

[Draft 11 October 2023]

## Decision 1

### Pollution

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The Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean,

**Recalling** the ministerial declaration “Towards a Pollution-Free Planet”, adopted at the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), and the subsequent Implementation Plan Towards a Pollution-Free Planet, which was welcomed at the fourth session of UNEA;

**Recalling** resolution A/RES/76/300 of the United Nations General Assembly<sup>1</sup> which declares that everyone on the planet has a right to a healthy environment, including clean air, water, and a stable climate, as well as the Human Rights Council resolution 48/13 that unequivocally recognized the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment for all people;

**Recalling** the recent resolution of the 76th World Health Assembly on the significant adverse effects of unsound management of chemicals and waste, as well as pollution, on human health and the environment<sup>2</sup>;

**Recognizing** the importance of advancing gender equality at all levels of action, participation, policy formulation, and decision-making in the areas of chemicals, waste management, plastic and air pollution, strengthening the participation of women and girls at all levels;

**Recalling** the Ibero-American Environmental Charter, approved at the XXVIII Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, held on March 25, 2023, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, in particular the provisions of section 4, on Pollution and Solid Waste, including plastics and microplastics;

**Recalling** Decision 1 of the XXII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment, which recognizes that a more integrated approach is needed to address the direct threats to human health and the environment of the various forms of pollution that are found in the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the land we live on;

**Taking into consideration** the resolutions adopted at the resumed session of the Fifth United Nations Environment Assembly, including Resolution 5/7 on the sound management of chemicals and waste, and Resolution 5/8 on the Science-Policy Panel to further contribute to the sound management of chemicals and wastes and to prevent pollution;

**Reinforcing** the decisions adopted at the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention (COP-4) and at the 2023 meetings of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel (COP-16), Rotterdam (COP-11) and Stockholm (COP-11) Conventions, and in particular those related to international coordination and cooperation;

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<sup>1</sup> UN General Assembly, Resolution A/76/L.75, “The human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment”, Seventy-sixth session of the UN General Assembly, 26 July 2022 [[Access link](#)].

<sup>2</sup> WHO [resolution A76/A/CONF./2](#) of the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly, 24 May 2023. World Health Organization, Resolution A76/A/CONF./2, “The impact of chemicals, waste and pollution on human health,” 76th World Health Assembly, 24 May 2023. [[Access link](#)].

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**[Welcoming]** the outcomes of the Fifth Session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5), including the recommendations on the beyond 2020 process....]

**Reaffirming** the need for concerted action by all countries in the region to effectively address the risks to human health and the environment arising from the unsound management of chemicals and waste throughout their full life cycle;

**Recalling** Decision 1 of the XXII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment, which adopted the *Action Plan on regional cooperation for the management of chemicals and waste 2021-2024*, within the framework of the Intergovernmental Network;

**Highlighting** the results and progress derived from the implementation of the Action Plan in its first period (Work Programme 2021-2022)<sup>3</sup>, and considering the priorities and emergent issues in the region;

**Highlighting** the link required with the 2030 Agenda, especially in relation to the environmentally sound management of chemicals and waste throughout their whole life cycle, as well as to responsible production and consumption;

**Stressing** the current situation facing the planet in terms of hunger and poverty, the loss of biodiversity, the effects of climate change that are increasingly evident and irreversible, the unsound management of chemical throughout their life cycle, resulting in the generation of waste and undesirable levels of pollution, in addition to the problem of plastic pollution;

**Taking into account** the worsening impacts of waste on human health, the economy and the environment, and considering the UN General Assembly resolution (A/RES/77/161) "Promoting zero-waste initiatives to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" <sup>4</sup>, proclaiming 30 March as the International Day of Zero Waste, to be celebrated every year starting in 2023.

