

Pacific Media Brief: Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution

The start point for Pacific Media as you prepare your chart to navigate your learning voyage about this global action – “The intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution including in the marine environment.”

Background as taken from: <https://www.unep.org/inc-plastic-pollution> as at 21 September 2024

In March 2022, at the resumed fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2), a historic resolution was adopted to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

[The resolution \(5/14\)](#) requested the Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) to convene an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop "the instrument," which is to be based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastic, including its production, design, and disposal.

The INC began its work during the second half of 2022, with the ambition to complete the negotiations by the end of 2024. The [first session](#) of the INC (INC-1) took place in Punta del Este, Uruguay from 28 November to 2 December 2022, followed by a [second session](#) (INC-2) from 29 May to 2 June 2023 in Paris, France. The [third session](#) (INC-3) marked the process' midway point from 13 to 19 November 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya, followed by the [fourth session](#) (INC-4) from 23 to 29 April 2024 in Ottawa, Canada. The [fifth session](#) (INC-5) is scheduled for 25 November to 1 December 2024 in Busan, Republic of Korea.

Pacific Islands representation at the INC on plastic pollution

- Cook Islands
- Federated States of Micronesia
- Fiji
- Kiribati
- Nauru
- Niue
- Palau
- Papua New Guinea
- Republic of the Marshall Islands
- Samoa
- Solomon Islands
- Tonga
- Tuvalu
- Vanuatu

The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme has been supported by the Governments of Australia and New Zealand, throughout the INC negotiating process to support Pacific Islands delegations. This has included pre-INC meetings to prepare Pacific Islands strategies, as well as provide support to the Chair of the Pacific Small Islands Developing States as they lead coordination.

SPREP has worked with the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner, the Pacific Community and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to support our Pacific Islands Delegations throughout some of the INC sessions.

Extensive media and social media content is developed by SPREP before, during and after each INC process. You can read more of the content produced on the SPREP website, and facebook pages.

Other key points of interest

There is a **High Ambition Coalition to end Plastic Pollution** with the goal to end Plastic Pollution by 2040: <https://hactoendplasticpollution.org/> There are four Pacific Islands Members to this, those being Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Palau and Solomon Islands. The Fifty-Second Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting Communique in 2023 encouraged Members to join the HAC. This was also one of the partnerships in the Pacific Partnerships for Prosperity that was launched at the PIFLM52.

The **Bridge to Busan: Declaration on Primary Plastic Polymers** was launched at the INC4 in April 2024. According to the Declaration – “Studies show that the world cannot achieve its goals of ending plastic pollution and limiting global average temperature rise to less than 1.5° Celsius if the unsustainable production of primary plastic polymers is not addressed.” (<https://www.bridgetobusan.com/> 21 September 2024) As at 21 September 2024, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu along with SPREP have signed on to the Declaration. The Fifty-Third Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting Communique in 2024 recommended endorsement of the Bridge to Busan Declaration.

Pacific Declarations

The [Pacific Regional Declaration on the prevention of marine litter and plastic pollution and its Impacts](#) was presented and endorsed at the 2021 Ministerial Meeting of SPREP. This declaration highlights support to address this issue and the deep concern about the impacts of plastics and microplastics pollution on our region.

Addressing Plastic Pollution is one of the [Regional Collective Actions](#) under the Ocean and Environment Pillar of the [2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent](#). In particular to “Support members’ efforts in relation to the pursuit of an ambitious, comprehensive, international legally-binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.”

Support from the Pacific Islands Leaders for the INC process

1. In the [PIFLM52 Communique](#) it states:

“Leaders encouraged Members to join the High Level Ambition Coalition to End Plastic Pollution, and continued support and involvement in the ongoing plastics treaty negotiations.”

2. In the [PIFLM53 Communique](#) it states:

“Leaders supported the ongoing efforts of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) in developing an internationally legally binding instrument (ILBI) on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. Leaders supported these efforts further by ensuring that the Pacific region presents a unified and strong position and recommended endorsing the “Bridge to Busan: Declaration on Primary Plastic Polymers”.

A member of the Pacific takes a front seat

1. Palau, through Ms Gwen Sisor, is a co-Chair of Contact Group 1 in the INC Process. The INC has been conducted through two Contact Groups (amongst other ways) which discuss two different key parts of the ILBI.
2. Samoa, as Chair of the Alliance of Small Islands States (AOSIS), coordinates the negotiating bloc of over 35 States. The Lead Coordinator is Ms Anama Solofa of Samoa. It is understood his role of AOSIS Chair will be led by Palau as of early 2025. You can learn more about AOSIS at: <https://www.aosis.org/>

Websites that may be of interest for you

- [UNEP Plastic Pollution](#)
- [INC Fact Sheet Designing Products and Systems for Safe and Sustainable Reuse](#)
- [INC Fact Sheet: Abandoned, Lost and Otherwise Discarded Fishing Gear](#)
- [INC Fact Sheet Designing Products and Systems for Safe and Sustainable Reuse](#)
- [INC Fact Sheet: Science Policy Interface](#)
- [INC Fact Sheet: Plastic Removal Technologies 101](#)
- [INC Fact Sheet: Plastics 101](#)
- [INC Fact Sheet: Plastics Alternatives and Substitutes 101](#)
- [INC Fact Sheet: Strengthening the Global Plastics Treaty with Indigenous Pacific People's Knowledge](#)
- [INC Fact Sheet: Bioplastics 101](#)
- [The Scientists' Coalition for an Effective Plastics Treaty](#)