

Agenda item 5: National, regional and international response options, including action and innovative approaches, and voluntary and legally binding governance strategies and approaches

New Zealand – check against delivery

- New Zealand is highly committed to addressing marine litter and microplastics in our oceans. Nationally, we have legislative frameworks to manage land-based and ship-derived waste. We have undertaken targeted work to address the plastic pollution problem with the banning of microbeads, investing in on-shore recycling of commonly produced plastics and improving data on litter composition on our shores. We have a voluntary product stewardship work programme to encourage manufacturers to use a circular economy model. At the regional and international level, we have signed on to a number of initiatives on or related to marine litter, and welcome action through these existing global initiatives, including where they promote action that can be accelerated at local levels.
- At this first meeting of this ad hoc open-ended expert group, we remain open-minded as to which particular option among those identified in Annex III of the report, or other potential options, is the preferred way forward. For this reason, we thank to secretariat for the paper identifying possible response options at the national, regional and international levels and are very interested to hear the views of others here on the range of response options.
- In determining the best options, we believe that form should follow function, that is we largely know what the problem is so need to identify what solutions will work best and then in turn decide the appropriate form for solutions.
- In consideration of possible responses that take us beyond the status quo, there needs to be robust discussion of added value, practicality and feasibility.
- We see value in further considering how existing partnerships, institutions and frameworks can better address marine plastic pollution. As a starting point, we think it is fundamental to have solid and coordinated implementation of relevant existing commitments, including multi-stakeholder initiatives such as Clean Seas Campaign and Global Ghost Gear initiative. A coordinated approach to the various initiatives is necessary to avoid duplication, which dilutes effectiveness and increases costs.
- Bearing in mind that some of the existing relevant frameworks are legally binding, we're interested in more information about how any new instrument would overcome the issue of lack of action around existing obligations and commitments.
- Effective responses to marine litter need to be holistic and address the sources of pollution. We urge integration of circular economy design in responses. An important component of this is working with industry and creating incentives for transition to a circular economy.