Statement by the Fiji on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States on Agenda Item 4.3(c) at Plastics INC-1

1 December 2022

Time Limit: 5 minutes

Chair,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Pacific SIDS and we align with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of AOSIS.

We, the Pacific SIDS, suffer the downstream consequences of unsustainable design of plastic products, and the inappropriate management of end-of-life plastic products. We require the new international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution to deliver strong outcomes for all countries in the downstream waste management phase of the plastics life cycle, to assist in addressing climate change and biodiversity loss, reflecting on our triple planetary crisis.

As a region, the Pacific has limited influence on the quantities and types of plastic that arrive in our countries. We are greatly challenged in transitioning to a circular economy and can only participate in a ‘global circular economy’. We therefore, strongly urge the development of binding control measures and obligations to ensure global transparency of information on the presence and the identity of chemicals in plastic materials and products throughout their lifecycle.

Monitoring and evaluation is key to the success of the new instrument to ensure its effectiveness and to ensure that we are truly delivering on our agreed obligations.

To track progress on these agreed obligations, a global monitoring programme that sets targets and indicators, with time frames must include full transparency and traceability arrangements.

This should include monitoring and verification of sources, levels, types and impacts of plastic pollution on a regular basis, particularly in the marine environment, and periodic reporting on national source levels and types of plastics being produced.

To support this, the availability of relevant data is of critical importance in this process. We note also, that monitoring and evaluation of extractive processes in other parts of the world could assist in decisions under the instrument on capping the contribution of the plastics life cycle to climate change.

Monitoring progress against National Action Plans should also have measurable, timebound targets, including reduction targets, along with corresponding performance indicators, and with coverage of the full lifecycle of plastic, and taking into account national circumstances and in particular the special circumstances of small island developing states.
In addition Chair, as a region we recognise the need for assistance in applying standard methodologies to collect and analyse data to understand and enable 1) evidence based reduction of stresses on the environment and on human health and 2) to enable evidence based improvements to flows of plastics and associated chemicals in our economies including environmentally sound waste management. We see an important role for a subsidiary scientific, economic, and technical body to provide guidance and support on these needs.

Finally, we see information gathered under monitoring provisions should contribute to a periodic review of the effectiveness of the instrument in achieving its objectives by Parties to assess whether further action is required.

Thank you Chair