



HMDC Model United Nations Position Papers

Committee: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Topic: Combating Plastic Pollution to Safeguard Global Ecosystems

Countries: Australia, Ecuador, Madagascar, Morocco, Pakistan, Philippines, Senegal, South Africa.

Committee: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
Topic: Combating Plastic Pollution to Safeguard Global Ecosystems
Country: Commonwealth of Australia

The plastic we put into the ocean is polluting the world. Only 15% of the plastic we put in our bins is recycled.

Problem:

Also, plastic can pollute in two ways. One way is for it to get burned, and that's bad because the smoke has bad chemicals could if it very often pollute the air. The second way is it to get in landfill and then it goes into a storm drain and finally ends up in oceans and then the sea creatures eat it and then they could die.

Solution:

We could go down there ourselves and collect the plastic and we would have a bag and collect the plastic and then we give the bag to the person on the shore and they would bring the bag to a place and scientists have discovered worms that eat plastic called wax worms, also known as the descendants of the moths.

Committee: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
Topic: Combating Plastic Pollution to Safeguard Global Ecosystems
Country: Republic of Ecuador

According to the WWF, which stands for the World Wildlife Fund, 90% of seabirds have plastic in their stomachs. This proves that plastic pollution is one of the most pressing environmental challenges in this generation which not only impacts the environment and humans but the ecosystems and wildlife as well. Therefore, this issue must be addressed by the Economic and Social Council immediately. As a nation profoundly impacted by this environmental crisis, the Republic of Ecuador strongly believes that in order to make sustainable development feasible, we must address and act on this issue collaboratively as an international community. The republic of Ecuador is very looking forward to actively participating in negotiations and discussions at upcoming Economic and Social Council meetings while working alongside other nations for the purpose of tackling plastic pollution and promoting sustainable development.

The consequence of plastic pollution poses a significant threat to the Republic of Ecuador, as our nation is rich in biodiversity and has an extensive coastline, which also makes us especially vulnerable to the severe impacts of this environmental issue. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, globally, only 9% of plastic waste is recycled. 19% is incinerated, 50% ends up in landfill and 22% either goes into uncontrolled dumpsites, burned in open pits, or ends up in aquatic environments. This is why we need to act immediately, if we want to counter or decrease the impacts plastic pollution has on our community. Furthermore, "in 2022, UN Member States agreed on a resolution to end plastic pollution, an International Negotiating Committee is developing a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution with the aim of having it finalized by the end of 2024." This resolution has helped the citizens of Republic of Ecuador better understand this environmental issue and has also increased enthusiasm and engagement of the local community. However, to keep this consistent, the Republic of Ecuador will need to engage the community in more waste management initiatives. In February 2023, The Republic of Ecuador's environment minister visited Imperial College London, with the purpose of looking into biodegradable and alternative materials to use instead of single use plastic. Since the visit, the Republic of Ecuador has noticed a decrease in the use of single-use plastics from the community. However, this behavior change has been relatively slow. Therefore, the Republic of Ecuador is hoping to support more local businesses that are currently working on solutions for plastic alternatives.

The Republic of Ecuador looks to continue supporting research into developing alternative, more sustainable materials than single use plastic, and launch public awareness campaigns to educate our people about the unfortunate impact of plastic pollution and to promote sustainable consumption of single use plastic. To make this solution feasible, the Republic of Ecuador looks to partner with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to implement programs directed to reduce plastic waste. These programs will focus on community education and advocating for sustainable practices. Moreover, the Republic of Ecuador is working towards implementing strict regulations to limit plastic production, use and disposal. To boost the efficiency of this solution, the Republic of Ecuador is looking to partner with Ocean Conservancy, to help the community participate in global clean-ups, such as the International Coastal Clean-up (ICC). This is so that the citizens of the Republic of Ecuador can realize the severe impacts plastic pollution has on our beaches and will better understand the new policies we will be implementing. If we work collaboratively towards this crisis, the Republic of Ecuador firmly believes that plastic pollution can be drastically reduced.

