FORUM: Environmental Commission
QUESTION OF: Measures to Address Marine Pollution and Plastic Waste in International Waters
MAIN SUBMITTER: Republic of Poland
CO-SUBMITTERS: New Zealand, Republic of South Africa, Republic of Finland, Republic of Ghana, Republic of Bulgaria

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION,

Distressed that plastics now account for 85% of all marine debris, harming over 600 species and killing more than 100,000 marine mammals each year through abandoned fishing gear,

Deeply concerned that approximately 19-23 million tons of plastic waste are being dumped into the undersea ecosystem, causing a threat to biodiversity and water resources,

Pointing out that the plastic waste ends up in the ocean and tap water, eventually entering the human body, affecting humans' ordinary biological systems,

Noting with deep concern that the average adult consumes about 2,000 microplastic particles from salt itself every year, playing a crucial role in illness,

Alarmed by the detection of microplastics in human blood and placentas, and recalling Japan's tragic Itai-Itai disease as a warning against unchecked toxic accumulation in the food chain,

Recognizing that existing treaties like MARPOL Annex V only restrict dumping at sea, leaving land-based pollution largely unaddressed,

Aware that the proportion of marine pollution towards small island developing states (SIDS) and developing coastal countries leads to unmatched negative influences as a result of reliance on natural marine resources,

Acknowledging the significance of enhancing international cooperation and establishing Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) in addressing the issue of plastic pollution and disposal into the ocean,

1. Urges all the member states of the United Nations (UN) to enter a system where all citizens can recycle through governments, with the support of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), in such ways including, but not limited to:
    a) creating the "bottle-deposit return system" through ways such as, but not limited to:
        i. implementing machines in a designated area for people to return plastic bottles or cans that can be recycled and get deposits as a refund,
        ii. establishing a community that is responsible for recycling stations only where people must throw away recyclable waste, especially plastics,
    b) developing laws pertaining to recycling waste in such ways:
        i. strengthening the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR),

ii. introducing any issues faced by countries regarding marine pollution,
iii. discussions in UNEP to build agreements,
iv. banning hazardous materials such as toxic materials or single-use plastic waste to prevent additional waste,
v. enforcing effluent limits;

2. Calls for the establishment of extensive government intervention regarding the production of waste, with the backing support of supervisors, UNEP, through ways such as, but not limited to:
    a) strengthening the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) in each country by the following:
        i. requiring companies that manufacture, import, export, or sell products made from plastics to collect any disposals due to production,
        ii. limiting excessive packaging and overpackaging products with unnecessary waste from any organization, including from big companies to local shops,
    b) improving individual gear management for regulating extra disposals from fishermen in such ways:
        i. deposit programs where fishermen can return damaged, unused, or reusable gear instead of neglecting it as waste in the ocean,
        ii. report systems for lost or left gear to the government, with return of a minor compensation;

3. Asks for strengthening the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) Annex V to strongly limit disposal in marine areas through such ways, but not limited to:
    a) requiring higher fines with stronger penalties for stricter rules for the vessels to take responsibility for compliance with regulations and laws,
    b) enhanced monitoring systems of vessels through ways such as, but not limited to:
        i. ensuring that the vessels are approved by governments, with supervision from the UN, and that they do not violate any rules regarding disposals in the ocean,
        ii. checking all vessels, both on entry and exit, to reduce the risk of illegal action taken during the sailing;
4. Requests for UN Global Plastics Treaty Negotiations (UNGPTN) on implementing persistent meetings at fixed periods, recommended as once every month, through the Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee (INC) to report and address any ongoing issues regarding the disposals in coastal areas of each country for:
    a) demanding that all houses affiliated with the INC host at least 1 meeting every month and have additional meetings due to reasons such as, but not limited to:
        i. problems in one or more countries involved regarding marine pollution,
        ii. emergence of climate change due to marine pollution,
        iii. changes in conditions of life in marine areas, including species in danger,
    b) enforcing all the developed countries that are stable in economics and politics to:
        i. acting in the discussion where their country can be beneficial within their environmental problem,

ii. organizing support for developing countries or unstable countries in economic or political situations,
iii. ongoing required meetings in order to ensure continuous diplomacy,
iv. reporting any issues from their countries regarding marine pollution, especially if it was due to production of companies,

c) conducting quarterly meetings in emergencies between border posts of neighboring countries to enhance rapid response in such ways:
    i. fostering communication between the neighboring countries, excluding settled meetings,
    ii. requiring constant reports from each country about all of the plastic disposals,
d) establishing structured specific laws through the discussions in meetings to enhance:
    i. rules protecting the coastal environment,
    ii. draft of the agreement on mandating reductions in plastic production and regulating certain chemicals;

5. Recommends that all member states report the status of any movements regarding the marine environment to UN committees, specifically the UNEP, including but not limited to:
    a) changes in marine animals, especially when the following occasions happen:
        i. one or more species seems to be endangered due to changes in populations,
        ii. changes in the biological structure of animals,
        iii. movements of animals seem extraordinary or abnormal,
    b) changes in the marine environment, which should be detected in each country through the following, but not limited to:
        i. measuring changes in the ratio of salt, microplastics, or any mechanisms on the coast of one's own country,
        ii. monitoring changes in temperature of each coast;

6. Further requiring the European Union (EU) to limit raw plastic and polymer production at manufacturing facilities, industrial design hubs, packaging factories, and chemical formulation plants in ways, but not limited to:
    a) passing a law to make it illegal for chemical companies to produce more than a specific amount of raw plastic each year,
    b) standardize packaging in ways, but not limited to:
        i. ban unique bottles,
        ii. create a shared catalogue,
        iii. use the same, universally designed glass and heavy plastic bottles for better reuse;

7. Further requests for Member States to raise awareness of the rising problem of marine pollution and its impact on habitats, marine species, human health, and more, among citizens in ways such as, but not limited to:

a) enriching marine pollution knowledge to students globally in schools in ways such as, but not limited to:
    i. featuring appropriate and educational videos and pictures for students relevant to the topic,
    ii. visiting beaches that are impacted by marine pollution and organizing beach clean-up activities,
    iii. organizing relevant organization visits like the UNEP or the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to schools,
    iv. implementing study units about the issue of ocean pollution starting from elementary school to enhance children's understanding at a young age,
b) raising awareness among citizens through public movements in ways such as, but not limited to:
    i. celebrating World Ocean Day by organizing parades in populated cities or public areas by collaborating with relevant organizations,
    ii. establishing clubs relating to marine conservation programs with professional environmental scientist for educational talks and community discussions,
    iii. hosting visits from organizations like UNEP or IMO to populated public areas like libraries, parks, malls, and more,
c) implementing and spreading videos and articles that entertain the content of limiting marine plastic waste disposal, mainly targeting teen audiences through governmental official accounts on social media platforms, topics including but not limited to:
    i. ways of preventing waste pollution
    ii. the statistics, and data of marine pollution and waste
    iii. advertising the laws regarding the ocean pollution issue

8. Suggesting member states reduce the act of littering by citizens and visitors on beaches in ways such as, but not limited to:
    a) hanging up posters or signs around the beach area that discourage citizens and visitors from littering by featuring topics such as, but not limited to:
        i. stating the impact of litter on the marine environment and species through accessible numerical and informational data, in addition to supporting pictures of evidence,
        ii. stating relevant laws and consequences of littering in marine environments,
    b) creating physical objects that encourage citizens and visitors to reduce litter on beaches in ways such as, but not limited to:
        i. installing more waste and recycling bins in populated beach areas,
        ii. creating monuments or statues made from plastic or litter collected from the beach to visualize and amplify the impact of littering.