

Tonga Statement on Barriers to combating Marine Litter and Microplastics

Important Barriers

1) Legal Barriers

- Lack of legislation to managing of Plastic Waste with regards to disposing, storing and recycling plastic waste
- Lack of enforcement on existing Environment Management (Litter & Waste) regulation
- Lack of a regulatory basis for upstream innovative solutions.
- There are existing Environment & Waste Management Regulation, however there is lack of capacity, knowledge, resources with regards to implementing and enforcement

2) Financial Barrier

- Due to the Geographical location of Tonga in the Pacific Region, with long distances to other islands or continents there is high cost of shipping plastic waste for recycling which complicates collection
- Insufficient economies of scale for attracting investment from the private sector for viable collection and recycling

3) Technological

- Lack of technical resources for recycling plastic and aluminum waste
- Lack of technical resources for waste collection, segregation and transporting of plastic waste to exporting countries

4) Information Barriers

- Lack of knowledge and information on the social, economic and environmental impact of marine litter, with the importance of the impact on human health, biodiversity and ecosystem
- The lack of public awareness is a crosscutting challenge due to a lack of resources to provide access to education and waste management.
- Lack of consumer information, awareness and public participation
- Limited formal education on marine litter and microplastics.
- The need to identify and address cultural barriers to behavioral change, to facilitate the adoption of reusable delivery systems and to replace single-use plastics.
- Lack of understanding and knowledge towards marine litter and microplastics

Solution

- Establish legislation regarding the importation of plastic productions from developed countries to minimize the amount of plastic pollution on land which ends up in the ocean.
- Seek Financial support
- Education and Awareness to become a priority response option
- Strengthen interactions between Governmental organization, Non-Governmental Organization and Private Sectors
- Because ocean current Marine Litter and Micro-plastics to has no respect to boundaries therefore Marine Litter & Micro Plastic should be our major concern as a key priority
- In the Pacific Region, changing the mindset of people towards Waste Management (Marine litter & Mircoplastics) will help change in their behavior with regards to waste segregation, recycling, collection and disposal.
- Needs more capacity building on Waste Management including Marine litter & Microplastics within Government Organization, Non-Government Organization, Private Sectors and stakeholders.
- Involve more on Pool of Experts on Waste Management and Combating Marine Litter & Microplastics