

## Format of the Position Paper

All Member States are invited to submit a concise position paper. The submissions may include the following elements:

### 1. Name of your organization

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, on behalf of the Independent State of SAMOA

### 2. Your view on major barriers to combatting marine litter and microplastics

With Samoa's experience, the majority of marine litter and microplastics have generally originated as a result of land-based activities. As a country with more than 80% of its land owned customarily by our local communities and families, much work should focus on raising awareness of the communities and families to understand the consequences of their land-based activities and be bold with their decision making. That is, poor decision making by land owners based on a lack of understanding of proper waste management somehow pollutes river ways eventually causing marine litter thereby polluting the ocean with plastics/microplastics.

Samoa is yet to put in place legislation and a regulatory framework to ban plastics of some form based on a Government priority to address marine litter and plastics/microplastics generated by land-based activities. Although we have the Solid Waste Management Act 2010 it requires formulation of a Regulation under the principal Act to regulate importation of plastics and address a specific focus on marine litter and microplastics.

Strong partnership and good coordination amongst Government Agencies and Ministries that have relevant links to enforce current legislations under their mandates is necessary and important. In Samoa we have a *Marine Pollution Prevention Act 2008* administered under the Ministry of Works, Transportation and Infrastructure, whereas the *Solid Waste Management Act 2010* is administered by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment including the Principal Act of *The Lands, Survey and Environment Act 1989*.

### 3. Your view on potential national, regional and international response options and associated environmental, social and economic costs

International laws to regulate current production practices to minimize production of products with microplastics, should instead look into more innovative and environmental friendly products.

On a national level, a review of legislation should be conducted to inform legislative requirements for banning plastic that are priority to address. Otherwise, new legislation should be allowed to formulate in order to ban importation of plastics and to address the issue of marine litter and the illegal disposal of plastics. Work is now underway to review our current legislation to allow legislative development work with a purpose to ban single-use plastic including Styrofoam to be effective towards the end of this year 2018.

Regional Organizations who work with local Government should take the lead in formulating Regional Strategies and provide technical support and guidance based on approved international priorities that link to issues of national significance and common interests to address the issue of marine litter and microplastics.

#### 4. Your view on the feasibility and effectiveness of different response options

It would be feasible to look into the cause of the marine litter and the issue of plastic/microplastic disposal to inform a more appropriate approach and set out key priorities for Government to address. Again, this can be based on reliable data collected to indicate emphasis on the cause of the problem. Strong and robust awareness campaign targeting communities and private sectors would also be more feasible to take a good stance to address the cause of the problem re marine litter and microplastics and complement a public awareness campaign on waste management and minimization.

#### 5. Any other inputs