Name of the country: India

Name of organization: UNESCO Association – Guwahati

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UNESCO Association, Guwahati- Assam, India (ECOSOC-Accredited special status)

I. Substantive elements

1. Objective(s)

a) What objective(s) could be set out in the instrument?

Proposed Objectives:

(The instrument should be unique in the sense that it is adaptable, actionable and all-inclusive)

1. Elimination of all types of Plastics (Polymer or other natural based) in totality which are human and animal health hazards (Marine lives too).

2. No commercial, domestic and any other mode of plastic be allowed which invariably cost human health and the fragile ecosystem.
3. Safe, secured and whole-some disposal of all kinds of plastic wastages which have no scope for reuse, refurbish or recycle. This will entail gigantic effort and commitment from all the nation states across the globe.
4. Substitutes must have sustainability and wider acceptability in terms of availability, affordability and easy accessibility.
5. The transition period must be as humane as possible
6. Production of one time use plastic be banned globally which inflict maximum harm to the eco-system.
7. The scientific community should make no bones about their findings on ill effect of plastic uses and which may be disseminated widely in the greater interest and well-being of all living species of this planet.
8. Producers, marketers, distributors, retailers of plastic products be compensated and new avenues be found out.
9. Plant cellulose, natural fiber like golden jute is one of the best alternative for plastic bags/ packaging which are abundantly grown in some Asian countries like India, Bangladesh.
10. The incinerating mechanism/technology of plastic wastage be upgraded and modernized with adequate safety measures.
12. A mandated provision for Worldwide cleaning drive in ocean, sea, rivers, lakes, mountain tops is a potent way to ward off potential effects of plastic on one hand and to create massive awareness on plastic hazard on the other.

Explanatory Text:
2. Core obligations, control measures and voluntary approaches

a) What core obligations, control measures and voluntary approaches would provide a comprehensive approach to addressing plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, throughout the full life cycle in line with the future objective(s) of the instrument?

   a) Massive advocacy initiatives be compulsorily encompassed in UN programmes and in all national/ regional and local action plans, seminars, workshops etc.
   b) Issues of existential crisis need to be prioritized and topped the list of actionable measure
   c) In human life cycle, inevitability of plastic cannot be gainsaid and it has been so deep and integral that putting a new born on a delicate plastic sheet and to the body bag, plastic is inescapable.
   d) In above context, banning plastic use in any form particularly in medical equipments should be the foremost step above the rest. News report flagging traces of plastic particulates detected in human blood causing multiple heart and kidney diseases have been causing serious concern.
   e) In most developing and least developed countries, the single use plastics get burned with gay abandon, unmindful of its serious consequences on health and environment. So burning of plastics be banned forthwith and massive advocacy program be undertaken.
   f) The question of survivability of all forms of lives in this planet precedes issues of human rights.

3.
II. Implementation elements

1. Implementation measures

a) How to ensure implementation of the instrument at the national level (eg. role national action plans contribute to meeting the objectives and obligations of the instrument?)

✓ So far, no on-going awareness or advocacy initiatives on war-footing seen to have been taken up by any country. People have been exposed to plastic items from sun shine to sun down.
✓ Plastic has been so integral part of human existence that substitutes will take years and years for full replacement of plastic.
✓ So national commitment or setting of a target is the *sine qua non* to achieve success of the legal instrument.
✓ To ensure implementation of the instrument the first and foremost thing is to convince the authorities about the hellish effect of plastic pollution.

b) How to ensure effectiveness of the instrument and have efficient national reporting?

• Primarily the sole effectiveness lies with the Government or regional/local authorities with a robust national policy to curb, stop and gradual elimination of plastic uses. It is not a one time action plan, it must be ongoing process.
• All municipal bodies, city Corporation, local garbage cleaning agencies (Government, NGOs or other voluntary units) need to be mandated to report daily on collection, separation and disposal of plastic garbage. Through an application of specially designed App
all information be monitored, compiled, assessed and finally the national reporting office will evaluate the whole process and furnish a comprehensive report to the Government for action.

- Lesson on harmful effects of plastic be incorporated right from pre-primary school syllabus
- Substitutes based on natural products or with no anthropogenic influences be encouraged with financial grants and prizes.
- All markets/shops/malls/restaurants must be declared as ‘No plastic Zone’.
- Imposition of hefty fine on habitual offenders be included in the Instrument. Provision of imprisonment against illegal trade be given importance

c) Please provide any other relevant proposals or priorities here on implementation measures (for example for scientific and technical cooperation and coordination as well as compliance).

- The scientific and technical cooperation amongst different organizations is the uppermost and in fact they are morally obliged to find out the best option for circular economy so that non-biodegradable plastic gets transformed to like so many other sustainable products available in the markets.
- All logistic and financial support be channelized towards these communities who stand committed to devise ways of minimizing, reducing and recycling anthropogenic substances including non-biodegradable plastic products.

With respect to means of implementation, document UNEP/PP/INC.1/5 covers the following elements, capacity-building, technical assistance, technology transfer on mutually agreed terms and financial assistance.

What measures will be required to support the implementation of the instrument?

➢ For implementation of the instrument what is most important is dissemination of authentic/authoritative information about serious effect of plastic in human and animal health and hard facts of research bulletin which need to be shared at all levels.
➢ An universal effort by the UN (the highest and most respected international body) is paramount. Caution notes be sent to all the states for compliance of the instrument for greater good of the planet.
➢ The UN offices dotted in different countries in association with the UN accredited major groups, NGOs, educational institutions can initiate slew of measures by undertaking high voltage campaign for withdrawing of plastic in any form.
➢ UN support/grants/endowment etc needs to be conditional on national compliance on works of plastic elimination.
➢ Support for implementation of the instrument be spontaneous rather than compulsive. So advocacy needs as much importance as the climate change issues which are interdependent.

Proposed response template (15 December 2022) / INC on Plastic Pollution

III. Additional input
Please provide any other relevant proposals or priorities here (for example introductory elements, awareness-raising, education and exchange of information, research/stakeholder engagement institutional arrangements and final provisions).

❖ Data on quantum of annual produce of plastic for commercial/household uses etc or their import, its practical utilization, rate of disposal as garbage or recycling etc, need to be collated and stored in the database for periodical review.

❖ From the said comprehensive database the countries can easily make out a full-proof documentation in the shape of a book. Such authoritative information will carry weight and thus the state can set a target for gradual elimination of plastic.

❖ Lastly the stakeholders particularly the producers of commercial plastic, their major customers, all other stakeholders who make massive uses of plastic in packaging or other tangible purposes in our day today lives must commit to the motto of “Banish Plastic” and gradually reduce their uses and shift to other sustainable eco-friendly products through technology up-gradation or technology transfer.

❖ Just as there is a room for sending SOS in highly emergent situation so the question of survivability needs foregrounding in every world forum as a reminder of a bleak future ahead.

    It is better late than never.