**Recalling** Decision 1 of the XXII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment, encouraging progress in the work of the Voluntary Coalition for the Progressive Closure of Dumpsites, by updating and implementing its Work Plan;

**Acknowledging** the results and progress in the implementation of the Coalition's 2021 – 2022 Work Plan<sup>5</sup>, and taking into account the priorities and emerging issues in waste management in the region;

**Considering** with concern the increasing magnitude and levels of plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, and its interrelated environmental, social, and economic impacts;

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<sup>3</sup> Intergovernmental Network on Chemicals and Waste, "Progress Report 2021-2023 for the Action Plan for regional cooperation on chemicals and waste management in Latin America and the Caribbean". [\[Access link\]](#).

<sup>4</sup> UN General Assembly, Resolution A/RES/77/161 "Promoting zero-waste initiatives to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", 2022. [\[Access link\]](#).

<sup>5</sup> Coalition for the progressive closure of dumpsites in Latin America and the Caribbean, "Progress Report of the Work Plan 2021-2022", UN Environment Programme, 2023. [\[Access link\]](#).

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**Recalling** resolution 5/14 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its fifth session<sup>6</sup>, to end plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, through an international legally binding instrument, based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastics;

**Taking also into consideration** the call for action to address plastic pollution made by Latin America and the Caribbean countries through various high-level declarations, including the St. John's Declaration of CARICOM, the Lima Declaration of the Pacific Alliance, the Buenos Aires Declaration of CELAC, and the Santo Domingo Declaration of the Ibero-American Summit.

**Recognizing** the work and related efforts within existing global and regional frameworks, such as the Regional Seas Conventions, the Minamata, Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions;

**Taking into consideration** the UNEP Plastics Initiative and the Global Partnership on Plastic Pollution and Marine Litter (GPML), among others;

**Recalling** Decision 1 of the XXII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment, which invited the Secretariat to facilitate the establishment of a suitable mechanism to promote regional cooperation and coordination in this area;

**Welcoming** the establishment of the Working Group on plastic and microplastic pollution, including in the marine environment in Latin America and the Caribbean, acknowledging the steady progress made in promoting regional cooperation and information exchange activities, and considering the recommendations issued by the Group to the High-Level Officers during the intersessional period, consolidating the Group as the main coordinating mechanism within the framework of the Forum;

**Acknowledging** the progress in the region to address plastic pollution, including the marine environment, and considering policy and regulatory measures on single-use plastics, and the implementation of the extended producer responsibility [principle], national planning and strategies, and increased awareness; but also noting that additional and concerted actions are urgently required across the full life cycle of plastics in the region;

**Noting with concern** that in the Latin America and the Caribbean region almost all people living in urban areas are exposed to levels of air pollutants that exceed the new guidelines recommended by the World Health Organization<sup>7</sup>, and the known effect of air pollution on public health, with high morbidity and mortality costs, estimated in 3.4% of the GDP of the region<sup>8</sup>;

**Recalling** the resolution 74/212<sup>9</sup> which designated September 7 as International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies to further enhance international cooperation in support of the efforts of all Member States to achieve clean air;

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<sup>6</sup> UN General Assembly, Resolution 5/14 "End plastic pollution: Towards an international legally binding instrument", March 2, 2022. [[Access link](#)].

<sup>7</sup> World Health Organization, "WHO global air quality guidelines: particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10), ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and carbon monoxide" 2021. [[Access link](#)].

<sup>8</sup> World Bank Group "The Global Health Cost of PM2.5 Air Pollution: A Case for Action Beyond, 2021". [[Access link](#)].

<sup>9</sup> UN General Assembly, "Resolution 74/212 International Day of Clean Air for blue skies" 2019. [[Access link](#)].

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**Recalling** the resolution 3/8<sup>10</sup> of the United Nations Environmental Assembly on the prevention and reduction of air pollution to improve air quality globally;

**Considering** also that the UNEP Global Assessment on Air Pollution Legislation<sup>11</sup> found that one-third of the countries in the Latin America and the Caribbean regional lack legislative instruments containing ambient air quality standards and provided recommendations to develop legal frameworks based on general principles of air quality governance;

**Recalling** Decision 1 of the XXII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment, through which the Secretariat was invited to reestablish the Intergovernmental Network on Atmospheric Pollution, as well as to support the updating of its Regional Action Plan and its resource mobilization strategy;