Committee: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
Topic: Combating Plastic Pollution to Safeguard Global Ecosystems
Country: The Republic of Madagascar

Since 1907, when plastic was invented, we have (according to Earth Day) produced over 8.3 billion metric tonnes of plastic, and according to National Geographic, 91% of the plastic we produce cannot be recycled. Plastic pollution is a major problem and should be dealt with by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations immediately because if we don't prevent plastic pollution, it might eventually become a worldwide disaster. As a nation significantly affected by plastic pollution, the Republic of Madagascar believes that global communities should cooperate to find solutions and strategies for this crucial problem. We are keen to negotiate with other member states about the ecological emergency currently affecting Madagascar in the upcoming ECOSOC meeting, aiming to create a more eco-friendly future for not only the Republic of Madagascar but also many other countries.

Plastic pollution poses a significant threat to both the environment and human health in Madagascar. Numerous studies have shown that over 90% of birds and 73% of fish in Madagascar have microplastics in their stomachs, posing serious health risks to both wildlife and humans who consume contaminated fish. This underscores the urgent need for action to address the issue. In response to the global plastic pollution crisis, 170 nations have pledged to "significantly reduce" plastic use by 2030. Many countries have already started by proposing or imposing rules on certain single-use plastics. The European Union, for instance, has taken significant steps against plastic pollution. As of July 3, 2021, single-use plastic plates, cutlery, straws, balloon sticks, and cotton buds are banned from the markets of EU Member States. This measure also applies to cups, food, and beverage containers made of expanded polystyrene, and all products made of oxo-degradable plastic. In 2015, Madagascar endorsed a historic resolution to ban the use of single-use plastic bags. However, due to a lack of implementation, the government issued an international ministerial decree in 2017 banning plastic bags under 50 μm . Additionally, Madagascar has launched a marine cleaning program, running from 2023 to 2026, to prevent and reduce sea-based litter. Efforts to combat plastic pollution in Madagascar also include observing World Cleanup Day every third Saturday of September since 2018 and partially banning single-use plastics. This program is dedicated to eradicating plastic waste and raising awareness among people who underestimate the severity of plastic pollution.

To tackle plastic pollution, Madagascar proposes that all countries cooperate to establish a global program aimed at reducing the use of single-use plastics, with the ultimate goal of banning them or limiting their use to special circumstances. Additionally, a global system should be launched to monitor marine-based litter and ban illegal dumping to protect our oceans. Last but not least, there is also a push to promote the use of recyclable plastics and standardize plastic materials to facilitate recycling processes, as the presence of various chemicals in packaging renders 91% of plastics non-recyclable. This collaborative effort seeks to mitigate the damaging effects of plastic pollution on both local ecosystems and the global environment.

Committee: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
Topic: Combating Plastic Pollution to Safeguard Global Ecosystems
Country: Kingdom of Morocco

The topic for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is to combat plastic pollution with a solution to safeguard global ecosystems. The Kingdom of Morocco recognizes the need for strong international cooperation to avoid and eliminate plastic pollution, and looks forward to discuss this topic at this conference.

Plastic pollution is a global crisis threatening our oceans, wildlife, and human health. The United Nations Environment Programme must address this pressing issue. With over 8 million tons of plastic entering our oceans every year, according to "sustainabledevelopment.un.org".

As a coastal nation deeply connected to both the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, we acknowledge the severity of plastic pollution and its impact on marine ecosystems and coastal communities. Morocco is committed to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 14 (Life Below Water) and Goal 15 (Life on Land), which directly address plastic pollution, as well. We, Morocco, already banned the production, import, export, sale, and use of plastic bags in 2016. However, plastic pollution is getting worse, worldwide. That's why, we are committed to taking decisive action to address this pressing issue.

