

Submission by Japan,

Draft resolution

Strengthened scientific foundation and global governance on marine plastic litter and microplastics

The United Nations Environment Assembly,

PP1 Noting with concern that the high and rapidly increasing levels of marine plastic litter and microplastics represent a serious environmental problem of a global scale, negatively affecting marine biodiversity, ecosystems, animal well-being, fisheries, maritime transport, recreation and tourism, local societies and economies;

PP2 Noting also that microplastics, intentionally added in products or unintentionally generated during their lifecycle, are found in a variety of species consumed by humans and thus there is concern about their potential to negatively affect food safety and that, hence, those aspects require further examination;

PP3 Stressing the importance of long-term elimination of discharge of marine plastic litter and microplastics to the oceans and of avoiding detriment to marine ecosystems and the human activities dependent on them from marine plastic litter and microplastics, as stated by the United Nations Environment Assembly in its resolution 3/7;

PP4 Affirming that prevention and reduction of marine plastic litter and microplastics from both land and sea sources constitute an essential contribution to achieving sustainable development goal 14 and its target 14.1, to “by 2025, to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution”, as well as to the sustainable development goal 12.4, to “by 2020 achieve the environmentally sound management chemicals and all wastes throughout the their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts human health and the environment”;

PP5 Stressing the importance of a more sustainable management of plastics throughout their lifecycle in order to increase resource efficiency, support circularity in plastics production and consumption, and reduce marine plastic litter pollution;

PP6 Stressing also the importance of promoting measures such as the sound waste management, the recovery of marine plastic litter, innovation of related technologies, and international cooperation, as well as the 3Rs, to most effectively prevent pollution of marine plastic litter and microplastics;

PP7 Noting that there is an urgent need to strengthen the science-policy interface at the international level and to do more to support evidence-based approaches, improve understanding of the impacts of the marine plastic litter and microplastics on the marine

environment and promote local, national, regional and global action on eliminating discharge of marine plastic litter;

PP8 Welcoming important developments to explore options within the mandates of relevant existing international agreements and organizations, in particular

(a) the recommendations of the Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) under the Basel Convention to its Conference of the Parties at its 14th meeting to consider further options under the Convention including the control of transboundary movements of plastic wastes and their disposal, and to establish a Partnership on Plastic Waste.

(b) the agreement of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Marine Environment Protection Committee to further address the significant problem posed by marine plastic litter from ships with the adoption of an action plan which aims to strengthen and introduce new measures to reduce marine plastic litter from ships.

PP9 Recognizing the work of Regional Seas Conventions and action plans for the protection of the marine and coastal environment and *reiterating* its invitation on relevant international and regional organizations and conventions to increase their action to prevent and reduce marine plastic litter and microplastics and their harmful effects, and coordinate where appropriate to achieve this end;

PP10 Acknowledging the need for more data and greater knowledge on marine plastic litter and microplastics, including source inventory, which enable better and more effective actions to combat them and the need for harmonizing methodologies for monitoring and assessing quantities of marine plastic litter and microplastics and their impact on marine environment;

PP11 Guided by the outcome of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Expert Group established by the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly pursuant to resolution UNEP/EA/3/7 operative paragraph 10, particularly in relation to the need for increasing coherence, coordination and synergies between existing mechanisms and to improve governance with a view to better address marine plastic litter and microplastics challenges at local, national, regional and global levels;

OP1 Recognizes the need to consider strengthened science/policy interface, including information sharing, at the international level, and enhanced global coordination and governance of the national, regional and global actions and initiatives and other international instruments, and underline the need for immediate action to the more effective implementation of the UNEA resolutions 1/6, 2/11 and 3/7,

OP2 Decides to immediately strengthen the activities related to scientific knowledge on marine plastic litter and microplastics and requests the United Nations Environment Programme to establish a scientific and technological programme:

(a) To compile and assess available environmental monitoring data on the pathways of marine plastic litter and microplastic pollution from land to sea, on the presence of marine plastic litter and microplastics pollution in the rivers and oceans,

scientific knowledge about adverse effects on marine ecosystems and human health, and to advice on a process for developing harmonized monitoring and assessment methodologies for marine plastic litter and microplastics in cooperate with related international organizations;

(b) To develop guidance on technological solutions, options, policies and measures for reducing risks of discharges of marine plastic litter and microplastics to the marine environment from production and use of plastics, taking into account the whole life-cycle of plastics, in support of local, national, regional and global action;

OP3 Decides to establish an ad hoc open-ended working group to, in parallel with the activities as described in paragraph 3 above, develop recommendations for consideration by UNEA-5 on a comprehensive global governance and coordination arrangements, for enhanced international cooperation towards the long-term elimination of discharges into the oceans of plastic litter and microplastics, including the following:

(a) Necessity, effectiveness, feasibilities and clear roles of potential/possible international arrangements on marine plastic litter and microplastics, acting in coordination with, building on and clarifying the respective roles, responsibilities, strengths and contributions by relevant:

- i. global international instruments and/or organizations,
- ii. regional international instruments and/or organizations, including Regional Seas Conventions and action plans, and
- iii. voluntary initiatives, partnerships, platforms etc. within the private sector, civil society, consumers and others.

(b) Technical and financial support programme/mechanisms, from a variety of sources for various activities to address marine plastic litters.

(c) The international voluntary partnerships i) which aims to promote various programs/activities, such as development of source inventory, improvement of waste management, awareness raising, promotion of innovation, and ii) which has a clear scope of each programme, strong leading bodies, and information sharing framework, in order to make good progress.

(d) Scientific and technological advisory body to assess available data and scientific knowledge, promote information-sharing, and provide technical advice to UNEP and member countries,

(e) The modalities of a process enabling Member States to periodically take stock of collective progress towards long-term elimination of discharges into the oceans, and the corresponding needs for further contributions to reducing marine plastic litter and microplastics by governments, global and regional instruments, international organizations and other relevant contributors.

OP4 Decides that the open-ended working group will be informed by and build upon, among others, the United Nations Environment Assembly resolutions 1/6, 2/11 and 3/7, the

work of the Ad Hoc Open Ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics and other relevant resolutions, decisions and reports as appropriate,

OP5 Requests the Executive Director to provide the secretariat for the ad hoc open-ended working group,

OP6 Invite all Member States, the organizations of the United Nations system, and other international and regional organizations, as well as civil society, non-governmental organizations and individuals, to raise awareness globally for elimination of marine plastic litter, including the importance of the sound waste management, and recovering marine plastic litter, as well as of promoting 3Rs, circular economy and resource efficiency, utilizing the opportunities, such as the “World Environment day” .

OP7 Requests the Executive Director to invite representatives from all relevant existing global instruments such as the Basel Convention, Regional Seas Conventions and action plans, to engage in and contribute to the ad hoc open-ended working group with a view to promote the strengthening, co-operation and coordination between the Regional Seas Conventions and action plans as regards, inter alia, monitoring, evaluation and reporting as well as implementation of action plans on marine plastic litter and microplastics;

OP8 Requests the Executive Director to report on the progress of the implementation of this resolution to the Fifth United Nations Environment Assembly.