

Call for written submissions – Proposed response template on the potential options for elements towards an international legally binding instrument

On 9 December 2022, the Executive Secretary of the INC Plastic Pollution Secretariat sent a notification inviting written submissions from members of the committee and from observers. The template below is intended to provide guidance to members of the committee and observers in structuring the written submissions.

As requested by INC-1, written submissions will inform the secretariat in the preparation of a document with potential options for elements towards an international legally binding instrument, for consideration at the second session of the INC, without in any way prejudging what the committee might decide regarding the structure and provisions of the instrument. The document is to be based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastics as called for by UNEA resolution 5/14, including identifying the objective, substantive provisions including core obligations, control measures, and voluntary approaches, implementation measures, and means of implementation.

The template below is meant to assist Members and Observers to prepare their written submission as a guide. A number of documents prepared for INC-1 are of relevance, notably UNEP/PP/INC.1/5 on 'Potential elements, based on provisions in paragraphs 3 and 4 of United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 5/14, including key concepts, procedures and mechanisms of legally binding multilateral agreements that may be relevant to furthering implementation and compliance under the future international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment'.

The template is divided into three sections:

- I. Substantive elements
- II. Implementation elements
- III. Additional input

All written submissions must be sent to unep-incplastic.secretariat@un.org. The statements received will be compiled and made available the INC webpage.

Please note that it is not required for all fields to be answered in the template for submission.

Deadline for submissions:

- 6 January 2023 for written submissions from observers.
- 10 February 2023 for written submissions from Members of the Committee.

TEMPLATE FOR SUBMISSIONS

Name of country (For Members of the committee)	The State of Qatar
Name of organization (For observers to the committee)	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
Contact person and contact information for the submission	Ms. Sameera M. Al Dosari smdosari@mm.gov.qa
Date	10 th January 2023

I. Substantive elements

1. Objective(s)

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

Proposed Objective:

Protecting human health and environment through sustainable plastic use.

Explanatory Text:

The role of plastic in the modern world cannot be ignored. It is impossible to imagine a world free of plastic materials and objects as they are ubiquitous in our society and play an important role in making life easier for mankind. However, the mismanagement of post-use plastic products has led to several environmental, human health, social, political, economic, and other problems. The key for the progress of society is to invest in finding the solutions to these problems through sustainable production, use and disposal of plastic products.

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?*

Different countries will have different national action plans to find ways to act and control plastic pollution depending upon their national circumstances. Some of the core obligations, control measures, and voluntary approaches that a national plan should address are delineated below.

Core Obligations:

- *Efficient collection and recycling of plastic waste.*
- *Reduction in plastic pollution.*
- *Increase in the use of recycled plastics.*
- *Correct labelling of plastic polymers and additives thereof.*
- *Make the plastic cycle sustainable through circular economy approach.*

Control Measures:

- *The countries to track their plastic pollution through their nationally determined baselines and targets.*
- *Continual monitoring of recycling targets of plastic within the country through the statistics provided by the plastic recycling industry.*
- *Correct labelling of the plastic and the additives used in the plastic so that adequate steps to sort and recycle can be taken.*
- *Fostering a system that enables the recycling of plastic in an environmentally sound way through transfer and adoption of appropriate technological know-how.*
- *Increasing the percentage of recycled content in the manufacturing of new plastic components etc. Stepping up efforts to mechanically recycle the plastic instead of landfilling and incinerating. Exploring the possibilities of chemical recycling of plastic (since mechanical recycling cannot be done infinitely) done in an environmentally sound way.*
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Voluntary Approaches:

- *Establish NGOs' support for spreading awareness of the benefits of plastic reuse and recycle amongst residents and citizens..*
- *Educate young minds on plastics by establishing workshops, seminars etc. in educational institutions.*
- *Establish R&D facilities to find the best product design (of various products manufactured in the country) plastic products for reuse and recycle.*
- *Creating universities, government, and businesses alliances to support research towards product designs that are based of the principles of circularity.*

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

There is a need for **regular updated reports** for fighting plastic pollution at the national level. The reports should develop the inventory of the plastic inside the country and should address the entire life cycle of the plastic within the country. The national inventory developed should contain information on the production, recycling, and imports etc. It should throw light on the waste statistics, that is the amount of the plastic generated in the waste and diverted to recycling. It should also publish results of fresh water, wastewater, coastal, and marine water impacted by plastic pollution.

These reports would enable different countries to communicate with the Secretariat about their individual needs and struggles in meeting the targets of reduced plastic pollution through increased recycling and a circular economy approach. They may inform through these reports about the technical know-how assistance required and the financial constraints that the country is facing. Depending upon the updated reports, the Secretariat may provide assistance to the individual countries to collaborate with the countries and institutions capable of providing support including suitable technology, capacity building, and financial assistance. The effectiveness of the instrument will be based on the national reports that would carry the information about the progress made through circular economy adoption in the life cycle of plastics such as increase in percentage of the recycled material in the products.

If information is widely available, it may bring the countries together by opening opportunities to collaborate in terms of technology and financial assistance. The opportunities arise for the developed countries that are at the helm of recycling plastic (like developed countries) to transfer or assist in the recycling technology of plastic to the countries that need to increase their percentage share of recycling plastic in their waste management efforts.

2. Means of Implementation

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.

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

Regular updates and exchange of information for the progress made by the countries through the Secretariat in terms of reports, memos, etc. According to OECD only 9% of the plastic produced has been recycled. The rest is either mismanaged, landfilled, or incinerated. There is a huge potential for increasing the share of the recycled plastic waste by tapping into the mismanaged/ littered plastic waste. The rate of plastic recycling in GCC around 10%^{1,2} and can be increased through the technical assistance by technology transfer in areas of chemical and mechanical recycling of plastic from the developed countries that have higher recycling rates.

The Plastic Instrument can play an important role in capacity building, technical assistance, and technology transfer by providing a conduit for collaborations among or between the countries depending upon the needs of the individual country as conveyed to the Secretariat in the reports/memos. The Secretariat, based on progress made by various countries in the updated action plans/ reports may recommend financial assistance through GEF, World Bank and other financial institutions. There should be provisions in the Plastic instrument about how the Parties can secure funding through regional bilateral or multilateral financial agreements through these or other financial institutions.

There should be measures taken in case of non-compliance by the Parties. This may involve referring to the existing MEAs and their non-compliance measures prescribed for the development of the non-compliance in the Plastic Instrument

¹ https://www.qdb.qa/en/Documents/Materials_Recovery.pdf

² <https://www.ptonline.com/blog/post/about-10-of-plastic-is-recycled-in-gcc-countries>

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).

To facilitate the purpose or objectives of the instrument, provisions may be included Calling on the parties to raise awareness and promote education on ensuring the elimination of additives that are proven to be harmful to human health (through a scientific basis) and/ or act as inhibitors to recycling, to ensure a fair transition to a non-toxic circular economy and also ensure the continuation of public awareness and understanding of the goal or goals.