



ROYAL NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF  
CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

## Written submission from the Government of Norway on the organisation of work of the INC

### General considerations

The Government of Norway would like to see a participatory, efficient and effective negotiating process to meet the world's expectation of ending plastic pollution.

To this end we highlight the following points which we consider key to success for the process:

- The strict timeline to complete the comprehensive mandate from UNEA requires an efficient work process making the most of available time to negotiate. Building on experience from the OEWG in Dakar and other meetings, we see a need to break discussions into subsidiary groups and that this happens already at INC1. Acknowledging the often small size of several delegations, the number of groups running in parallel must be limited.
- While some issues may be relevant at all INCs, we see a need for the bureau, in close consultation with the regions, to prioritise items on the agenda of each meeting.
- We would like to see the first INC begin with an initial discussion on our overall ambition, the objectives and scope. While it would be unlikely that INC1 could reach any conclusions on these items, their deliberation would inform subsequent conversations.
- In line with previous negotiations, there is merit in establishing legal drafting group at INC2 to work in parallel with the negotiations to address relevant general treaty provisions under international law and, on request, other legal issues that may arise as the negotiations make progress.
- We expect delegations to assign certain delegates to specific clusters and issues. It would help delegations in the planning and internal distribution of tasks if the bureau make sure that certain clusters never run in parallel as has also been the case for different clusters under UNEA.
- INC1 will also need to discuss how to prepare INC2 and a text available before INC2 to advance the negotiations. We note that there are several options available, one is that

the secretariat is tasked with preparing a text basis, another that a text is developed by co-facilitators of the different working groups/contact groups based on the discussions at INC1. Norway would be interested to hear others' views as there is no standard procedure.

- A key to success in modern treaty-making is early and effective involvement of the business community and voices in civil society. We expect a transparent and inclusive INC process and encourage the INC bureau and secretariat to find opportunities for non-governmental stakeholders, including the informal sector and the business community, to engage meaningfully, to inform our discussions.
- Finally, Norway recommends that the secretariat sets a deadline for submissions from member states prior to INC1. In these submissions member states can, should they so wish, present more detailed views on the agreement in order to inform the discussions at INC1.

## **Clustering of issues**

Noting that the mercury INC was able to start discussing many elements relevant to the new treaty already at its first meeting, Norway expects that the INC1 would consider several possible elements of the new plastics agreement along the following clusters:

### **1) Key life cycle measures**

The task ahead is to develop «a comprehensive approach that addresses the full lifecycle of plastic»<sup>1</sup>. In order to be able to conduct fruitful discussions, Norway underlines the need to break down the discussions of issues along the lifecycle of plastics into more specific, thematic clusters. That would help structure discussions based on the recognition that different sources may require different control measures and approaches, and also different expert participation. From previous experience a source-based approach, based on an understanding of the nature of the environmental problem and its related measures, is key to ambition. We suggest dividing the lifecycle discussions on key measures into three main approaches:

#### **1.1 The products cluster**

Elements under this cluster include:

- promoting more sustainable plastic products (ecodesign, sustainability criteria)
- requirements for use of secondary plastic materials
- substances of concern in plastics, including identification of key risk areas and priorities, and recyclability.
- products that pose particular environmental risks for different reasons (chemical additives, intentionally added microplastics, products prone to release microplastics when used, single-use/high litter risk, etc.)

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<sup>1</sup> UNEP/EA.5/Res.14 para 3

- documentation of sustainability aspects and access to environmental information for market actors and consumers
- sustainable consumption of plastics (private consumers, public procurers, business and industry)

## **1.2 The waste cluster**

Elements under this cluster include:

- Minimization of plastic waste
- Resource-efficiency in plastic waste management, i.e. increased recycling of plastic waste with a view to creating a more circular value chain for plastic materials
- Environmentally sound management of plastic waste and waste containing plastics
- Legacy waste

## **1.3 Sources of microplastics other than products and waste**

All plastics, in all stages of the life-cycle, are potential sources of microplastics pollution. In addition to microplastics from products and waste, microplastics may be generated from a variety of other sources that require control measures aimed at point sources of plastic pollution, such as:

- Industrial point sources: Unintentional microplastics as a pollutant in emissions to air or water, caused by wear and tear from production equipment. Point source emissions from *plastic* production sites, unintentional or accidental (waste water containing plastic fragments, releases/loss of plastic pellets, etc.)
- Emissions from point sources to air and water other than production facilities, e.g. sewage treatment plants, buildings/renovation, shipyards, waste landfills, etc.

## **2) Means of implementation ensuring a life-cycle approach covering all sources and operationalizing the polluter pays principle**

Possible elements under this cluster:

- National action plans for a life-cycle based national plastic policy, and for national reporting
- Extended producers' responsibility, other domestic regulatory and market based measures

**3) Science and knowledge building, measuring progress** - including a science-policy interface, environmental monitoring and research, reporting.

**4) Supporting measures**, including funding, capacity building, education and awareness raising.

**5) Institutional arrangements**, including synergies with existing MEAs, industry and civil society.

Norway would not expect the INC 1 to be able to discuss details under each of the clusters, but it would be helpful for following discussions to have a better picture of the member states' initial views on many of the elements.