



## 2022 United Nations Ocean Conference Side Event

### *The African Marine Litter Outlook Pre-Publication Event (Event ID:V5)*

Jun 30, 2022 1:30 PM, GMT +1 (Lisbon), Zoom

Organized by: GRID-Arendal

#### **Background on the event**

This open access book provides a cross-sectoral, multi-scale assessment of marine litter in Africa with a focus on plastics. From distribution, to impacts on environmental and human health, this book looks at what is known scientifically. It includes a policy analysis of the instruments that currently exist, and what is needed to help Africa tackle marine litter—including local and transboundary sources. Across 5 chapters, experts from Africa and beyond have put together a summary of the scientific knowledge currently known about marine litter in Africa.

The context of the African continent and future projections form a backdrop on which the scientific knowledge is built. This scientific knowledge incorporates quantities, distributions, and pathways of litter into the marine environment, highlighting where the impacts of marine litter are most felt in Africa. These impacts have widespread effects, with ecological, social, economic, and human health repercussions. While containing detailed scientific information, this book provides a sound knowledge base for policymakers, NGOs and the broader public.

#### **Agenda:**

- 1) Welcome
- 3) Background to GRID-Arendal and the African Marine Litter Outlook
- 3) Interactive game/quiz on marine litter
- 4) A summary of each chapter (5) by an author of each chapter as follows:
  - Chapter 1: Introduction to Marine Litter in Africa - **Fiona Preston-Whyte**
  - Chapter 2: Marine litter sources and distribution pathways - **Dr Takunda Yeukai Chitaka**
  - Chapter 3: Impacts and Threats of Marine Litter in African Seas - **Dr Yashvin Neehaul**
  - Chapter 4: Legal and Policy Frameworks to Address Marine Litter through Improved Livelihoods - **Zaynab Sadan**
  - Chapter 5: The Way Forward, Building up from on-the-Ground Innovation - **Dr Thomas Maes**
- 5) The regional perspective – **Dr Abdoulaye Diagana**
- 6) Interactive poll
- 7) Panel Q&A

#### **Speakers:**

Clever Mafuta is the Head of Programme, Waste and Marine Litter at GRID-Arendal.

Eirin Husabø is the Quiz Master, an associate expert in waste and marine litter for GRID Arendal. She has experience in marine biology and ecotoxicology.

Fiona Preston-Whyte is a consultant working for GRID-Arendal. She has extensive experience in research focusing on marine litter, adaption mitigation and national action plans.

Dr Takunda Yeukai Chitaka is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of the Western Cape. She has research experience in quantifying leakage rates of products with a high likelihood of entering the marine environment. Furthermore, she has researched the life cycle management of problematic plastic products. Her current research focus is on the just transition to circular economy.

Dr Yashvin Neehaul joined the Mauritius Oceanography Institute in 2012 following his tertiary education at the University of Strasbourg. His research interests are ocean acidification and marine litter. Both are threats to the oceans and have a greater impact on SIDS. Yashvin gives his time to the NGO Reef Conservation as a scientific adviser to promote the sustainable use of marine resources. He joined Cap Business Océan Indien in early 2022 as Officer-in-Charge: Ocean, Blue Economy and Maritime Connectivity.

Zaynab Sadan is the Regional Plastics Policy Coordinator for Africa at WWF. She is currently engaging with and supporting governments, businesses and civil society organisations in Africa in preparing for negotiations of a global treaty to end plastic pollution. This includes contributions to policy development, research and advocacy. She also explores business and behaviour change interventions to catalyse the transition towards a circular plastics economy. Alongside this, she enjoys facilitation and skills-building in innovation and human-centred design methodologies.

Dr Thomas Maes is an excellent communicator in different languages. He has a broad educational background, including pre-MBA, civil engineering, terrestrial & marine biology, and a PhD in Science. He started his international career as an environmental manager on large development projects and moved to become a Principal Scientist for the UK government leading an extensive portfolio of projects and a team of marine experts. In 2020, Thomas joined GRID-Arendal where he supports global policy development through the UN framework. Thomas also assists developing countries with capacity building and research on the impact of waste and marine litter, their sources and pathways.

Dr Abdoulaye Diagana holds a PhD in Geography from the University of Rouen, and an advanced Master in Environment from the University of Paris IV Sorbonne in France. His research focuses on regional cooperation in marine and coastal biodiversity management and resilience to climate change in Africa. Dr Diagana has worked as a consultant to several private companies and public agencies in Africa, North America and Europe. He is the Programme Coordinator and Acting Executive Secretary of UNEP Abidjan Convention

Dave Messing (moderator) is an associate expert for the waste and marine litter department at GRID-Arendal and has experience related to working with various environmental issues as a Peace Corps volunteer focused on developing countries.

### **Number of attendees:**

Registered attendees (excluding speakers listed above): 22

Actual attendees (excluding speakers listed above): 13

### **Key Issues discussed (5- 8 bullet points) – Questions**

- There will be a mechanism to continue communication between regions for comparative analyzes in the generation of marine litter data?
- What are the most promising growth areas for the Blue Economy in Africa?
- With regard to the way forward how do we ensure enforcement occurs in Africa?
- In researching the sources and pathways of marine litter, what are some key gaps you have identified?
- What do you think is the way forward for the mitigation with the absence of so much information?
- What are the gaps in scientific data in Africa that you have identified during this work?
- SIDS are the most impacted by marine litter, can you tell us more?
- What are some examples of best practices to prevent marine litter in African countries?
- What opportunities do the upcoming negotiations on a global treaty to end plastic pollution provide to African governments?
- What are some of the most successful recommendations in your opinion?
- How can the regional conventions be used to tackle marine litter - both from a national and regional perspective?