

Commission: Environment
Session: 23rd National Model United Nations Conference – 2019
Sponsors: Botswana, Canada, Dominican Republic, Philippines,
Kazakhstan, Nepal, Indonesia, Japan, Libya

QUESTION OF: **BANNING SINGLE-USE PLASTICS AND REDUCING
THE SIZE OF THE 'SEVENTH PLASTIC' CONTINENT**

The General Assembly,

Fully aware that the largest oceanic plastic accumulation in the Northern Pacific extends to 1.6 million square kilometres and it contributes to the relentless growth of the 'seventh plastic' continent,

Noting with regret that only 10% of plastics worldwide are recycled due to negligence and poor methods of waste management,

Deeply concerned by the skyrocketing global plastic production of 300 million metric tonnes per year, of which 8 million metric tons are dumped in the ocean adding to the 150 million metric tons that are circulating freely in the marine environment,

Grieved that the sun, salt and waves decompose plastics into hazardous materials such as bisphenol A and polystyrene that can leach into waters resulting in low oxygen levels and affecting the survival of marine ecosystem,

Alarmed that fish is a crucial source of protein and that micro-plastic particles ingested by fish are subsequently consumed by human beings,

Deploring that the consumption of micro-plastic particles by humans at the end of the food chain potentially places them in high risks of developing some health problems, with toxins in plastics directly linked to cancers, birth defects, immune system problems, and childhood developmental issues,

Noting with deep concern that it takes more than 450 years for plastic to decompose,

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1. Requests member states to implement stricter national laws that aim to reduce plastic consumption:
 - a. By enforcing a ban on single-use plastics and;
 - b. Imposing a tax on single-use plastics to act as an incentive for businesses and consumers to opt for more sustainable biodegradable alternatives;
2. Recommends the introduction of biodegradable or more easily recycled alternative materials such as mushrooms, bagasse, corn starch and stone paper;
3. Invites member states, scientific communities and other stakeholders to promote further research for the development of new sustainable materials that could replace plastic and come up with inexpensive and feasible ways to manage plastic wastes locally and internationally;
4. Calls upon international organisations to provide financial assistance to developing countries to fund sustainable development projects;
5. Encourages member states to promote environmental sensitisation in educational institutions, focusing on the negative consequences of the use plastics on the environment, and thereby encouraging sustainable consumption among the younger generation;
6. Approves the investment of funds in awareness campaigns across platforms available to all citizens to draw their attention to the environmental drawbacks of over-using plastics;
7. Endorses the use of modern and emerging technologies, advancements and innovations to provide new tools to alleviate plastic pollution, such as the use of membrane technology in water filtration;

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8. Further requests all nations to recycle their own wastes by recycling and reusing shredded plastics for other purposes like building roads or insulating materials and finally revolutionizing recycling of trash into treasures (arts and crafts);

9. Urges member states to use the INTERPOL Pollution Enforcement team, which works with agencies in member countries to detect and disrupt plastic pollution crimes and dismantle the illegal use and production of plastic;

10. Further invites the youth to be a force for good by taking initiatives, signing petitions, using social platforms and publicly campaigning against single-use plastics;

11. Appeals to all member states present in this commission to support this resolution as responsible production and consumption is one of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals for 2030.