

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Ad Hoc Open-Ended Expert Group Meeting on Marine Litter and Micro-plastics Country Statement of Bangladesh**

Bangladesh attaches high importance to prevention of marine pollution of the Bay of Bengal coast at the south of the Bangladesh delta, hence marine litter and micro-plastic is a matter of great concern as many other countries of the world. The situation of Bangladesh is unique in this regard considering its 580 km long coastline and high population density.

We believe that measures for combating pollution of marine litter and microplastics should be considered and be taken based upon appropriate and sufficient scientific knowledge and with adequate legal instruments in place. Resource allocation and awareness of communities are also important.

To give a legal overview, The Article 18A placed under the 2nd part of the Constitution which provides the fundamental principle of the state policy builds the foundation of the marine pollution protection by proclaiming that ‘the state shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to preserve and safeguard the natural resources, biodiversity, wetlands, forests and wildlife for the present and future citizens’.

The Environmental Conservation Act 1995, as the main act for environmental protection of Bangladesh, covers the solid and liquid waste management of the whole country including marine waters. provisions to protects the environment by enforcing against any pollution to the Air water and soil. The country also banned use of plastic shopping bags (upto certain millimeter of thickness) since 2002.

Bangladesh has developed the action plan for ‘the sustainable abstraction of marine resources and its environmental management’. As a part of the action plan a number of acts relating pollution control of the marine environment are being developed. However, the grave nature of the current pollution of marine litter at the coastal areas requires more stringent provisions both in national and international arena.

Limited funds for infrastructure for collection, treatment or disposal of plastic waste is one of the major barriers. Knowledge is also limited about the costs of marine litter pollution and its recovery. The cost of impacts on the human health is not yet widely known. Although the 3R policy has been adopted by the Government of Bangladesh we need appropriate financial support in implementing that. Financial instrument/assistance for the developing countries to reduce and manage the pollution of marine litter will be welcomed.

Here I would also like to highlight that Bangladesh is currently preparing a draft position paper on the Marine litter pollution under SACEP initiatives. It has been found that inadequate data availability on the existing pollution level of the Bay of Bengal was a major barrier for planning and designing the actions for the management of marine litter.

Lack of consumer information, awareness and public participation is another barrier for proper management and reduction of marine litter. Cultural barriers and behavioural change are very important in this regard.

We hope that the important area of Marine Litter and Micro-plastics would be effectively deliberated in the next few days of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ad-hoc Expert Group Meeting. Any global initiative through UN system in this regard will be beneficial for all.

I wish you a pleasant stay in Bangkok and a meaningful participation in the deliberation.

I thank you all..