**Spain  
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)   
Global Solutions for Reducing Marine Plastic Pollution**



Marine plastic pollution is a serious threat to ocean ecosystems, marine biodiversity, and human health. Covering over 70% of the Earth's surface, oceans are essential for regulating the planet’s climate, producing oxygen, and supporting millions of species. However, plastic waste -particularly microplastics- has infiltrated marine environments, breaking into harmful particles that threaten both aquatic life and human food chains. Marine species such as fish, turtles, and whales often ingest plastics, leading to suffocation, starvation, and declining populations. Spain recognizes this environmental crisis and emphasizes that urgent global cooperation is essential to reduce marine plastic pollution and safeguard our oceans for future generations.

Spain has consistently demonstrated leadership in addressing marine plastic pollution through national and international initiatives. Spain has implemented the *EU Single-Use Plastics Directive* into its *Waste Law*, reducing single-use plastic consumption and preventing marine pollution. Spain also supports the *Global Plastics Treaty* initiated by the United Nations, advocating for legally binding commitments to address plastic pollution across its lifecycle. Domestically, Spain has improved its waste management infrastructure, increasing its recycling rate to over 50% by 2022. Furthermore, Spain has banned the free distribution of plastic bags in retail outlets, resulting in a 71% reduction in plastic bag consumption. Spain has also invested in coastal cleanup programs, collecting more than 2,200 tons of plastic waste annually from its shores. In addition, Spain has undertaken reforestation projects, restoring 1.3 million hectares of land, mitigating pollution runoff into oceans, and enhancing public awareness campaigns on sustainable waste practices, such as the "Mar Limpio" initiative, which educates citizens about marine plastic pollution.

Spain proposes the following actionable solutions to address marine plastic pollution on a global scale:

* **Enhancing Waste Management Systems:** By 2025, Spain will improve waste disposal systems in coastal regions and support developing nations in adopting modern waste infrastructure.
* **Phasing Out Single-Use Plastics:** Spain commits to reducing single-use plastic production by 50% by 2030 and encourages global adoption of similar targets.
* **Promoting Sustainable Alternatives:** Spain aims to increase investments in research and development of biodegradable and reusable materials to replace conventional plastics.
* **Monitoring and Cleanup Initiatives:** Spain is going to establish regional partnerships, particularly in the Mediterranean and Atlantic, to monitor plastic hotspots and launch large-scale cleanup projects. Spain will expand its coastal cleanup efforts to collect 3,000 tons annually by 2025.
* **Creating a Global Plastic Pollution Monitoring Network:** Spain advocates for a UNEP-led network to track pollution data, assess progress, and ensure accountability.

Spain firmly believes that with international collaboration, innovative solutions, and concrete actions, we can significantly reduce marine plastic pollution and preserve the health of our oceans for future generations.

**REFERENCES**

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