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Solidarity
Equality
Sustainability

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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

"Global problems are moving faster than the institutions designed to solve them".

Poverty, unemployment, hunger, inequality, environmental degradation, and climate change are but a few of the complex issues challenging the world today. While there are several international frameworks, such as the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the implementation thereof is not in harmony with the speed and efficiency that is required to effectively address these challenges. Environmental protection, ecosystem restoration, and climate change mitigation and adaptation, however, can serve as key solutions in addressing several of these challenges. The impacts of biodiversity loss, pollution, soil erosion, ecosystem degradation, and the interlinkages with the severe impacts of climate change have rippled across the globe, affecting fauna and flora, livelihoods, and vital ecosystem services to people.

The theme for South Africa's Presidency of the Group of Twenty (G20) is *Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability***,** which is underpinned by the need to focus on a number of key areas, such as global governance reform, environment and climate finance, trade, health, and financing for development, among others. Therefore, in line with the overall theme of South Africa's Presidency of the G20, the overarching objective of the G20 Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group (ECSWG) is to advance the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs through a number of priorities and deliverables. This includes the enhancing of global partnerships as outlined in SDG 17 and to foster capacity building support; promotion of equitable trade; transfer of and access to science, technology and innovation; as well as mobilising financial resources.

The ECSWG will broadly focus on the following five key priorities:

1. Biodiversity and Conservation
2. Land Degradation, Desertification and Drought
3. Chemicals and Waste Management
4. Climate Change and Air Quality
5. Oceans and Coasts

2. PRIORITIES AND DELIVERABLES

2.1 PRIORITY 1: BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVATION

Context

National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) are the main instruments for implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at the national level. National reports are the main instruments for monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the CBD and the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

Recognising the above, the CBD Conference of the Parties (COP) 15 in adopting the GBF also adopted an enhanced multidimensional approach to planning, monitoring, reporting and review with a view to enhancing implementation of the CBD and the GBF, comprising, among others:

- NBSAPs revised or updated in alignment with the GBF, including national targets communicated in a standardised format by the CBD COP 16;
- Submission of the seventh national report by 28 February 2026 and the eighth national report by 30 June 2029;
- Global analysis of information in NBSAPs, including national targets to assess the contribution towards the GBF;
- Global review of collective progress in the implementation of the GBF;
- Information on non-State actor commitments towards the GBF.

As with a number of countries, South Africa communicated its national targets in the lead-up to COP 16 as part of its contribution to attaining the goals and targets of the GBF. The revision of South Africa's NBSAP will be undertaken in 2025, and a number of other countries will also be submitting their revised NBSAPs during the course of 2025.

Embedded within the NBSAP is the implementation of the draft National Biodiversity Economy Strategy (NBES), which encompasses sectors like the bioeconomy, wildlife economy, bioprospecting/biotrade economy, and ecotourism. Consideration of sustainable consumptive and non-consumptive sectors within National Biodiversity plans, is an attempt to demonstrate and support the linkages between people and biodiversity/nature. In doing so, socio-economic transformation through inclusivity of indigenous peoples and local communities; grassroots players in innovation; and marginalised communities has become an imperative in both value chain development and conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The enablers of the Biodiversity Economy are diverse and cut across a myriad of disciplines, such as conservation and sustainable use; trade; enterprise development and sustainability; market access;

research, research development and innovation; social protection and justice. Enhancing the effectiveness and safeguarding these enablers are evolving nationally with salient potential for scaling in Africa.

The nexus between Conservation and Sustainable Use (CSU) of biodiversity and trade to globalise value chains is being unravelled through the development of Voluntary Sustainability Standards for the consumptive animal wildlife economy and biotrade economy, namely, the Wildlife Economy Sustainability Game Meat Standard and Certification Scheme, and the Conservation and Sustainable Use Biotrade Charter that also proactively considers European Union value chain requirements. The expansion of the national methodology in safeguarding biodiversity through voluntary sustainability standards creates opportunities to develop incentives for sectors and overall gives a competitive advantage to the country in the trade fraternity. Lastly, the novelty in unravelling this nexus by the public sector allows for harmonisation between private and public initiatives, which could also be mainstreamed in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement. Underpinning biodiversity, CSU is the establishment of a Biodiversity Account as part of a Natural Capital Accounting Initiative. The Biodiversity Account has dual benefits and that is to create a biodiversity abundance baseline and measure national progress by measuring socio-economic indicators.

Expected outcomes:

- Sharing of experiences in updating NBSAPs and national reports to incorporate key elements, goals and targets of the GBF.
- Piloting Biodiversity Economy Voluntary Sustainability Standards.
- Mainstreaming of Biodiversity CSU in ongoing efforts under the AfCFTA Agreement.
- Developing national models for Biodiversity Accounts.
- Establishing and operationalising technical and scientific cooperation support centres in G20 countries for the implementation of the GBF.

2.2 PRIORITY 2: LAND DEGRADATION, DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT

Context

Land degradation is the result of human-induced actions that exploit land, causing its utility, biodiversity, soil fertility, and overall health to decline. Land is being degraded rapidly worldwide. Ensuring food security for a growing global population requires healthy land resources and flourishing ecosystems. Yet our current agricultural

practices are causing soils worldwide to be eroded up to 100 times faster than natural processes replenish them.

