TEMPLATE FOR SUBMISSIONS

Name of country (for Members of the committee)	(Linked with Ecuador)
Name of organization (for stakeholders to the committee)	Galapagos Conservation Trust
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I. Substantive elements

1. Objective(s)

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

Proposed Objectives:

1. Enforcement of existing international laws on plastic waste management and pollution at-sea.
2. Acceleration of the uptake of circular economy strategies to tackle the problem of macroplastic, microplastic and nanoplastic pollution at source in the long-term.
3. Acceleration of the testing and scale up of alternative (environmentally safe and non toxic) biopolymer based material usage in mass manufacturing.
4. Acceleration of sustainable livelihoods provided within a global circular economy for plastics.
5. Support for remote island communities such as in the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador to cope with the influx of international plastic waste whilst longer term solutions are manifesting.
6. Protect ocean and terrestrial biodiversity from the risk of plastic pollution.

Explanatory Text (linking to above objectives):

1 Studies in Galapagos and the Eastern Tropical Pacific region highlight the role of dumping plastic waste at sea (i.e. lost fishing gear and general 'domestic' plastic and other waste is intentionally disposed of overboard in significant quantities, within countries' Exclusive Economic Zones as well as in the High Seas) contrary to MARPOL convention – van Sebille et al., 2019 doi.org/10.5194/os-15-1341-2019, Schofield et al., 2020 doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2019.232.

2-4 Case studies from our East Pacific network "Pacific Plastics: Science to Solutions" made up of researchers, Marine Protected Area managers, industry and NGOs from Ecuador, Peru and Chile, point to the importance of incentives to accelerate circular economy solutions (PPSS website: https://www.pacificplasticssciencetosolutions.com/strategy/), Ford et al., 2022 doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2021.150392.

5 A significant majority of coastal plastic waste in the Galapagos Islands is arriving from international sources external to the marine reserve (a study around San Cristobal island in 2018 estimated less than 2% of plastic items found on beaches were likely to be a result of local leaks or littering – Jones et al., 2021 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2021.147704).

6 Plastic pollution is directly impacting species through ingestion and entanglement. Recent risk scoring has identified 32 species in Galapagos that need urgent, targeted monitoring and mitigation strategies to counter plastic contamination, including pinnipeds, seabirds, turtles, sharks and corals. 27 marine vertebrates also scored at high risk of harm from entanglement and

ingestion – Jones et al., 2020 doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-111140/v1; Jones et al., 2021 doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2021.147704

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?

1. Enforce at-sea waste management legislation with greater accountability for maritime industries:
   - Apply tighter controls on waste management reporting of industrial and artisanal fleets (facilities to enable waste disposal/recycling must be adequate in ports to reduce leakage risk)
   - International fishery operators should be given financial incentives to bring additional waste found to shore, including retrieving found gears/ ghost nets and fish aggregation devices (FADs)
   - Vessels should be compelled to retrieve all the FADs they release.
   - International offshore fleets should be subject to the same standards of waste management as the merchant navy cargo fleets.

2. Future objectives of the instrument should focus on Reduce, Reuse and Repurpose, with Recycling seen as a last resort to decrease waste generation and pressure on waste management systems. Manufacturers must design with the intention of prolonging lifetime of products, and take all reasonable steps to facilitate setting up 'repair cafes' for consumers to use.

3. Establish National Circular Economy Committees and single-use plastics bans.

   - The establishment of Circular Economy Committees, made up of diverse stakeholders at a provincial level, could support with the implementation of national policy. National Circular Economy Committees should;
     - prioritise meaningful engagement and participation of local communities, especially the most vulnerable (I.e. grassroots plastic recyclers).
     - Promote financial incentives for companies to use alternative plastic feedstocks to petrochemical sources. (e.g. bioplastic production from locally abundant organic waste flows).
     - Drive the application of regulations limiting plastic pollution and support the implementation of national laws on inclusive circular economy, giving emphasis to Extended Producer Responsibility, handling and management of solid waste.
   - Establish comprehensive bans on single-use plastics in tandem with accessible alternatives.
     - Reinforce with inclusive behaviour change and national communication campaigns targeting multiple and diverse audiences (e.g. businesses, schoolchildren, families etc.).

4. Strengthen the Extended Producer Responsibility mechanism and employ the 'polluter pays' principle to fund remediation i.e. clean up and enforce the observation of waste management legislation.

5. The need for more sustainable livelihood options/'green/blue jobs' has become increasingly evident since the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Establishing sustainable funding mechanisms and training/development opportunities for 'green/blue jobs' should be a priority for socioeconomic resilience against plastic pollution and other environmental/social stressors.

