

Item 4: Barriers to combating marine litter and microplastics, including challenges related to resources in developing countries

New Zealand – check against delivery

- allow me to join those in thanking the co-chairs for guiding our meeting and the secretariat for this useful paper. I wish to share some comments related to the barriers identified in the paper:
- New Zealand agrees with the report's finding – which other speakers have also referred to – that one barrier is a lack of comprehensive data. Nonetheless, our view is that this overall lack should not impede progress on combating those sources of marine litter and microplastics that are already known.
- Further to barriers related to lack of robust legislative, regulatory and policy frameworks, we note also the barrier presented by lack of effective land-based waste management practices. This needs innovative solutions, including those anchored in a circular economy approach to change our current practices to more circular and sustainable ones.
- Noting the 425 billion USD spent annually on fossil fuel subsidies – an astonishing amount that is four times higher than the amount spent on renewable energy – New Zealand strongly welcomes the highlighting of FFS as a barrier in this report. FFS encourage wasteful consumption, they affect trade, investment and operational decisions, introduce distortion into the marketplace and impair trade and long-term competitiveness. The cross-cutting nature of this issue shows that there can be co-benefits to addressing the drivers of plastics pollution: in this case to the marine environment and also for climate change.
- Finally, regarding the resource challenges faced by developing countries and small island developing states, other speakers have already referred to the need for effective regional cooperation. In this regard we would like to highlight the positive work being done in our region by Pacific Islands countries, with donor support, to develop a Pacific Regional Action Plan on marine litter. We would encourage the global community to support this type of tailored regional action as a means of responding to this barrier.