**Welcoming** the development of the Regional Action Plan on Air Quality 2022-2025<sup>12</sup> and its Resource Mobilization Strategy<sup>13</sup>, which were presented to the High-Level Officers during the intersessional period<sup>14</sup>, and acknowledging the progress made by the Intergovernmental Network in promoting information exchange and capacity building actions on priority related issues<sup>15</sup>;

**Considering** the need to mobilize new and additional financial resources and access to technology for developing countries to combat pollution;

### ***Decide to***

#### ***I. Regional Cooperation on Chemicals and Waste***

1. **Adopt** the Work Programme 2023-2024 within the framework of the Intergovernmental Network on Chemicals and Waste, on regional cooperation for the integrated management of chemicals and waste<sup>16</sup>;
2. **Call upon** the Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Network on Chemicals and Waste to develop a draft Resource Mobilization Strategy, for consideration by countries, for the effective implementation of the Network's Work Programme (2023-2024), including consideration of at least one in-person meeting of Network Focal Points.
3. **Encourage** the countries of the region to support the implementation of activities contemplated in the Work Programme, including the latest decisions adopted by the Conferences of the Parties of the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm, and Minamata Conventions, [and the new post-2020 international framework for international chemicals management], promoting the exchange of experiences and information;

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<sup>10</sup> United Nations Environment Assembly, "Resolution 3/8 Preventing and reducing air pollution to improve air quality globally", 2017. [[Access link](#)].

<sup>11</sup> UNEP "Regulating Air Quality: The First Global Assessment of Air Pollution Legislation", 2021. [[Access link](#)].

<sup>12</sup> Intergovernmental network on Atmospheric Pollution for Latin America and the Caribbean, "Regional Action Plan on Air Quality 2022-2025". [[Access link](#)].

<sup>13</sup> Intergovernmental network on Atmospheric Pollution for Latin America and the Caribbean, "Resource Mobilization Strategy for the Regional Action Plan 2022-2025". [[Access link](#)].

<sup>14</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of High-Level Officers of the Forum of Ministers of Environment, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022. [[Access link](#)].

<sup>15</sup> Intergovernmental network on Atmospheric Pollution for Latin America and the Caribbean, "Progress Report 2022 – 2023 of the implementation of Decision 1 of the XXII Forum", 2023. [[Access link](#)].

<sup>16</sup> Intergovernmental Network on Chemicals and Waste, "2023-2024 Work Programme for regional cooperation on Chemicals and waste management in Latin America and the Caribbean". [[Access link](#)].

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4. **Request** the support of the Secretariat and other relevant stakeholders to promote capacity-building actions through resource mobilization, technology transfer and technical assistance to facilitate the effective implementation of the Programme, in order to achieve a balanced level of progress in the region;
5. **[Welcome]** the results obtained in the framework of the Fifth Session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5) held in Bonn, Germany, 25 - 29 September 2023, which adopted the "new [Global Framework for Chemicals]", and to reiterate the region's commitment to the effective implementation of this instrument and the Bonn Declaration, adopted in the framework of this meeting. (COL)]
6. **Ratify** the members of the Steering Committee of the Intergovernmental Network, for the period 2023- 2024, until the next Forum of Ministers, as indicated below:
  - Caribbean Subregion: ...
  - Mesoamerican Subregion: ...
  - Andean Subregion: Peru, ...
  - Southern Cone Subregion: Brasil, Chile, ...
7. **Invite** the Steering Committee, with the support of the Secretariat and all focal points, to develop the Action Plan 2025-2028, taking into consideration the priorities and emerging issues in the region, and the developments of the international and regional agenda on chemicals and waste, for consideration at the next Forum of Ministers.

## **II. Waste management**

1. **Call** upon Governments of the region to intensify efforts and initiatives to prevent and minimize waste generation, ensure the environmentally sound waste management and the progressive closure of dumpsites<sup>17</sup>, in accordance with the capacities of the countries of the region;
2. **Adopt** the 2024-2025 Work Plan of the Coalition for the progressive closure of dumpsites in Latin America and the Caribbean<sup>18</sup>, and encourage countries in the region to commit to its implementation, with the support of UNEP and other members of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee (ITC), as well as donors and partners in coordination with other existing regional initiatives.
3. **Ratify** the governmental members of the Steering Committee of the Coalition, for the period 2023- 2025 until the next Forum of Ministers, as indicated below:
  - Brazil
  - ...
  - ...
  - ...
  - ...

