



Statement of African Group

Madam chair, distinguished delegates,

We want to take this opportunity to thank the chair and her bureau and the secretariat for the excellent work they have done so far on this process. However, we have some few concerns;

1. As the African Group, we have observed some sort of discontinuity in terms of the agendas of the different meetings of this expert group, which has resulted in losing focus on some of the critical issues to our region, and we would like them to be brought back in the agenda of the next meeting. We call upon all delegates to refer to resolution UNEA 3/7 related to the mandate given to this expert group by UNEA that includes “(ii) To identify the range of national, regional and international response options, including actions and innovative approaches, and voluntary and legally binding governance strategies and approaches;”, which was further extended until UNEA-5 by resolution UNEA 4/6. In this regard, we request that the agenda on governance is brought back in the next meeting.
2. We note with concern the emphasis by some member states to restrict the response options to the national level, while marine litter is a global issue. We wish to reiterate that Africa is a leader in taking action on management of plastics through bans and levies, but these efforts have been limited by the lack of international regulatory frameworks. Therefore, we would like that the response options be at all levels and on a multilayered approach.
3. While we appreciate the work already done, we’d wish that we spend some time to develop a transformative agenda for the 4th AHEG meeting, one that

helps us progress faster in achieving UNEA 4 Resolution 7. Involving parties early in this process is crucial to enable them provide relevant submissions.

4. Due to the magnitude of the problem of marine litter and microplastics in Africa, the participation of African countries should be strengthened in future meetings of AHEG.
5. Africa stands for safe circular economy approaches and products and an emphasis on these aspects will be highly appreciated.
6. We take cognizance of the outcomes of the 17th African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN), related to Plastic Pollution that states the following: “We commit to supporting global action to address plastic pollution which will need further work to engage more effectively on global governance issues on plastic pollution, including reinforcing existing agreements or the option of a new global agreement on plastic pollution that takes a comprehensive approach to address the full lifecycle of plastics”.

I thank you!