



## **Submission to Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group Meeting (Dakar, 30 May - 1 June 2022)**

Minderoo Foundation welcomes the opportunity to provide comments on aspects of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) and intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) process.

Minderoo Foundation is one of Australia's largest philanthropic organisations working on intractable world challenges. We have two teams working on ending plastic pollution and protecting humans from the harmful effects of plastic.

Our No Plastic Waste initiative works to eliminate the leakage of plastic into the environment, build a circular economy for plastics, and drive global action to address plastic pollution. Our Plastics and Human Health team works on banning and phasing out toxic or harmful chemicals throughout the life cycle of plastic from extraction to disposal, as well as searching for alternatives for safe plastics and safe circularity. Together our mission at Minderoo Foundation is to eliminate the harmful effects of plastics on people and the planet.

### **Essential elements**

It is vital that the ambition which saw the 'End plastic pollution' resolution adopted at UNEA 5.2 continues into the OEWG and formal negotiations of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC).

We encourage Member States as well as Major Groups and Stakeholders to maintain the highest level of ambition throughout negotiations and to publicly state this intent, including commitment for mandatory provisions and a framework that drives systemic change needed to achieve the end of plastic pollution.

Minderoo Foundation sees the following elements as essential to a successful treaty outcome:

1. Mandatory measures to cap and phase down virgin (fossil fuel) plastics, and minimum standards for safer alternatives to fossil fuel plastics;
2. A robust framework for the assessment of safety of plastic chemicals and additives for human and environmental health;
3. Recognition of informal waste pickers' rights;
4. Rigorous disclosure and reporting on plastic production, use, recycling and disposal by country; and
5. Effective integration of the Science Policy Panel (to be established pursuant to UNEP Resolution 5.8) with the global plastics treaty framework, and for this panel to explicitly consider the human health risks of plastics and plastic additives.

### **Rules of procedure**

Meaningful participation by a wide range of stakeholders will be critical to the success of the negotiations. We encourage support for rules of procedure that will provide avenues for this participation to occur. Minderoo Foundation is supportive of Draft Rule 56.1 and welcomes the opportunity to make written submissions.



Plastic particles and some plastic additives are found in the human body, and scientific literature has shown associations to health outcomes. Minderoo Foundation encourages formation of a working group or expert group of scientists and clinical researchers to focus on plastics, chemicals, and human health (Draft Rule 49.1). Our aspiration is that such a group could work to inform the treaty outcomes on human health, chemical and plastic pollution.

## Approaches to the work of the INC

The UNEP Secretariat suggested that the OEWG consider organising the work of the INC into defined work areas (section IV.17). We believe that this would be a sensible approach, and we specifically encourage focus on the human health risks and risks to the environment of plastic chemicals throughout the plastic lifecycle.

Finally, we support the spirit of constructive engagement and innovation that the UNEP multi-stakeholder dialogues allow and will actively participate in this pilot (section IV.22).

Minderoo Foundation welcomes the OEWG's continued engagement and consultation to achieve a legally binding global plastics agreement by UNEP 6.0 2024.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anthony Worby', with a long, sweeping underline.

Dr Anthony Worby

Director, Flourishing Oceans and Planet Portfolio

Minderoo Foundation