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## United Nations Ocean Conference

Nice, France

5 Juin 2025

### Subject: **Written Statements to 2025 UN Ocean Conference**

Dear Sir or Madam,

*Pollutions travel from land to sea: 80% of plastic pollution in oceans originates on land.* Environmentally sound management (ESM) of waste includes the reduction of waste generation as a priority and the safe recovery or disposal of materials. ESM of waste is one of the most effective and sustainable solutions to reduce marine pollution.

The implementation of such systems is complex, requiring the control of waste collection, treatment, and disposal in ways that protect both human health and the environment. Recycling potential depends not only on infrastructure, but also on product design - avoiding complex or composite materials - and the availability of stable, sustainable markets for recycled outputs.

**Local waste systems are essential.** They are the first line of defense against marine pollution and the building blocks of a circular economy. Without these systems, waste, and in particular plastics, get *transferred from hydrographic basins of rivers and lakes to the sea, as these are major pathways for marine pollution.*

Reducing plastic waste at its source requires embracing the circular economy hierarchy, beginning with “refuse.” This calls for deep transformations in how we produce, consume, and design business models. While this transition is underway, it faces significant push-back. **Now more than ever, broad-based cooperation among all stakeholders, including governments, industry, communities, and civil society, is critical.**

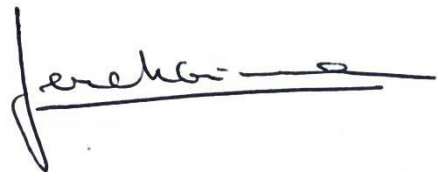
Environmentally sound management of waste, which includes the reduction of waste generation as a priority, is an essential solution to protect oceans. This solution has a cost, even when circularity and the associated revenue streams are established. This solution also has environmental benefits which, in turn, offer avoided future costs. These avoided costs far outweigh those of implementing circularity and waste management (GWMO 2024). Harnessing the potential of this solution requires financing it through a range of financial instruments

involving both public and private stakeholders, so that society as a whole, so that people and the planet, may in return benefit from these avoided costs.

The UN Ocean Conference is a key moment to advance global recognition of this agenda. It will play a pivotal role in shaping the Global Plastics Treaty, expected to be finalized in August 2025. It also strengthens the momentum behind the **Global Push** which is a united initiative to secure the central role of waste management and circularity in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Let us seize this opportunity to align ambition with action for healthy oceans and a more sustainable future.

NB: The above statement was co-authored by the French Solid Waste Partnership, ISWA, UN-Habitat, and UNEP/IETC, as partners of the “Global Push”, to be delivered [in Ocean Action Panel 4 : Preventing and significantly reducing marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities](#) | Department of Economic and Social Affairs.



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