Japan Statement, 30 November 2022

The first session of Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment under agenda item 4

Scope, objective(s) and options for the structure of the instrument

Potential elements, including elements: a. Core obligations, control measures and voluntary approaches as well as national action plans; b. Means of implementation, including capacity building, technical assistance, and finance;

The following points should be considered:

- Technological and scientific characteristics of plastics and their high-utility in the socio-economic context
- There is no sufficient established scientific data showing negative impacts of plastic pollution on human health and the environment
- Engagement by both plastic consuming and emitting countries is a key factor
- Plastic pollution needs be tackled through full-lifecycle approach, taking into account national circumstances and capacities

Objectives and goal:

- Halting and reversing biodiversity loss, protect human health from potential risks caused by plastic pollution including in the marine environment while recognizing the important role of plastic for society
- Related risks of plastic pollution to human health should be carefully considered based on the future progress of scientific knowledge and evidence
- Setting a clear global common goal such as Osaka Blue Ocean Vision or its advanced version in the instrument.
- Feasible approach would be all Member States aim to reduce additional plastic pollution particularly in the marine environment to zero by a certain year
- Substantial issues come first. Structure should be corresponding to substance particularly obligations and measures

Obligations and measures:

- Parties shall establish an appropriate mechanism in the whole society to promote circular economy on plastic and control plastic leakage into the marine and other environment.
- Parties shall take all necessary measures to promote reduce, reuse, recycle and renewable measures in society by selecting appropriate effective measures which cover whole lifecycle stage of plastics taking into account national circumstances
• Measures chosen by Parties shall be reflected in national action plans and their efforts should be reported and reviewed periodically
  • Checking the global progress made by all Parties is necessary. Implementation of fundamental measures to prevent leakage such as waste management should be given priority
  • The national action plan should include targets and actions in the medium-term and long-term strategies towards realization of the global goal and objectives of the instrument
  • Imposing a ban of the production or use of plastic should be categorized as a voluntary measure taking into account national circumstances and its socioeconomic impacts including its effectiveness
  • Parties shall promote reduction of unnecessary single-use plastics which are not covered by the circular economy system
  • A transparent and robust PDCA mechanism for assessment of member states’ action based on the standardized and periodic reporting and peer review should be established
  • The mechanism should ensure continued and strengthened actions of the individual countries and their collective achievement towards the global goal

A list of measures that Parties may choose from:

<Production stage>
Reduction of plastic usage, promoting sustainable product design for the environment, promoting development and usage of substitute materials, reduction of unnecessary single-use plastics, collecting and recycling used plastic by production sectors

<Distribution/consumption stage>
Reduction of unnecessary single-use plastics, collecting and recycling used plastics by distribution/consumption sectors

<Waste management and disposal stage>
Sorting, collecting and recycling plastics at municipality level, engagement by waste management industries to reduce plastic waste and enhance recycling, crackdown on illegal dumping, sound waste disposal and collecting coastal plastic debris.

Capacity building, technical assistance and financial assistance
  • Capacity building, technical assistance and financial system should be addressed in a correct manner. Content may vary corresponding to the level of ambition of the objectives, goals, obligations and measures. All parties to the treaty should equally respond to the common objectives and common goal.
Japan is willing to continue to support bilaterally mostly to States without capacity to implement measures including waste management

- We should prioritize those countries who are most in need.