Morocco urges the international community to prioritize the development and deployment of robot technology for plastic pollution monitoring and clean-up efforts. With our fast developing technology, now, is the best time to encounter this global threat. As a member of Morocco, I see how innocent marine lives are lost, because the current solution aren't working good enough. Firstly, we can use AI and with the help of drones to detect large garbage spots and secondly send out robots to them immediately. Then, the robots will bring the garbage to the nearest coast and with trucks or other transport, from global campaigns, they can dump it into those campaign locations. Thus, we require strong cooperation and sustainable relationships among sea-nations. Afterwards, on land, it would be a much less threatening problem to us. Just like nuclear waste, we can first store it underground, until a good solution is made, about how or what we can do with it. We believe, that technology is developing so fast, that we can find a great solution in the near future, soon enough.

It's time to move beyond awareness and take concrete steps towards tangible solutions like this. Plastic pollution poses a significant challenge to Morocco's marine environment, tourism sector, and sustainable development goals. With increasing plastic waste entering our oceans, urgent action is needed to safeguard our natural resources and marine biodiversity. Morocco recognizes the interconnected nature of plastic pollution and the need for international cooperation to address it effectively. We stand ready to collaborate with other nations, international organizations, and stakeholders to share expertise, resources, and best practices. Morocco is committed to implementing a comprehensive national strategy to combat plastic pollution, including regulatory measures, public awareness campaigns, and investment in innovative technologies such as robot technology.

Morocco proposes the establishment of a regional task force, comprised of Mediterranean and Atlantic coastal states, to coordinate efforts in deploying robot technology for plastic pollution monitoring and clean-up operations. Through collective action and shared responsibility, we can make significant progress towards a cleaner and healthier marine environment. If we all work together, everyone will benefit from it. We can definitely make the world of better place.

Committee: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
Topic: Combating Plastic Pollution to Safeguard Global Ecosystems
Country: Islamic Republic of Pakistan

According to a report from surfers against sewage, “ 1 in 3 fish caught for human consumption now contains plastic”. The topic of ‘addressing ‘plastic pollution for sustainable development’ is of utmost importance and must be addressed immediately by the economic and social council. As a member state deeply affected by plastic waste, The Islamic Republic of Pakistan believes that the international community must collaborate to develop strategies and effective measures to battle plastic pollution. Pakistan looks forward to actively engaging in the important discussions at the upcoming -meeting-, sharing our experiences, and working alongside other member states to cut a path towards a brighter and more sustainable future.

The rising issue of plastic pollution is of extreme importance to The Islamic Republic of Pakistan, as it directly impacts the health of our marine ecosystem and our bodies of water, the livelihoods of coastal communities and the overall sustainability of our development efforts. According to surfers against sewage, “more than 1,000 metric tons of microplastics -roughly the same weight of 1000 elephants-fall onto the western 11 national parks a year.” Additionally, in 2024, a report showed that the coca cola factory itself produces 200,00 pounds of plastic each year. The Islamic Republic of Pakistan recognizes the urgent need to address plastic pollution and has taken concrete steps to tackle this issue. The islamic republic of pakistan has a law stating, “The Single-Use Plastics (Prohibition) Regulations 2023 prohibit the use, import, manufacture, distribution, supply, sale, purchase, stocking and trade of single-use items, such as polythene bags, and plastic crockery such as cups, glasses, plates and bowls.” This shows that even though Pakistan is poor, they continue to preserve and try to stop plastic pollution from going too far. The islamic Republic of Pakistan calls for the establishment of many organizations dedicated to help clean up the ocean. This will help increase awareness that plastic pollution is a global problem and should be addressed immediately. It can also increase the morale of countries with lots of waste in their oceans with no way to clean it up.

