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Outcomes of Fourth Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee

The fourth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, took place from 23 to 29 April 2024 at the Shaw Center in Ottawa, Canada. The session was preceded by regional consultations on 21 April 2024.

More than 2,500 delegates participated in INC-4, representing 170 Members and over 480 observer organizations including - non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, and UN entities. INC-4 marked the Committee's largest and most inclusive gathering to date, with observer participation increasing by almost fifty per cent.

The Committee decided to conduct intersessional work in preparation for INC-5, which will be held in December in Busan, Korea. Two open-ended, ad hoc, intersessional expert groups were formed:

- The expert group was co-chaired by Axel Borchmann of Germany, Gwen Sisor of Palau, and Luay al Mauqtar of Iraq. Examine criteria-based and non-criteria-based approaches to plastic products, chemicals of concern in plastic products, and product design. focusing on recyclability and reusability of plastic products considering their uses and applications.
- The second expert group co-chaired by Kate Lynch of Australia and Oliver Boachie of Ghana. This group is to develop an analysis of potential sources and that could be mobilized for implementation of the objectives of the instrument including options for the establishment of a financial mechanism, alignment of financial flows, and catalyzing finance.

The committee asked the secretariat to arrange an in-person meeting for the expert groups prior to INC-5, to discuss financial resources being available.

The Committee made the decision to form an open-ended legal drafting group. The group will provide a legal review of the draft text and will start working at INC-5. It will be made up of two Co-Chairs nominated by the INC and legal experts designated by Member States.

The Sub-Groups at INC-4 submitted a proposal for a compilation document containing the five non-papers, which the Committee approved. The INC Secretariat will release a compilation

document that preserves placeholders for future annexes while standardizing layout and making corrections without significantly altering the content. The negotiations at INC-5 will begin with this compilation document.

The Bridge to Busan Declaration on basic Plastic Polymers was introduced by 28 Member States. Stakeholders and interested Member States are invited to sign the Declaration in support of this call to action on basic plastic polymers. As the INC approaches its final meeting in November 2024, delegates and observers are uncertain if they can overcome the hurdles and reach a consensus to combat plastic pollution effectively.

Source:-

<https://www.genevaenvironmentnetwork.org/resources/updates/towards-plastics-pollution-inc-4/>

<https://enb.iisd.org/plastic-pollution-marine-environment-negotiating-committee-inc4-summary>