

FORUM: Environmental Committee

QUESTION OF: Measures to reduce the use of single-use plastic

SUBMITTED BY: Luxembourg

CO-SUBMITTERS: France, South Africa, Syria, Norway, Austria, Nigeria, Andorra, Belize, Senegal, Greenpeace, Mauritania, Bolivia, St. Vincent and Grenadines, Algeria, Viet Nam, Cape Verde, Russian Federation, Hungary, European Union, Yemen

THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE,

Reminds all Member States of the European Union, that they have agreed to the Reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment, which promotes “circular approaches that prioritize sustainable non-toxic reusable products and re-use systems over single-use products”,

Recognizing the combined efforts of over 170 countries to significantly reduce single use plastics before 2030 at a recent UN Environmental Committee,

Defining the term “circular economy” as an economic system aimed at eliminating waste and using resources sustainably,

Further recognizing the European Environmental Bureau, founded in 1974 with the goal of encouraging 25 Member States to implement measures that ensure a transition towards a circular economy, with emphasis on reduction of single use plastics,

Reaffirming the actions of various member international organizations and conglomerates of the Break Free From Plastic (BFFP) global movement to massively reduce single use plastics,

Commending The EU’s decision to ban 10 common single use plastic products by 2021,

Realizing the fact that due to their inexpensiveness and convenience, plastics have become a ubiquitous and necessary resource in today's world,

Deeply Disturbed that single use plastic packaging comprises of almost 40% or 160 million tonnes of total plastic production,

Keeping in mind that due to the fact that almost 8 million tons of plastic are found in oceans and water bodies which connect multiple nations, the issue of overabundance of plastics is a global one,

Taking into consideration that too strong law enforcement has already led and will continue to lead to illegal distribution of plastic bags,

1. Requests all Member States, in cooperation with United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) and the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCSUSA), to pass legislation which pushes public and private schools as well as business and companies to address the dangers and educate their students/employees of the unsustainable usage and the ever increasing production of single use plastics which will:
 - a) Help individuals realize the importance of international cooperation and the efforts of their respective governments to reduce single use plastics
 - b) Educate students and the working class to make smarter choices when faced with the choice of using single use plastics, keeping in mind the negative impacts the improperly disposed plastics have on the environment
 - c) Inform individuals on how to properly recycle plastic in a way that is the least harmful for the environment
 - d) Potentially inspire future generations to create/move towards an environmentally friendly way of living

- e) Emphasize the benefits of responsible consumption and production to a sustainable economy in every nation;
2. Calls upon Member States to adopt and fund new technologies that offer alternatives to and reduce the need for single use plastics such as but not limited to:
- a) technologies used by private companies to overcome the overabundance and environment harming production of single use plastics, for example
 - i. unilever and Indorama's circular solution for PET plastics that disintegrates PET plastic waste and then converts it back into almost "virgin-PET", which can be re-used for future products
 - ii. ioniq's "depolymerisation" method ensures a completely circular production and use of necessary plastics such as PET and this method, similar to the one adopted by Unilever, could entirely remove the need for oil taps for the production of certain plastics
 - b) Artificial Intelligence (AI) being developed in the private sector to streamline waste management process and speed up plastic sorting processes such as
 - i. dots and PERUZA, two Latvian companies, which have developed AI that recognizes the materials of single use packaging such as bottles, packets, delivery packaging etc. and this sorting technology can vastly improve the recycling process and earn back time to adjust to alternatives of plastic
 - ii. the use of AI assisted technology can speed up waste management and save money as opposed to human efforts, this can provide financial incentives to governments and companies alike
 - c) Funding research and scientists, by giving researchers who work in public service the opportunity to work on finding an alternative to single use plastics, starting by eliminating the specific plastic compounds: Low-density polyethylene (LDPE), Expanded polystyrene (EPS);
3. Urges International cooperation on the implementation of various government intervention techniques to reduce the production of single use plastics such as:
- a) corrective taxes on major producers of plastics in order to curb the over production of single use plastics such as plates, knives, forks, spoons, bottles etc
 - b) incorporation of regulation/legislation that
 - i. limits the amount of plastic produced to a socially optimal quantity as necessary for a circular economy mentioned in clause 1
 - ii. taxes the purchase of certain single use plastic items as done successfully by Ireland in 2002
 - iii. places heavy abatement costs on all major plastic producers in order to reduce effective supply
 - iv. creates a label with information which aims to persuade people to consume products from companies that attempt to reduce the usage and production of single-use plastics
 - v. bans of various single use plastics that are currently not a necessity but a convenience for producers and consumers such as single use plastic bags, packaging, and other single use plastic products like vapes, bottles, cutlery, etc.
 - c) issuing tradable permits within the plastic production industry to maintain an ecologically sound output of certain plastics while retaining competitive nature of the industry
 - d) creating a deposit refund scheme that
 - i. refunds a proportionate monetary value as determined by the respective governments each time a single use plastic item is recycled by an individual
 - ii. can extend to producers and retailers of single use plastic goods too;
4. Further Urges Member States to implement the SDG-12 in an effort to reduce single use plastics through means such as, but not limited to:

- a) Creating a circular economy to ensure a sustainable cycle of production and consumption of plastics that are currently a necessity using means including but not limited to
 - i. redesigning necessary plastics used in products like plastic bottles, bags, containers etc. for circularity by maintaining their longevity while isolating toxic chemicals
 - ii. implementing extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes on international mass producers of plastics to ensure their participation in the research and implementation of redesigned plastics in their products
 - iii. combining scientific research of public and private sectors to hasten the process of creating eco-friendly, economically viable for Low Income Countries (LIC's) and renewable alternative(s) to necessary plastics
 - b) Combining efforts of the UNEP and major environmental organizations such as Greenpeace, European Environmental Bureau (EEB) and the Plastic Pollution Coalition to further reinforce the steps taken by individual member states by raising awareness and setting global standards using but not limited to the methods below
 - i. using UNEP and Greenpeace's global significance, the Plastic Pollution Coalition can further their cause to reduce single use plastics and exponentially increase awareness in developing countries
 - ii. creating a global standard that not only limits the production/use of single use plastics but also limits the pollution caused by the production of plastics, similar to a pollution permit issued by governments;
5. Reminds Member States that LIC nations that cannot fully commit to the above clauses will be reimbursed of their contributions proportionately by the United Nations International Budget to in accordance to the following conditions:
- a) The nations in question must submit proof of their LIC status on a quarterly basis to the parties responsible
 - b) The nations in question must also submit proof of their contributions towards progressing the above clauses
6. Wishes to eventually achieve strong global restrictions on single-use plastic, starting with the implementation of the clauses above.