

Format of the Position Paper

All Member States are invited to submit a concise position paper. The submissions may include the following elements:

1. Name of your organization

Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan

2. Your view on major barriers to combatting marine litter and microplastics

We believe that measures against marine litter and microplastics should be considered and be taken based upon sufficient scientific knowledge. We also recognize that actions towards more resource efficient society and economy, including efficient resource uses and sustainable material and waste management system, are fundamental to address marine litter and microplastics from the viewpoint of their reduction.

It is also important to develop an internationally harmonised methodologies of marine litter and microplastics monitoring. In order to understand marine litter issues including microplastics and to implement effective measures, it is essential to quantitatively understand the situation of pollution by marine litter and emission sources on a regular basis, and therefore, countries should put a priority on collecting quantitative data by continuous monitoring of marine litter and microplastics in the marine zones of each country. However, monitoring methodologies are currently different among countries; and marine litter and microplastics are not uniformly distributed across the world, because the distribution is affected by not only emission sources but also ocean current, tidal current, wave, wind, weather and so on. Under this situation, there are no universal methodologies for measuring and evaluating the pollution in comparative form. Therefore, the development and sharing of internationally harmonised methodologies of marine litter and microplastics monitoring based on scientific basis are necessary and important. The measures should be based upon data gathered by the harmonised methodologies and their evaluation which would include an inventory of emission sources.

3. Your view on potential national, regional and international response options and associated environmental, social and economic costs

Possible response options and their cost should be examined in accordance with the development of monitoring methodologies mentioned above, and with the accumulation of scientific knowledge and their evaluation which include an inventory of emission sources. Responses should address each emission source in an effective and feasible manner. Resource efficiencies including efficient resource uses and sustainable materials and waste management would be one of key and major components of the response options, while scientific knowledge should be further enhanced.

4. Your view on the feasibility and effectiveness of different response options

We need to address marine litter and microplastics issues internationally, noting that currently available scientific knowledge is not fully sufficient yet as mentioned above; and that challenges and

barriers in implementing countermeasures are differences among countries(*e.g.*, pollution levels, situations of emission sources).

Getting over these issues, we recognize that flexibilities should be given to each country in selecting their measures and actions in accordance with their current domestic situations, taking into account both advantages and disadvantages of all possible options in comparative and transparent manners.

5. Any other inputs

We are ready to contribute to this newly established working group by providing expertise and scientific knowledge, especially in the area of monitoring methodologies and of resource efficiencies.

Furthermore, under the frameworks of G7 and G20, Japan is promoting the international harmonization of monitoring methodologies of microplastics. Outcomes of these efforts would be shared widely.