6. Agree global targets for drastic action to reduce plastic pollution, reflecting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other worldwide initiatives (e.g. a 30% reduction in plastic pollution at key indicator sites by 2030).

- To implement and achieve these ambitions targets, regions and countries should collaborate with scientific networks to (a) gather evidence and establish current pollution baselines, (b) develop monitoring protocols for ongoing data collection and analysis, and (c) recommend effective solutions based on the performance of pilot projects and case studies in the research area.

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?

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).

i. The establishment of Circular Economy Committees, made up of diverse stakeholders at a provincial level, could support with the implementation of national policy. Central to success will be ensuring meaningful engagement and participation of local community, especially the most vulnerable (I.e. grassroots recyclers that currently depend on plastic waste as an income source).

ii. Incentives for companies to increasingly adopt the use of alternative plastic feedstocks to petrochemical sources. (e.g. bioplastic production from locally abundant organic waste flows such as algae or chitin – see work of biopolymer research group Materiom).

iii. Realise benefits of reinforcing the Treaty through cooperative international instruments using existing ocean basin-based Governance, with each nation represented reporting to their regional body. An example of this is the CMAR network in the Eastern Tropical Pacific (Ecuador, Colombia, Panama and Costa Rica).

iv. Application of Extended Producer Responsibility and polluter pays principles implementing circular economy strategies would reduce plastic pollution at source and avoid plastic waste leakage.

v. Ask for regions/countries to establish alliances with scientific networks to connect different forms of evidence with policymaking. For additional benefits, these networks should be supported to engage early career researchers and practitioners into Treaty design,

implementation and monitoring to strengthen capacity around the world and support the measurement of the Treaty's impact. This could also inform improved enforcement. In the Eastern Pacific, the Galapagos Conservation Trust and University of Exeter co-run the Pacific Plastics: Science to Solutions network that contains representatives from Ecuador, Peru, Chile and across Europe at varying stages of their careers, developing evidence on the plastic pollution problem at a regional scale and trialling scaled solutions. These international networks are key to implementing standardised methodologies for ongoing data collection.

vi. Agreement on terminology and indicators to monitor the impact and observation of the Treaty at a national scale. Work with universities to support student research projects on relevant themes to the Treaty. Establish comparable and standardized methods of data collection.

vii. Create an Implementation Plan that defines responsibilities and roles of different stakeholders: governments, industries, NGOs, businesses, and individuals.

viii. Establish and agree upon common objectives, yet contextualize actions depending on the region.

ix. Encourage and give space for representation of disadvantaged groups, communities, and perspectives.

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?

i. Technology offers opportunities to improve tracking of polluting sources – investment in research and development is required to continue to refine models (e.g. ground-truthing oceanic current and plastic models using oceanic drifters: see galapagosplasticfree.nl/drifters, and using Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags to track plastic movement and waste flows).

ii. All FADs must have a GPS locator beacon to enable tracking and retrieval. This data should be made available to the scientific community (after retrieval) to support ocean plastic flow model accuracy and transparency of fishing activity

iii. Clean up data, particularly from islands (as common accumulation zones for oceanic plastics), could be monitored as an ocean-basin level scale of success – support provided to nations to deliver monitoring data into a global database would be very impactful.

iv. Tackling plastic pollution in tandem with illegal/unregulated/unreported fishing and marine surveillance has increasing potential.

v. Funding to support innovation and incubation of new solutions and alternatives both within local communities and on a broader regional scale.

vi. Funding to support Industries in technological shifts to design products "that factor in the reparability and reusability of products"[1]

[1] Söderholm, P. The green economy transition: the challenges of technological change for sustainability. *Sustain Earth* 3, 6 (2020). https://doi.org/10.1186/s42055-020-00029-y

vii. Establishment of a Monitoring and Evaluation system to track progress

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).

i. Awareness raising of the Global Plastics Treaty negotiations: provide regular accessible communications for wide public access e.g. infographics/ short videos. Provide a platform for members and stakeholders to present their progress and a public forum for discourse.
ii. Consider regular peer-to-peer academic conferences to gather experts and relevant knowledge, and public conferences to keep the public informed and engaged.
iii. Education: prioritise and emphasise the transition towards a circular economy and consumption reduction, as opposed to the historical focus on recycling.
iv. Education: develop a central hub with recommended resources for educators introducing the global plastic problem and solutions to address the issue.
v. Grassroots to Governments: engage local stakeholders in remote island communities to input into political decisions with locally relevant solutions.