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<sup>17</sup> Guided, as appropriate, by the "Roadmap for the progressive closure of dumpsites in Latin America and the Caribbean", prepared by the Coalition. [\[Access link\]](#).

<sup>18</sup> Coalition for the progressive closure of dumpsites in Latin America and the Caribbean "Work Plan 2024-2025", UN Environment Programme, 2023. [\[Access link\]](#).

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### ***III. Plastic pollution, including in the marine environment***

1. **Call** upon Governments in the region and other stakeholders, such as academia, civil society and the private sector to undertake further efforts to end plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, through a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastic by strengthening the circular, sustainable and low-carbon approach;
2. **Urge** governments of the region to adopt technical and awareness-raising or educational measures for the substitution of problematic, avoidable, or plastics of concern, and to encourage the use of alternative, safe, sustainable and environmentally friendly materials, in a gradual manner and in accordance with national capacities, for which it is necessary to allocate financial funds to support the implementation of these aspirations;
3. **Reaffirm** the commitment of governments of the region to support global action and international cooperation, and actively contribute to the development of an ambitious, implementable, and effective legally binding international instrument to end plastic pollution, including in the marine environment;
4. **Endorse** the Rules of Operation of the Working Group on plastic and microplastic pollution, including in the marine environment in Latin America and the Caribbean<sup>19</sup>, agreed upon by consensus among the representatives of the working group, and ratify the members of the Coordinating Committee for the period 2023- 2025 until the next meeting of the Forum of Ministers, as indicated below:
  - Caribbean Subregion: ...
  - Mesoamerican Subregion: Panamá,...
  - Andean Subregion: Ecuador, Peru
  - Southern Cone Subregion: Brazil...
5. **Invite** the Working Group, with the support of the Secretariat and other stakeholders, to develop and implement the 2024 and 2025 annual programs of work, considering the emergent priorities and needs in the region, and in coordination with other relevant initiatives, to foster regional and inter-regional cooperation and coordination, facilitating the exchange of information on good practices and experiences;
6. **Encourage** regional and international donors and partners to support the governments of the region in implementing concrete actions and solutions to combat plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, through sustainable financial and technical assistance, capacity building, and technology transfer.

### ***IV. Atmospheric pollution***

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<sup>19</sup> Working Group on plastic and microplastic pollution, including in the marine environment in Latin America and the Caribbean, "Rules of operation", 2023. [[Access link](#)].

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1. **Encourage** countries in the region to commit to the implementation of the Regional Action Plan on Air Quality 2022-2025, in accordance with national capacities, and request the Secretariat and other relevant stakeholders to secure resource mobilization actions to facilitate its effective implementation as evidenced through an annual follow-up report;
2. **Ratify** the members of the Steering Committee of the Intergovernmental Network on Atmospheric Pollution, for the period 2023- 2025 until the next Forum of Ministers, as indicated below:
  - Caribbean Subregion: ...
  - Mesoamerican Subregion: ...
  - Andean Subregion: ...
  - Southern Cone Subregion: Brazil, Chile
3. **Call** on the United Nations Environment Programme and the Inter-Agency Technical Committee (ITC) to support country efforts to strengthen legal frameworks to prevent and reduce air pollution by adopting ambient air quality standards and developing sectoral plans to mitigate pollutant emissions, including those that have a negative impact on the environment, climate, and health, such as short-lived climate pollutants;
4. **Encourage** countries in the region to engage in transformative regional actions to abate emissions of short-lived climate pollutants, highlighting the opportunities and benefits to health, the environment, and climate resulting from such reductions and their important relationship to air quality management.
5. **Promote** best practices, policies, infrastructure, and sustainable mobility initiatives that contribute to a just transition in the cities of the region, in order to reduce air pollution caused by fossil fuel-based transportation.