The islamic republic of pakistan proposed that people should recycle and not litter because if they don't, they spend time in jail or pay extreme fines. The islamic Republic of Pakistan also proposes the use of robots and machines to especially counter microplastics by filtering them. Pakistan's states that there is no person who can use, manufacture or sell any kind of plastic bags. Pakistan also proposes that the economic and social council should collaborate with organizations like ocean conservancy or surfers against sewage, to plan more beach cleanups and to raise more attention. Pakistan stresses the need to clean up the ocean in due time, before plastic pollution becomes irreversible. Furthermore, changes should be made on plastic being manufactured and the among of plastic used.

Committee: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
Topic: Combating Plastic Pollution to Safeguard Global Ecosystems
Country: Republic of the Philippines

As the delegate for the country of the Philippines, plastic pollution is a topic that has been severely affecting my country. In 2015, the Philippines was the third largest plastic generating country in the world, with 2.7 million tons of plastic waste generated yearly (Braganza 2017). An estimated 20% escaped into ocean environments (Braganza 2017), though 74% was initially collected in landfills (World Wildlife Fund 2018). Plastic pollution has major consequences, and though there aren't any formal policies, many cities within the Philippines have developed their own plastic pollution regulations.

It is estimated that nearly 5 million metric tons of mismanaged plastic was produced in 2015 alone. It is expected for mismanaged plastic to reach 9 million metric tons by 2040, and over 11 million metric tons by 2060 (Lebreton and Andrady 2019). These have serious health consequences due to waterways and drainage systems clogging from waste runoff during heavy rains. This threatens the sanitation of Filipino residents (Braganza 2017). Major plastic pollution production also has its economic effects. In 2016, coastal and marine tourism generated nearly \$3 billion USD, which is nearly 2% of the total GDP, opening up 900,000 jobs for potential employees. Fisheries and aquaculture contributed more than \$2.3 million USD, an estimated 1.5% of the GDP, also opening 260,000 jobs. Ports and shipping industries generated \$1.4 billion USD, equal to almost 1% of the GDP that also employed 700,000 people (SEA Circular 2020). All of these industries are affected by plastic waste, therefore dependent on a pollution free environment. Though there are devastating effects of plastic pollution; environmental, health, and economic wise, there have been no national level policies explicitly addressing plastic pollution passed. However, many cities have shown incentive to help with the plastic issue. In Muntinlupa City, Ordinance 10-109 was passed in 2010. Muntinlupa was the first city in Metro Manila to regulate plastic bag use. Ordinance 10-109 prohibited the use and sale of plastic bags on all non refrigeration required items, as well as the use of plastic bags as secondary packaging for refrigerated or frozen products. This ordinance also came with must conduct information, educational campaigns, and public promotion of biodegradable packaging. The City Environmental Sanitation Center was tasked with monitoring effective implementation of Ordinance No. 10-109. Las Pinas City has also adopted a similar ban. Ordinance No. 1036 bans the distribution of single use plastic carry-out bags, and polystyrene foam. Violating this ordinance could cost up to a 1,000 Philippine peso fine for a first offense, but more severe punishments include a 5,000 Philippine peso fine, a six month prison sentence, and loss of operation license for a year.

A solution imposed could be applying consequences on single use plastic bags. Of course exceptions will have to be made, including for medical purposes, menstrual products, and disabilities. Single-use plastics pose a major threat to the environment, due to them being used only once then thrown away. An estimated 20% escaped into ocean environments (Braganza 2017), though 74% was initially collected in landfills (World Wildlife Fund 2018), as stated before. Facing consequences is a motivating incentive that leads to visible change. Financial consequences are an example. In Toronto 2012, a \$0.05 fee was put in place for all single-use plastic bags. Toronto saw a 3.4% increase in reusable bags. Though this would most likely not be a long-term solution, this could spark an incentive for innovation. There could be educational articles posted around the city to inform the citizens, as well as digital news. It could follow a similar policy as the Las Pinas City Ordinance No. 1036, with each offense reaching a more severe punishment than the last. Plastic pollution harms the environment, economic stance, and sanitation of the citizens in the Philippines. Solving this ongoing issue could improve the lives, economic structure, and environment of the Philippines.

