

Draft speaking points:

Sweden believes that status quo is not an option and consequently that there is a need for a co-ordinated and holistic response at global level. We hope that this expert group will focus its efforts on exploring a new holistic architecture and we would like to ask the Secretariat to support such discussions further on with background papers as appropriate up to the second meeting.

To get a little more specific, I would like to share a picture of what it could look like in the thinking of Swedish experts so far.

In our view, this holistic new architecture would build on existing instruments, in specific the RSC:s and the BC. The RSC and BC would constitute the pillars 1 and 2. It would need a new overarching body coordinating instruments, and in have a new global platform for the prevention of plastic litter for multi-stakeholder agreements, possibly also member states regulations as found appropriate.

As regards a coordinating body, it could be explored to what extent the UNEP, or the Global Programme of Action, or SAICM, or if a new body would be more feasible.

As regards the RSC, we would like to see explored the opportunities and challenges, and the timelines, for the RSC to harmonize monitoring, reporting and evaluation, to possibly harmonize and strengthen their action plans on marine litter. It would be useful to know more about the experience within RSC:s so far in addressing the various sources of marine plastic litter and microplastics – where have they been successful, where have they been less successful and why?

As regards the BC, we believe it is of utmost important to closely follow the progress of deliberations of the parties of the BC in addressing plastic waste, particularly sorted plastic household waste. From the SE side, we think that this is a big opportunity for the BC and we would encourage them to do so. Should the BC, however, decide not to engage in transport of plastic waste, then we believe that this expert group would have to find out how such element could be created within the new platform. Because such element would be a necessary part of a proper global response.

As regards a new platform, it would be valuable to further analyze rather from scratch how it could look like, the possibilities for multi-stakeholder participation, where we believe proactive industry participation is key, inter alia, as well as possibilities for such forum to evaluate, inter alia, the recyclability of various plastics, agree on the standards necessary to assure that sufficient information on the properties of plastics are communicated through the value chain, and possibilities to stimulate and co-operate on innovations that are dependent on large scale investments.

Finally, we would like further analyze a forum for voluntary and possibly also binding commitments by member states, to move away from the current fragmented approach as regards, for example, restricting single use plastics. Other elements that might benefit from being part of a new forum are, in our view, targets for collection, reuse, and recycling of plastic waste. Also requirements on port reception facilities as well as fishing gear should be explored in this context.