

Information to the Bureau of the INC for consultations with their regions on the proposed dates for INC-4

During the Bureau meeting on 21 August 2023, the Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, informed that Canada, as the host country of the fourth session of the INC, has indicated the venue and proposed dates for INC-4.

Canada indicated that the INC-4 will be held at the **Shaw Center in Ottawa**. The offered dates for the fourth session of the INC **are within the period 21-30 April 2024**.

The Secretariat would like to propose that the session be preceded by an INC Bureau meeting and regional consultations take place on 21 April. INC-4 would then take place from 22 to 30, including a one-day break during the session, with the specific day to be confirmed at a later stage. INC-4 would therefore be an 8-day meeting.

Sunday, 21 April	Opening of registration Bureau meeting Regional Consultations
Monday, 22 April until Wednesday, 30 April	Fourth session of the INC (one-day break would be observed)

As per Rule 2 of the draft rules of procedure that provisionally apply to the INC, the venue and dates of the sessions shall be decided by the Committee in consultation with the Secretariat. A decision on the host countries for INC-3, INC-4 and INC-5 was taken by the Committee during the closing plenary of the second session of the INC. Therefore, the host countries could not provide, at that time, additional information on the exact dates of future INC sessions.

Given the short time between INC-3 and INC-4, and in order to provide participants with sufficient time to process visa applications for INC-4, the INC secretariat would like to open the registration portal for INC-4 before the start of INC-3. The recommendation is to open registration for INC-4 on 23 October 2023. The reason is that registrations and applications for travel support for nominated delegates must be processed and approved, so the approval documents can be submitted to support the visa application process.

Regarding the length of the INC sessions, the proposed approach, as agreed at the meeting of the Open-ended Working Group held from 30 May to 1 June 2022 in Dakar, is that the length of the session can be adjusted from the 5 days general length as the INC process develops. If agreeable, since the length of INC-3 has already been extended, INC-4 would also be held over more than 5 days, as the Committee is in its last year to be able to finalize its work of the INC by end of 2024, as mandated by UNEA resolution 5/14.

Therefore, to allow the Secretariat to prepare accordingly, I would like to request members of the Bureau of the INC to inform their respective regional groups of the proposal for the date and venue of the fourth session of the INC as proposed above. I would kindly ask the Bureau to revert to the Secretariat with the regional views no later than 6 September 2023.

Thereafter, the secretariat will compile those views and present them to the Bureau at the in-person meeting to be held in New York on 23 September with the aim of making a decision so that preparations can be finalized.