Committee: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
Topic: Combating Plastic Pollution to Safeguard Global Ecosystems
Country: Republic of Senegal

According to Plastic Oceans International, it's estimated that more than 10 million tons of plastic is dumped into our oceans every year. The United Nations environment programme must immediately address the topic of "Combating Plastic Pollution to Safeguard Global Ecosystems." The Republic of Senegal firmly believes that the international community must work together to develop effective strategies and implement extensive measures to combat plastic pollution. Senegal looks forward to actively engaging in these crucial discussions at the upcoming UNEP meeting, sharing its experiences, and working alongside other member states to create a path to a more sustainable future.

Plastic Pollution directly impacts Senegal's marine ecosystem, coastal communities, and sustainable development efforts. Especially considering our reliance on fish for our economy and infrastructure, the effects are particularly devastating. The UN launched the Clean Seas campaign in 2017 to raise awareness and promote action against marine plastic pollution. As part of this, Senegal has initiated the Zero Waste Senegal campaign that campaigned for waste reduction and more sustainable management of waste. Zero waste Senegal launched three Zero Waste projects: a Zero Waste school, a Zero Waste restaurant and a Zero Waste island. The Republic of Senegal recognizes the urgent need to address plastic pollution. We have implemented a law in 2020 production, import, stocking to sell, putting up for sale, selling, putting it in place to be used, the use in any form of single-use or disposable plastic. Any solutions must be quick and effective.

Senegal calls for a policy that limits plastic production and initiates an extensive search for any large heaps of plastic left over. As well as raising awareness online about plastic pollution. Senegal has a history of effectively spreading awareness online. For instance, in 2020 Senegal spread awareness about COVID-19 using the help of music artists and digital creators, with information being translated into many languages for the people to understand. This caused the total cases of COVID-19 to be extremely low. The Republic of Senegal believes that this could be achieved again with plastic waste, warning the citizens about their effects and what they can do to help. Through the help of other countries, Managing waste more efficiently will solve a lot of the problems that are at the core of plastic pollution. Senegal urges other countries to encourage their own citizens to clean up trash as well as taking their own measures in reducing plastic pollution. With our combined infrastructure, we can deal with this problem head on. We will experience not only a cleaner ocean, but also more sustainable infrastructure and more breathable air.

Committee: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
Topic: Combating Plastic Pollution to Safeguard Global Ecosystems
Country: Republic of South Africa.

Plastic pollution is a pressing global issue that demands urgent attention. It poses significant threats to our environment, wildlife, and human health. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the scale of plastic pollution is staggering. Every minute, over one million plastic bottles are purchased worldwide, and up to five trillion plastic bags are used annually and around 50% of all plastic produced is designed for single-use purposes, resulting in approximately 400 million tonnes of plastic waste generated each year. This pollution harms marine life, disrupts ecosystems, and contaminates food chains, impacting countries worldwide.

As the Republic of South Africa, we recognize the severity of this problem and are committed to taking action to address it. While we have implemented bans on single-use plastic bags and promoted recycling, we acknowledge the need for stronger collaboration at the international level to effectively combat plastic pollution. One important step in this direction would be to use biodegradable plastics globally. Biodegradable plastics offer a promising solution by breaking down into harmless compounds over time, reducing the amount of plastic waste in the environment and minimizing harm to wildlife. Additionally, supporting research and development efforts to improve the accessibility and durability of biodegradable plastics can accelerate their adoption and contribute to a cleaner, healthier planet for future generations.

In conclusion, plastic pollution poses a grave threat to our oceans, wildlife, and ecosystems. As representatives of the Republic of South Africa, we urge all nations to join us in reducing plastic consumption, embracing biodegradable alternatives, and strengthening international cooperation to safeguard our natural heritage for generations to come. Together, we can combat plastic pollution and ensure a cleaner, healthier planet for all.