

5th June 2023

Participation Report

DOSI participation in the Second Meeting of the Plastics Treaty - INC2, Paris, May 29th -June 2nd 2023

Overview

In 2022, UN Member States agreed to start negotiating a new global treaty to end plastic pollution. This is a historic step towards protecting wildlife, the environment, and humans from the harmful effects of plastic pollution.

The first session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to Develop an International Legally Binding Instrument on Plastic Pollution, including in the Marine Environment (INC-1) was held from 29 Nov - 2 Dec 2022 in Uruguay but DOSI did not have resources or time to engage in this first round of negotiations, which was characterised by discussions on procedural matters. However, Melanie Bergmann, although not a DOSI Ambassador for INC-1, attended the German delegation and was able to pass on useful information for us post-event.

INC-2 was held at the headquarters of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris, France, from 29 May – 2 June 2023. It brought together over 1,656 participants from 169 countries and the EU, and over 300 observer organisations. As DOSI does not yet have observer status (we are still trying...), DOSI ambassadors participated via our Gallifrey colleagues on their delegation and also via the German delegation.

DOSI Ambassadors attending in person



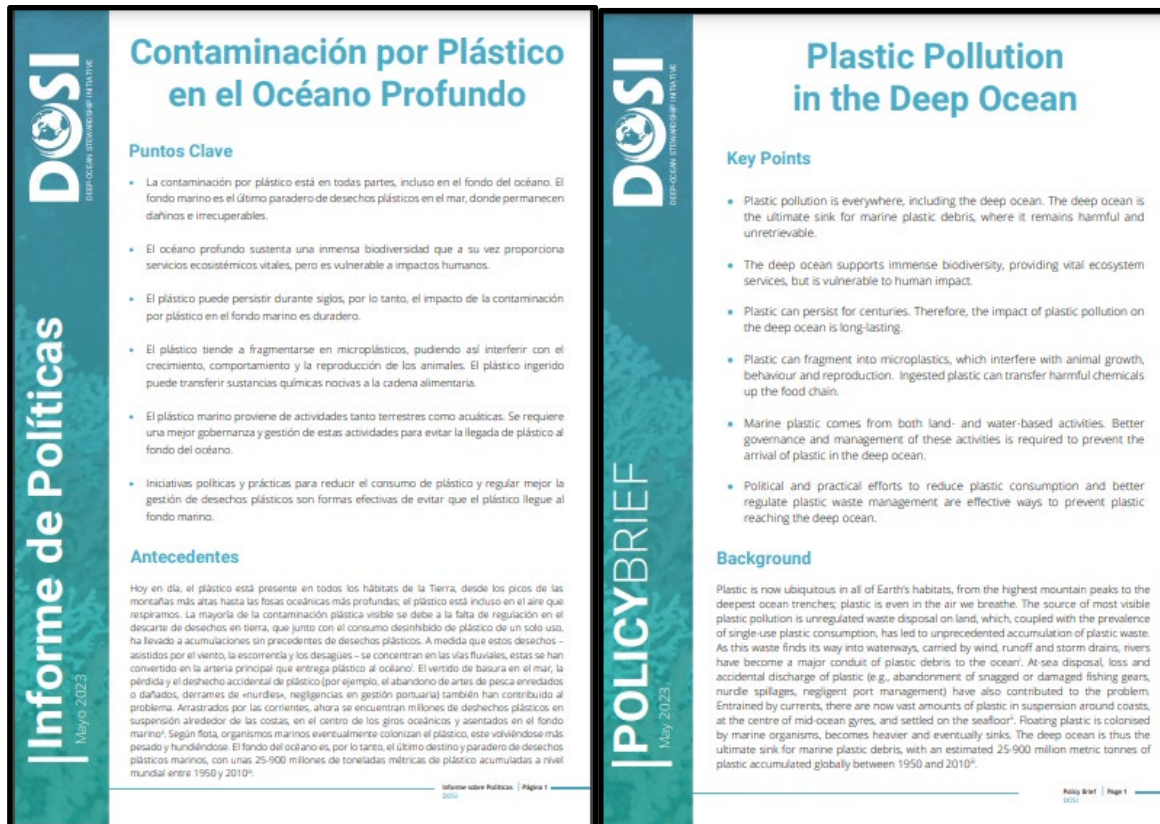
Lucy Woodall,
University of Exeter,
UK (Gallifrey
delegation) - left

