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**United Nations
Environment Assembly of the
United Nations Environment
Programme**

**Ad hoc open-ended expert group
on marine litter and microplastics**

Third meeting

Bangkok, 18–22 November 2019

Item 5 of the provisional agenda¹

Progress on the mapping of all United Nations agencies, programmes, initiatives and other sources of expertise relating to marine litter including plastic litter and microplastics

**Progress on the mapping of all United Nations agencies,
programmes, initiatives and other sources of expertise relating to
marine litter including plastic litter and microplastics**

Note by the Secretariat

1. The United Nations Environment Assembly resolution UNEP/EA.4/Res.6, in paragraph 8, invited the Environment Management Group to:

“...engage in and contribute to the work of the ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastics by providing, inter alia, mapping of all United Nations agencies, programmes, initiatives and other sources of expertise relating to marine litter, including plastic litter and microplastics;”

2. In response to this call, following the midterm meeting of its technical segment held in May 2019, the Environment Management Group Senior Officials decided to establish an interagency Task Team to prepare the requested system-wide contribution to be finalized by October 2020.

¹ UNEP/AHEG/2019/3/1

Objective and scope of the Task Team

3. The purpose of the United Nations Task Team is to expand UN system involvement and strengthen the coordination of UN-system support to Member States in addressing the global challenge posed by marine plastic debris and microplastics. Key objectives include:

- i. To provide a comprehensive overview of UN system activities and initiatives that directly or indirectly address marine litter and microplastics, contributing to a broader stock-taking and “state of action” analysis under way by the ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastics;
- ii. Serve as a platform for information exchange among UN system entities on activities and expertise related to marine litter and microplastics;
- iii. To identify further collaboration opportunities or prospects to expand existing initiatives within the UN system related marine litter and microplastics;
- iv. To raise awareness within and outside of the UN system on sources and impacts of marine litter and microplastics, highlighting the linkages to the issue of different sectors and mandates, and identifying entry points to addressing the challenge.

4. The Task Team shall organize its work to undertake the following main activities:

- i. Undertake a mapping exercise of initiatives and expertise with relevance to marine litter including plastic litter and microplastics, identifying possible gaps, areas of synergy and opportunities for further cooperation.
- ii. Based on the outcome of the mapping report, provide inputs, case studies and recommendations to the work of the ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastics.
- iii. Enable information and knowledge exchange among EMG members on mandates, expertise and initiatives, for instance, in the form of webinars with the purpose to generate prerequisites for informed decision making, efficient use of funds and avoided duplication of efforts.

5. The Task Team shall apply a life-cycle approach to discharges of litter and microplastics into the oceans. Relevant interventions may cover various parts of the lifecycle of e.g. plastics production. The mapping of initiatives in this regard may also include efforts within the UN system to reduce its own plastic waste.

6. Under the leadership of UNEP as Chair of the Environmental Management Group, the Task Team is composed of focal points nominated by Environmental Management Group members and is open to observers from non-UN entities whose knowledge, activities or expertise will be relevant and useful to the work of the Group. Task Team meetings will be organised by the Environmental Management Group Secretariat, primarily through electronic means. A list of Task Team members is attached as Annex II.

7. A refined data collection methodology prepared for gathering data for the broader stock-taking exercise from governments and the private sector, will be used for the collection of data from the UN system. The application of this tool will ensure consistency with other inputs to the state of play analysis prepared by the ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastics. The Task Team will provide input to the design of a survey that will be circulated to UN entities. For information on internal efforts to reduce plastic waste in the UN system, the Greening the Blue inventory may provide additional data.

8. The call for nominations was issued 16 August and resulted in nominations from 21 entities and 3 observers. The first meeting of the group was convened by the Environment Management Group Secretariat 24 October 2019 to review the proposed Terms of Reference of the Group and consider modalities for collection of data. The approach considered for the stock-taking as outlined in UNEP/AHEG/2019/3/2 may be used by the Task Team as well.

Annex I

Timeline

	2019			2020										2021
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Feb
Finalization and agreement on ToR	■													
Design survey for information collection		■												
Update on progress to the Ad Hoc Open-ended Expert Group		■						■					■	
Circulation of survey			■	■										
Webinar I			■											
Drafting of analysis				■	■									
Analysis for comments							■	■						
Finalization of analysis								■	■					
Webinar II				■										
Webinar III					■									
Report on progress to EMG Senior Officials								■				■		
Provision of analysis to the Ad Hoc open-ended Expert Group													■	
Submission of final output to UNEA 5														■

Annex II

List of Member Agencies of the Environmental Management Group that are in the Task Team

	Entity
1	The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
2	The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
3	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
4	The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA)
5	The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
6	The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
7	The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
8	The International Labour Organization (ILO)
9	The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
10	The Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
11	The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
12	The Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions (BRS)
13	The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
14	The World Trade Organization (WTO)
15	The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat)
16	The International Maritime Organization (IMO)
17	The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
18	The World Health Organization (WHO)
19	The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
20	The World Bank
21	The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) (observer to EMG)
22	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development <i>OECD</i> (observer to EMG)
23	The World Food Programme (WFP) (observer)