



Delivered by Sebastian König on 18 November 2019

SWITZERLAND

General Statement

3rd Meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics, 18 – 22 November 2019, Bangkok

CHECK UPON DELIVERY

Distinguished Delegates, Dear Colleagues,

The contribution of Switzerland to ocean plastic pollution is a mere 0.0004% which corresponds to 40 tons/annum. Our own, recent report on the “State of the Environment of Switzerland” reminds us, however, that 75% of our consumer footprint of Switzerland is caused abroad. Switzerland has to take on responsibility.

Marine plastic pollution is a classic example of a global coordination problem that requires a global response. The existing legal framework covering marine plastic pollution is fragmented and ineffective to the extent that is also not coordinated. A more coherent and targeted global response is needed.

Overarchingly, the elements for the further process and aims include:

- (a) adopting an integrated, holistic approach to waste management;
- (b) embedding the life-cycle approach and a reduce-reuse-recycle thinking into all aspects of the economy, incl. producer responsibility;
- (c) using a source-to-sea approach given the importance of rivers as conduits for the delivery of plastic litter to the marine environment;
- (d) building on successful regional and global mechanisms such as the Regional Seas and Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the Global Programme of Action;
- And (e) addressing the gaps of legal or technical nature, where the existing mechanisms are not sufficient, in a multilayered, governance approach.

In this light, our expectations for this and the upcoming two meetings of this group are clear: we expect to develop a deeper understanding of the mandate under UNEA 4/6 and in combination with the scientific assessment by the SAC we will be ready to take on ambitious steps at UNEA-5. We expect that we will be able to formulate a response to the gaps we have been identifying over the last 6 years at an expert and intergovernmental level. I am in good faith that the bureau will guide us there, by making every meeting count and by taking into considerations the results and discussions of the first two and the upcoming meetings.

Thank you.

Federal Office for the Environment FOEN
Sebastian König
Papiermühlestrasse 172, 3063 Ittigen
Postal address: 3003 Bern
Telephone +41 58 46 330 05, Telefax +41 58 46 303 49
sebastian.koenig@bafu.admin.ch
www.foen.admin.ch