UNIDO Contribution to

Background Note for the 2020 United Nations Conference to support the implementation of SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

2-6 June 2020, Lisbon

Theme proposed:

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The proposed theme is directly related with SDG target 14.1 and indicator 14.1.1, as shown below.

Target 14.1: By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution

Indicator 14.1.1: Index of coastal eutrophication and floating plastic debris density

Introduction

Plastics are versatile materials, being inexpensive, light, easily shaped and durable and have brought immeasurable benefits to many areas of life. They are used in numerous industrial sectors, including packaging, health care, construction, automotive, aviation, agriculture, logistics and storage, consumer goods, clothing and many more.

Primarily made from fossil fuels, plastic materials are material resources (in addition to oil, a lot of energy, mostly of the non-renewable kind, and water), and come with sunk investment costs that may be reused to create fresh economic value.

Due their widespread use in the products the global population consumes on a daily basis and the embodied economic value of plastics wasted, including those entering our oceans, this is an ideal area for public-private partnerships at the global, regional, national and local levels.

Plastics production and waste generation

In 2015, global production of primary, or virgin, plastics was 407 million metric tons (Mt) and expected to double by 2030 and to double again by 2050, excluding bio-based plastics production that was approximately 1% of total annual production of fossil fuel-based plastics.

In 2015, 302 Mt of plastic waste was generated, amounting to 74% of the total primary plastics production in the same year, including secondary (recycled) plastics. In the same year, plastic waste generated as a proportion of 195.32 847a00052.530 f-5(n)3(alr3(id))3(in)1(in)5(u)46(p)ims such as 9(M)-3(t)9(o)-ee to

In $\,$, for instance in tourism and retail businesses and industrial laundries circular economy practices

- b) Technical assistance for integration of informal sector waste operators into waste management systems; and
- c) Capacity building in developing countries on circular economy practices.

Finally, seeking and supporting innovations for measures to clean-up plastics from shores and water columns and open oceans would need to continue, where economically feasible (e.g. ocean surface,