

Ministerial Conference on Marine Litter and Plastic Pollution

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated: 14/09/2021

Note: The below Frequently Asked Questions were decided and developed by the co-conveners, namely, Germany, Ecuador, Ghana and Vietnam, of this informal initiative.

1. What is the process for the development of the Ministerial Statement?

A draft Ministerial Statement was developed by the co-conveners based on comments received regarding the draft key messages shared on 23 July. A first draft of the Statement has been circulated on 13 August. Deadline for comments on the draft was 27 August. The comment process is made as participatory and transparent as possible in order to show the range of views to be expected. A revised draft based on comments received will be shared on the first day of the Ministerial Conference for further consideration during the Conference. A consultative process on the Statement will be made during the two-day meeting.

2. How will the Ministerial Statement be finalized?

The Ministerial Statement will be finalized during the Ministerial Conference by the co-conveners taking into account the discussions. The final draft of the Ministerial Statement will be provided before the beginning of the second day.

3. What are the expected outcomes of the Ministerial Conference and how will signature be done by countries that wish to join the Statement? And what level of delegation members will be expected to sign the Statement?

A co-conveners' Summary will be prepared as the outcome of the Conference. The Conference is expected to maintain momentum and further dialogue among governments and other stakeholders.

Delegates with speaking roles from countries that wish to sign the Statement may request the floor and endorse the Statement at the Conference during the high-level dialogue and before the end of the Conference. Those who wish to sign the Statement after the Conference may choose to do so by officially communicating the endorsement of the Statement in writing to the co-conveners through the website (www.conferencemarinelitterplasticpollution.org/ENDORSEMENTS/) by 15 October 2021. Name and title of the signatory will be listed at the end of the Statement and on the conference homepage. Government representatives with delegation of authority¹ may sign the Statement. No physical signing on the Statement is expected.

4. Until when can each country express acceptance of the Ministerial Statement?

The deadline for signing the Statement will be the 15th of October.

¹ A letter of accreditation may be required – depending on the delegation of authority

5. What is the time limit for interventions during the high-level dialogue?

Maximum time allocation for each intervention is 2 minutes.

Should Ministerial level delegates for countries be unable to attend the Conference, and wish to prepare pre-recorded video messages, they can do so, provided these are submitted to unep-gpmarinelitter@un.org by 25 August. Please note that live interventions will be given priority during the Conference.

6. Do you anticipate just statements from each delegate or will there be a discussion or questions asked to the participants at the high-level dialogue?

High-level representatives will be invited to deliver statements on national position especially on:

- a) the desired outcome of the resumed fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA 5.2) and
- b) related to the Ministerial Statement.

7. Apart from the high-level dialogue, are there other segments during the Conference that are open to interventions/questions by participants?

In addition to the high-level dialogue under agenda item 5, there will also be opportunities to make interventions under agenda item 3b. Short interventions or questions can be asked under agenda items 4, 6 and 7.

8. Will any contact group be organized for consultation on the Ministerial Statement during the Ministerial Conference?

No contact groups or breakout sessions are envisioned during the Ministerial Conference.

9. Are there other relevant ongoing processes?

There are a number of ongoing country-driven processes, including the New York Group of Friends to Combat Marine Plastic Litter and the Nairobi Group of Friends to Combat Marine Litter and Plastic Pollution.

10. Can Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) contribute to the development of the Ministerial Statement?

The Ministerial Conference is open for multi-stakeholder participation. Delegates from MGS can request the floor by raising hands during the Conference under different agenda items. Please note that delegates from governments and regional groups will be given priority to take the floor.

11. What are the next steps after the Ministerial Conference?

Countries that have not already done so during the Ministerial Conference may choose to sign onto the Ministerial Statement after the Conference by 15 October 2021.

Informal briefings and strengthened regional outreach on the outcome of the Ministerial Conference for Geneva, Nairobi and New York constituents will be organised virtually by the United Nations Environment Programme between September and November 2021.

The Ministerial Conference is a country-driven process that has been convened by the co-conveners, namely, Germany, Ecuador, Ghana and Vietnam. It is occurring outside the United Nations as well as the UN Environment Assembly. However, this does not preclude a United Nations body such as the Environment Assembly from addressing the outcomes of the Conference.

12. Can you share a list of Ministerial level attendees who have confirmed or indicated likely attendance?

A list of registrants will be shared prior to the Conference.