

Intervention by Germany

First of all we would like to thank Norway for the introduction of the idea of an *open-ended ad hoc expert group* which has been endorsed by governments through the adoption of UNEA resolution 3/7 and UNEP for providing the infrastructure for this meeting.

Undoubtedly, the issue of marine litter has gained a lot of attention throughout the last couple of years. Many initiatives, movements, partnerships, dialogues and other forms of cooperation have been established or broadened on national, regional, supranational and international level.

Germany is very active through a variety of different measures on the issue of marine litter. Specifically during the development of the G7- and G20 Action Plans on Marine Litter under the German presidencies in 2015 and 2017, the complex issue of marine litter has also gained in Germany another level of attention.

Bearing in mind our national toolkit – which includes, i.a. the round table on marine litter and the national cosmetics dialogue as implementation platforms, and considering the large variety of instruments and approaches that have been mentioned so far for us the main challenge now lies in connecting and implementing the different approaches on different levels such as the Regional Seas Conventions (HELCOM, OSPAR), the G7 and G20-processes, EU-legislative instruments - in order to maximize our success. This also applies to the broader international level.

We agree there is a need for a coherent policy response to marine litter.

Since the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, a solution may lie in improving or broadening existing structures and building synergies: focus on existing mechanisms and promote the implementation of the instruments linked to them (e.g. RSC and their action plans), connect them in order to **gain a worldwide net that spans the globe.**

The momentum at present could carry us forward. We need to:

- identify gaps - especially gaps in science and implementation
- identify barriers – barriers to ratification and compliance of international treaties before we start discussing about another international treaty;
- eliminate obstacles throughout international cooperation – create a level playing field, e.g. establish a global extended producer responsibility scheme;
- work together with all stakeholders – leverage knowledge and experience;
- bundle resources and expertise and increase efficiency – avoid duplication of work, promote the transfer of knowledge;
- build on existing structures and assess if they could be applied – e.g. the Basel and Stockholm Convention, or SAICM.

In our view, when it comes to discussing a multi-layered governance structure, building on these well-established systems, has to be given priority to discussing a completely new legally binding instrument. Then, if it comes to discussing a new international governance structure, the interaction between international, national and local level, as well as the effectiveness and enforceability of this new international

governance structure have to be taken into account. In addition, to be considered as well is the fact that there is no one size fits all.

However, all deliberations and conclusions are calling for a balance to be struck between advantages and disadvantages of the different approaches in order to find the solution, which would yield the best and most balanced result.

Therefore, some questions we need to ask ourselves are:

- What do we want to achieve? Where are we starting from? It is about taking stock.
- What is the timeframe we are looking at / we can afford??
- Which –additional- data is needed? (e.g. consumption patterns)
- Whom are we addressing and at what level?

Thank you!