Melanie Bergmann,
AWI, Germany
(German
delegation) - right

DOSI Actions

DOSI engagement in this process aims to bring the deep ocean into the discussions so that this vast realm is fully appreciated in terms of its ecosystem services and as an ultimate sink for much of the plastic pollution released into the marine environment. We do not expect the deep ocean to be explicitly included in the final treaty text, but rather to be considered by delegations during deliberations to ensure the treaty text does not exclude this ecosystem or actions needed to address plastic pollution in or going into it.

Immediately prior to the meeting, DOSI Pollution and Debris WG members produced and circulated (via direct mails to delegates and also via social media) a policy brief on plastic pollution in the deep ocean (in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)):



This was well-received by many of the delegations and was found to be useful during subsequent meetings during the week. The first few days were frustrating for many delegates, with much of the discussion focussed on procedural matters that many considered delaying tactics and a reflection on geopolitics, these actions were led by Saudi Arabia, Brazil and India. However, this meant that our DOSI ambassadors were able to engage in more bi-laterals than might have been possible otherwise. Key engagements:

1. Chile (who were very complimentary about DOSI and BBNJ / ISA/ UNFCCC conversations) and Belgium delegations specifically asked for a briefing on the deep sea
2. DOSI Ambassadors were involved in many conversations about plastic and the ocean
3. DOSI Ambassadors were both part of the Scientist's Coalition for an Effective Plastics Treaty (SCEPT), which both gave them access to experts from across fields and provides them with access to many delegations
4. DOSI Ambassadors independently supported delegations MB- Germany/Europe and LW- Seychelles
5. DOSI Ambassadors wrote and submitted a statement to the treaty secretariat, based on our DOSI policy brief (Appendix below)

6. DOSI Ambassadors engaged in a discussion with The OceanCleanUp team about its narrative diverting public awareness from the need for upstream measures to inefficient cleanups

Final thoughts on DOSI participation

1. DOSI Pollution WG leads need to decide if DOSI will be represented in INC-3 in Nairobi and organise any delegation early. (Hotels already booked for 2 participants as holding places)
2. If finance allows, it makes sense to have some continuity in attendees between meetings along with new DOSI Ambassadors. Funding will be sought via the DOSI Office in consultation with Pollution and Debris WG leads.
3. A few new research gaps were identified by Lucy and Melanie that could be useful to consider in future work/engagement. Funding will be sought to undertake these.
4. Lucy and Melanie thought it would be useful having a DOSI technical brief in advance of INC-3 summarising the impacts of plastics in the deep ocean and the difficulties associated with researching this and why.
5. Considering the awareness of many delegations of the link between plastic and climate change. It is thought a 1 pager on plastic pollution and climate change within the context of the deep sea would be useful. This would provide an opportunity to link and highlight the policy briefs already written by DOSI on these topics
6. A webinar on the impacts on high-seas/deep-ocean of plastics is also under consideration.

Appendix

DOSI Statement Submitted:

29th May 2023

INC-2 on Plastic Pollution

Deep Ocean Stewardship Initiative (DOSI)

While working towards an ambitious treaty we encourage nations to consider the ultimate fate of plastic in the ocean. This is the deep sea. A remote part that covers 60% of our planet, and out of sight to many, but already impacted by the increasing plastic pollution. The deep sea provides many essential benefits to the planet and humanity, but these are now being affected by plastic

pollution. Plastic can't reasonably be cleaned up from the deep sea, so the only solution to this growing challenge is to radically reduce the amount of plastic getting to the marine environment. This includes reducing the amount of plastic polymers produced, plastic items consumed and plastic waste disposed of. Furthermore, specific consideration of plastic fishing gear and its impacts is encouraged as this is a source of plastic pollution that will not be reduced by interventions that target plastic waste that is generated on land.