

INC-1 Plastic Pollution Treaty

First Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) for the development of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution,

including in the marine environment

Punta del Este (Uruguay)

28.11.-2.12.2022

Chair, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, colleagues

IUCN welcomes the beginning of these important deliberations and stand ready to support the process.

This first meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee is taking place amidst a context of growing economic, food, and energy insecurity. At the same time, numerous international environmental treaties and those relating to trade, are addressing elements of plastic pollution.

There is overwhelming evidence that **nature conservation works** and is an effective and essential contributor towards many of humanity's goals, including towards a circular economy and a systemic shift to sustainable trade on plastics.

For this first INC, IUCN highlights the following ([Plastic Pollution | IUCN](#)) :

- ✓ Guided by **IUCN Resolutions** adopted by IUCN Members in 2021¹, IUCN strongly welcomes the ongoing process for a global Plastics Treaty and supports the partnerships in place in order to eliminate and remediate plastic pollution and enhance circular plastic management at local, regional, and global levels.
- ✓ IUCN urges Parties to adopt clear, preferably numerical and verifiable objectives in order to take priority action **by 2025** to prevent further plastic pollution from **single-use plastic products** in protected areas and in the land, water and marine environment.
- ✓ IUCN strongly encourages Parties to start negotiations with the ultimate goal of **stopping plastic pollution worldwide by 2030 (Zero Pollution)** in sight, while considering national and local circumstances and capabilities for implementation along the whole plastics value chain.
- ✓ IUCN calls for **inclusiveness in the process** and an **effective treaty** as an outcome. The Treaty must address the full life-cycle, embrace bold, new, science-based tools, cover a broad scope of environmental resources (land, water, ocean) and create a set of policy measures and means of implementation to upscale and redirect finance, incentives, and trade. Strong

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¹ [019](#) - Stopping the global plastic pollution crisis in marine environments by 2030; and

[069](#) - Eliminate plastic pollution in protected areas, with priority action on single-use plastic products.

stakeholder involvement in the upcoming negotiations and in implementation is therefore key.

- ✓ **At IUCN's heart is respect for nature and respect for people** ([Nature 2030](#) | [IUCN](#)). IUCN's pioneering work on **assessing plastic waste** and leakage led to the development of methodologies for **quantifying plastic waste** and leakage across the plastic product life cycle ([iucn plastics](#)). IUCN also offers the tools to guide, monitor, and measure action including [the IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions \(NbS\)](#), which could showcase the contribution of nature-based solution towards circular plastics economy.
- ✓ In doing so, IUCN aims to **build trust and consensus** among different stakeholder groups, identify **feasible policy options** and, critically, foster a culture of delivery and action that accelerates early and sustainable implementation, but also remediation, **covering in particular developing countries and SIDS**.
- ✓ The **Union's engagement will focus on strengthening the legal foundations** of the conservation of nature and sustainable development elements, including the human right to a healthy environment and the precautionary principle. It will incorporate the learnings gained through engagement in similar fora on Biodiversity, Climate, Oceans and Chemicals and Waste and promote synergies.
- ✓ **IUCN's foundational science-based technical, legal (namely through IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law), and economic expertise and evidence** is particularly well placed to connect the biosphere elements of the SDGs with a commitment to work towards more just and equitable societies and circular economies, with a strong focus on **biodiversity and ecosystems related impact of plastic pollution, also beyond national jurisdiction**.
- ✓ IUCN will **build on existing cooperation** with other relevant actors and strengthen it, **scale up local and regional initiatives**, give a voice to **traditional, indigenous knowledge**, and promote circular economic models to develop synergies and coherence in relation to engaging IUCN and its Members in the dialogues on the Global Plastics Treaty.

Thank you!

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Statement on Agenda Item 4

IUCN through its World Commission on Environmental Law has elaborated different legal briefs for negotiators. We will be happy to share those through the possibility of submissions.

At this time, IUCN would highlight the following, with regard to national action plans:

National action plans have been used across various multilateral environmental agreements.

National action plans can be valuable **tools** for government planning and implementation if they are carefully designed and if State Parties have **assistance**, such as technical and financial assistance, to alleviate the potential for excess burdens being placed on governmental entities and communities.

National action plans **should be designed** to increase ambition over time, means promote progression. It would be preferable that the national action plans be communicated on the same time, iterative for all State Parties rather than on staggered timelines. The **content** of national action plans should be informed by the objectives of the Plastic Pollution Treaty and designed to fulfil these objectives, taking in account local and national, eventually regional circumstances, based on strong stakeholder, traditional and indigenous knowledge and science involvement.

Starting from the bottom-up approach through national action plans, the Plastic Pollution Treaty should **include a strong system of international oversight**. This would apply to **robust binding guidance for national plans**, binding requirements for reporting on implementation and achievement of these plans (possibly by using indicators), independent review and a mechanism for facilitating implementation and compliance.

To address increasing ambition over time, inclusion of the requirement for iterative processes for all State Parties, the need for progression of ambition in national action plans, global **stocktakes** which inform the level of ambition and common timeframes for reporting for national actions plans should be considered as critical elements.

Stocktakes could also be used to assess progress regarding plastic pollution at the national level and international level, adoption and implementation of laws and rules relating to plastic pollution, economic transitions away from plastics intensive industries, reductions in biodiversity loss connected with plastic pollution, and reductions in carbon emissions attributable to the plastics industry, to name a few potential options.

IUCN and its WCEL stand ready to support negotiators, countries, municipalities and communities in this endeavor.

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