



AHOEEG on Marine Litter and Micro-plastics 2018

Item 6 Environmental, social and economic costs and benefits of different response options

Intervention by Lea Guerrero, NGO GAIA, Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives

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Thank you Madame Co-Chair, Good morning colleagues

I represent the NGO GAIA, Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives, a network of more than 800 grassroots groups, NGOs and individuals who are working together to advance Zero Waste solutions. I am speaking on behalf of 6 Major Groups: Women, NGO, Children & Youth, Farmers, Indigenous Peoples, and Science & Technology major groups.

The impact of plastics extends far beyond marine litter impacts. In order to address the plastic pollution crisis in the most efficient way, we need to consider the whole life cycle of plastics, as acknowledged by many of our colleagues in this room since yesterday.

We believe we need to look at the impacts and costs of plastics from the wellhead to the ocean, and on health, biodiversity, climate, society and the economy at each stage. This includes looking at the impacts of fossil fuel extraction as primary feedstocks and the additives used in plastic production, as well as the impacts of the manufacturing process, the subsequent use and environmental release of the resulting plastic products, and their handling through various plastic waste management options.

The accounting of the impacts at every stage should also include the externalized costs that are being shouldered by communities, taxpayers and local and national governments. These include: the impacts on health and well-being, on the environment, on livelihoods, food sources, etc, as well as the economic costs local governments incur to handle the plastic waste generated. There are also externalized costs related to climate impacts—including on ocean health—across all the stages of the plastics lifecycle: from its origin from fossil fuels, to its carbon emissions when incinerated.

The concrete costs on the health of humans and wildlife and on climate, as well as the costs associated with social and economic impacts, including the externalized costs throughout the lifecycle of plastics are less well understood, but are very important in evaluating response options. Updates should be included into discussion papers in a timely manner as more information becomes available, and should inform the discussions of this group.

NOT SURE ABOUT THE BELOW: COPIED IT FROM THE POSITION PAPER SUBMISSION. SHOULD WE ADD THIS?

In that respect, we believe the OEEG should give significant attention to examining the feasibility and effectiveness of a new legally binding global governance framework to manage the full lifecycle of plastics in order to prevent plastic pollution in the marine and other environments and to support the goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This framework should aim to address plastic production and consumption levels, drive national and regional action plans and programs toward a common objective, collaborating with existing multilateral agreements where appropriate, while otherwise filling the significant gaps in coverage that have been identified by UN Environment and others that have looked at this issue.

Thank you.