

**First Meeting of the Ad Hoc Open Ended Expert Group (AHEG)
29-31 May 2018 | Nairobi, Kenya**

Canada's Remarks to Item 5: National, regional, and international response options, including action and innovative approaches, and voluntary and legally binding governance

Plastic waste, marine litter and microplastics are a priority for the Government of Canada. I would like to highlight a few examples of Canada's efforts at the national, regional and international level to illustrate the value that we place on actions at all of these levels to address this important issue.

Nationally, we want to move toward zero plastic waste through a circular economy approach. This will require coordinated action by governments, industry, retailers, consumers, academics, and individuals – including youth. It will also require a shift in emphasis from end-of-life management to treating plastics as a resource throughout the value chain.

Together with our provinces and territories, the Government of Canada, in consultation with civil society, industry and others, are developing an approach to keep plastics within the economy and out of landfills and the environment. On Earth Day, we launched the Canadian Dialogue on Plastic Waste. This public consultation - through an online platform – is gathering Canadian's views to contribute to the development of this domestic approach to reduce plastic waste and marine litter.

This builds upon a solid foundation of waste diversion programs – we have a wide range of product stewardship programs in place and we aim to improve them. Several municipalities have banned some plastic items according to their needs. But there is much more that we need to do to reduce unnecessary uses of plastics, increase our recycling rate and have solutions for what cannot be recycled.

Canada has over 10 federal acts and regulations to prevent pollution and protect all waterways and habitats. Notably last year, we introduced regulations to ban microbeads in toiletries. We are also conducting research on the sources, distribution and impacts of marine litter and microplastics as well as microfibres.

Internationally we are party to the key international frameworks that touch on this issue such as the London Convention/Protocol and the Basel Convention. For instance, Canada is undertaking work to develop scientific methods to detect plastics at disposal at sea sites under the London Convention/Protocol. We are also very engaged in the FAO discussions on fishing gear marking and tagging.

This year, Canada joined the Global Partnership on Marine Litter and participates as a steering committee member. We have also joined the Clean Seas Campaign.

We also work regionally with partners to advance this issue and recognize the importance of working regionally. We are working with the United States and Mexico through the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation to engage citizens to identify local marine litter challenges and implement solutions. We are also participating in the Arctic Council's study of marine litter and microplastics in the Arctic.

Lastly, I would like to highlight our work under the G7. Canada has made oceans health, resiliency and addressing plastic pollution a priority under its 2018 G7 Presidency.

Building upon existing G7 commitments on marine litter and resource efficiency, work is underway to advance a new G7 commitment to take action on plastics throughout their lifecycle and reduce marine litter through a G7 Plastics Charter. This will be discussed by the G7 Leaders' at their Summit next week in Charlevoix, Quebec. We encourage participants to look out for announcements over the next couple of weeks.

This comprehensive approach pursues solutions to reduce plastic waste and prevent its release into the environment.

We are pursuing solutions along the plastics lifecycle in the following areas:

1. Sustainable design, production and after-use markets
2. Waste collection, management and infrastructure
3. Sustainable lifestyle and education
4. Research, innovation and new technologies
5. Action on the ground.

We recognize that the interventions today and yesterday have highlighted the mass global momentum to take action on this issue. We look further to expanding our discussions on barriers and solutions and how we can build upon the substantial work being done and find solutions to address the challenges and gaps that will become evident through clearer analysis. As we move forward we would like to deepen the discussions and analyses of this group to identify first how do we support and enhance existing initiatives and agreements, identify gaps in the current work, the barriers to progress and solutions that will address them.

We will continue to listen to all of you on your ideas and maintain an open mind on all potential solutions until this rigorous analysis is concluded. Above all we want to continue to support the significant momentum that is building within all sectors of society and governments with our actions nationally and in international fora.