



CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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MANAGEMENT OF MARINE DEBRIS

Adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 11th Meeting (Quito, 4-9 November 2014)

Recalling CMS Resolution 10.4 on Marine Debris and *reiterating* the concern that marine debris has negative impacts on many species of migratory marine wildlife and their habitats;

Welcoming the Resolution 1/6 on Marine Plastic Debris and Micro Plastics adopted by more than 150 countries at the first United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), concluded on 27 June 2014;

Aware that entanglement in and ingestion of marine debris are both conservation and welfare concerns;

Acknowledging the substantial work on this subject being undertaken by other regional and global instruments, including *inter alia* the UNEP Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA-Marine), the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans (RSCAPs), the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML), the Global Partnership on Waste Management (GPWM), the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution From Ships (MARPOL), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the International Whaling Commission (IWC), the London Convention, London Protocol, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles;

Further acknowledging actions undertaken by States to reduce the negative impacts of marine debris in waters within their jurisdiction;

Noting with gratitude that the extensive reviews called for in CMS Resolution 10.4 have been carried out with financial support from the Government of Australia;

Recognizing that information on marine debris remains incomplete, especially regarding the quantity present in the ocean and entering the ocean annually, as well as its sources, pathways, prevalence in different sea compartments, and fate in terms of fragmentation, decomposition, distribution and accumulation;

Concerned that currently available information is not sufficient in order to generally understand which populations and species are the most affected by marine debris, especially the

specific effects of marine debris on migratory as opposed to resident species, and that population level effects of marine debris are unknown in many cases;

Emphasizing that preventing waste from reaching the marine environment is the most effective way to address this problem;

Further emphasizing that despite the knowledge gaps relating to marine debris and its impacts on migratory marine wildlife, immediate action should be taken to prevent debris reaching the marine environment;

Recalling that in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, entitled “The Future We Want”, States committed “to take action to, by 2025, based on collected scientific data, achieve significant reductions in marine debris to prevent harm to the coastal and marine environment”;

Aware that a significant proportion of marine debris is the result of discharges of ship-generated waste and cargo residues into the sea, lost or abandoned fishing gear, and that the protection of the marine environment can be enhanced significantly by reducing these;

Recognizing that a range of international, regional and industry-based measures exist to manage waste on board commercial marine vessels and prevent the disposal of garbage at sea;

Also recognizing that the International Maritime Organization is the authority regulating shipping on the High Seas; and

Conscious that a wide range of target audiences needs to be addressed through effective public awareness and education campaigns in order to achieve the behavioural change necessary for a significant reduction of marine debris;

*The Conference of the Parties to the
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals*

1. *Takes note* of the reports on Management of Marine Debris published as UNEP/CMS/COP11/Inf.27, Inf.28 and Inf.29, which cover (i) Knowledge Gaps in Management of Marine Debris; (ii) Commercial Marine Vessel Best Practice; and (iii) Public Awareness and Education Campaigns;
2. *Encourages* Parties that have not yet done so to join other relevant Conventions such as MARPOL Annex V and the London Protocol, to join Protocols to Regional Seas Conventions on Pollution from Land Based Sources, and to include the prevention and management of marine debris in relevant national legislation;
3. *Further encourages* the Parties to engage, as appropriate, with other global marine initiatives such as the UNEP’s Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA-Marine), the Regional Seas Programmes, the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML), the Global Partnership on Waste Management (GPWM);

4. *Further encourages* Parties to continue working on the issue of management of marine debris in order to reach agreed conclusions on this subject;

Knowledge Gaps in Management of Marine Debris

5. *Encourages* Parties to consider within any monitoring programmes established giving particular regard, using standardized methodologies, to the prevalence of all the types of debris that may, or are known to, have impacts on migratory species; sources and pathways of these types of debris; geographic distribution of these types of debris; impacts on migratory species, within and between regions; and population level effects on migratory species as appropriate to national circumstances;

6. *Invites* Parties to consider implementing cost-effective measures for the prevention of debris, such as levies on single-use carrier bags, deposit refund systems for beverage containers and obligations for the use of reusable items at events as appropriate to national circumstances;

7. *Encourages* Parties to establish public awareness campaigns in order to assist in preventing waste from reaching the marine environment and set up management initiatives for the removal of debris, including public beach and underwater clean-ups;

8. *Calls upon* Parties to incorporate marine debris targets when developing marine debris management strategies, including targets relating directly to impacts on migratory species, and to ensure that any marine debris management strategies plan for and carry out evaluation;

9. *Encourages* the Scientific Council, with support from the Secretariat, to promote the prioritization of research into the effects of microplastics on the species ingesting them, and support research on the significance of colour, shape or plastic type on the likelihood of causing harm, in order to be able to focus management strategies in future;

10. *Invites* the Secretariat to work with the UNEP Regional Seas Programme to support standardization and implementation of methods for studies monitoring impacts in order to produce comparable data across species and regions that will allow robust ranking of debris types for risk of harm across different species groups;

11. *Requests* the Scientific Council, with support from the Secretariat, to further the Convention's work on the marine debris issue and investigate the feasibility of close cooperation with other biodiversity-related agreements by means of a multilateral working group;

12. *Further requests* that working groups established under the Scientific Council incorporate the issue of marine debris where relevant, drawing on the work already undertaken by the Convention;

13. *Further requests* that the Secretariat ensure appropriate links are made with other regional and global instruments working on marine debris in order to share information and avoid duplication of effort;

Commercial Marine Vessel Best Practice

14. *Strongly encourages* Parties to address the issue of abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG), by following the strategies set out under the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries;

15. *Further encourages* Parties to promote measures such as the Clean Shipping Index and marine environmental awareness courses among shipping operators;

16. *Invites* the United Nations Environment Programme to continue and increase its leading role in acting as a moderator between the different stakeholders in the maritime industry, and facilitating coordination to enable best practice measures to be implemented;

17. *Encourages* shipping operators and other key industries involved with the international transport of goods to drive environmental demands, including adopting the indirect fees system in ports, supporting the improvement of port waste reception facilities in general, adopting, where possible, the use of waste-to-energy systems on vessels and implementing relevant ISO standards;

Public Awareness and Education Campaigns

18. *Strongly encourages* Parties to note the examples of successful campaigns provided in UNEP/CMS/ScC18/10.4.3 when considering campaigns to address the most pressing needs in their area of jurisdiction, and to support or develop national or regional initiatives that respond to these needs;

19. *Recommends* that Parties planning to implement regulatory measures or economic instruments in order to reduce the amount of waste entering the environment to accompany these with behavioural change campaigns aiding their introduction by communicating the rationale for introducing the measure, and therefore increasing the likelihood of support;

20. *Encourages* Parties and the Secretariat to cooperate with organizations currently campaigning on marine debris, and seek to engage organizations dealing with migratory species to promote campaigns and raise awareness of marine debris amongst their members;

21. *Further encourages* Parties, the Secretariat and stakeholders to develop marine debris campaigns of specific relevance to migratory species;

22. *Invites* industry bodies to promote debris prevention measures across their industries; and

23. *Calls on* campaign organizations to survey the campaign reach, message recognition and impact upon the target behaviour or levels of marine debris in order to evaluate the success of a campaign and readily share that information to enable future campaigns to be effective.