage of the life cycle on the environment, society, culture, economy, health, and food security. Tonga:

- is increasingly inundated by an acute overabundance of inexpensive primary (virgin) plastic, undermining secondary markets for recycled material and investments in collection and recycling.
- experiences an increased rates of production and consumption of plastics/plastic products.
- have challenges with phasing out problematic plastics / polymer types including infrastructure and capacity to identify chemical constituents of plastics and how to address and manage these.

The lack of technical and financial capacity, infrastructure coupled with poor waste management practices and systems in the region lead to huge quantities of plastics/plastics products waste ending up on our shores. Therefore, we need to consider the issue comprehensively from the point at which plastic is conceived as a material to the moment it finds its way to end of life.

2. Core obligations, control measures and voluntary approaches

a) *What core obligations, control measures and voluntary approaches would provide a comprehensive approach to addressing plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, throughout the full life cycle in line with the future objective(s) of the instrument?*

- The Pacific therefore requests the ILBI to develop sustainable plastics production and consumption guidelines, to ensure strategies and actions are in place to address global plastic production, to promote sustainable production and consumption of plastics (product design, environmentally sound management, resource efficiency and circular economy approach) effectively reducing the amount of plastic entering the waste stream.

The IBLI should develop mechanisms to control aggregate primary production (including establishing baselines, targets and establishing reporting similar to Montreal Protocol – production and consumption use); establish targets to reduce production of single-use plastics with associated monitoring to track and report on reduced production; implement bans on single use plastics (where practical), implement bans on problematic or hazardous polymers and other constituent chemicals; and establish harmonious design and labelling standards.

Most importantly the ILBI must recognize the forced role on Pacific Island Developing States that are the receivers of plastic either as imported materials, or through the trans-boundary movement of waste through the worlds' oceans.

We request the full life-cycle of plastics be considered within the IBLI scope, with a view to promoting resource-efficient circular economy approaches, with a priority focus on addressing single-use plastics. It should take a central place in the international efforts, while facilitating cooperation, coordination and complementarity among relevant regional and international conventions and instruments.

II. Implementation elements

1. Implementation measures

- a) *How to ensure implementation of the instrument at the national level (eg. role national action plans contribute to meeting the objectives and obligations of the instrument?)*
- b) *How to ensure effectiveness of the instrument and have efficient national reporting?*
- c) *Please provide any other relevant proposals or priorities here on implementation measures (for example for scientific and technical cooperation and coordination as well as compliance).*

As Developing Nations, we lack the access to appropriate technology, the funding to appropriately address the worlds waste issues, and the capacity and training to adequately engage and implement necessary action to combat the scourge of plastic pollution. We seek the IBLI to provide this support, whilst pushing to limit the creation of plastic upstream to reduce the impact and burden

felt by those most reliant on the oceans, and least able to act to address the impacts. The objectives of the IBLI should be designed to allow for equity, effectiveness, flexibility, and progression. It must reduce and control the leakage of waste plastic and microplastics into us environment. As well as prioritizing the urgent elimination of existing plastic pollution in the marine environment.

2. Means of Implementation

With respect to means of implementation, document UNEP/PP/INC.1/5 covers the following elements: capacity-building, technical assistance, technology transfer on mutually agreed terms and financial assistance.

a) *What measures will be required to support the implementation of the instrument?*

Tonga require financial assistance, Technical assistance and Capacity buildings to tackle the plastic pollution issue, and is actively seeking the support of our member nations to deliver this most important of Treaties to ensure the legacy we leave our children is one of prosperity and environmental harmony, not pollution and destruction.

III. Additional input

Please provide any other relevant proposals or priorities here (for example introductory elements; awareness-raising, education and exchange of information; research; stakeholder engagement; institutional arrangements and final provisions).