At least 70% of all ice-free land has been altered, impacting over 3.2 billion people. At current rates, 90% of land will bear our imprint by 2050. The impacts of land degradation will be felt by most of the world's population. Land degradation also changes and disrupts rainfall patterns, exacerbates extreme weather like droughts or floods, and drives further climate change. It results in social and political instability, which drives poverty, conflict, and migration.

Land degradation neutrality (LDN) can halt, and then reverse, this alarming picture of the future. Approximately 196 countries have pledged to arrest land degradation by 2030. More than 100 countries participate in the Changwon Initiative, which supports national voluntary target-setting processes to achieve LDN. In line with these global efforts, the G20 launched the G20 Global Land Initiative (Global Initiative on Reducing Land Degradation and Enhancing the Conservation of Terrestrial Habitats) in 2020, aiming to prevent, halt and reverse land degradation with an ambition to reduce degraded land by 50 percent by 2040.

Achieving LDN requires three concurrent actions:

- firstly, avoiding new degradation of land by maintaining existing healthy land;
- secondly, reducing existing degradation by adopting sustainable land management practices that can slow degradation while increasing biodiversity, soil health, and food production; and
- thirdly, ramping up efforts to restore and return degraded lands to a natural or more productive state.

Land restoration has been on the G20 Environment Climate Change Working Group Agenda since 2020. The Indonesian Presidency had two focal areas on land restoration (mangrove forests and peatlands), while the Indian Presidency focused on the restoration of land affected by mining and areas affected by forest fires.

Therefore, LDN represents a major opportunity to contribute to sustainable development by scaling up good practices and pilot activities through large-scale transformative projects and programmes (TPPs). These initiatives can generate multiple benefits, including positive changes in human well-being, poverty alleviation, and the restoration of terrestrial ecosystems and their services.

Considering that each country that has hosted the G20 Presidency has championed a domestic and international legacy initiative during their G20 Presidency, South Africa

intends to contribute towards the Southern Africa Great Green Wall (GGW) Initiative, which was approved by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) with an agreed resource mobilisation roadmap that is currently under implementation. It is proposed that this is a potential G20 Legacy Programme, in collaboration with the SADC Member States and supported by the African Development Bank, Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the African Union, and the SADC Secretariat. Additionally, the Coordination Office of the G20 Global Land Initiative can support the programme's capacity-building efforts, enhancing skills and knowledge crucial for sustainable land restoration and management.

Expected Outcomes:

- Financial commitments from G20 countries mobilised to combat land degradation, desertification and drought.
- Review of lessons learnt from large-scale restoration initiatives, including the Great Green Wall and the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100), producing a compendium of case studies of restoration initiatives from G20 Members and relevant partners.
- G20 countries support for investment plans through technical and financial assistance towards attaining LDN.
- The capacity of government institutions, non-governmental organisations and civil society to support efforts and initiatives aimed at mitigating desertification, land degradation and drought is strengthened.
- Funding mechanisms to support landowners, communities, and conservation entities to implement sustainable land use management have been established and are functioning.
- To ensure that degraded ecosystems are restored while contributing to ecosystem services delivery, climate change adaptation, and mitigation.

2.3 PRIORITY 3: CHEMICALS AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

2.3.1 Sub-Priority: Sustainable Chemicals Management

Context

The global demand for pesticides and industrial chemicals continues to grow, and accessibility of relevant information on associated risks to human health and the environment remains a challenge. Inaccessibility of safe, appropriate, and affordable chemicals and non-chemical alternatives compounds these risks. The projected

exponential chemical production is also increasingly shifting to the global South (UNEP's Global Chemicals Outlook II), which is particularly vulnerable as there is a lack of adequate technology and infrastructure to detect, analyse, and monitor chemicals' import, use, treatment, and disposal.

The various multilateral environmental agreements aimed at protecting the environment and human health are significantly far away from achieving such noble objectives. Sustainable chemicals management prioritises pollution prevention through intentional substitution of toxic input chemicals at the product design stage prior to chemical production and the reduction of toxic chemical releases throughout the life cycle and value chain. Furthermore, coupled with extended producer responsibility and internalising costs of pollution, such would lead to the achievement of the set objectives, including sustainable development goals.

The Global Framework on Chemicals and Waste adopted at the fifth International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5) in September 2023 is also of relevance to achieving sustainable chemicals management, including the framework's targets and timelines, provides a concrete global context to advance the sound management of chemicals and waste. The upcoming Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) in 2025 is pivotal for advancing the implementation of the Global Framework.

Expected Outcomes:

To develop an Action Plan on Sustainable Chemicals Management:

- to end double standards in hazardous chemical production, trade, and use
- to improve access to safer, affordable, and adequate chemicals and non-chemicals alternatives
- to transition the chemicals industry towards sustainable production and operations
- to improve chemicals value chain transparency and accountability
- to share best practices to detoxify and enable safe recycling and circular economy and increased environmental job creation in the chemicals and waste sector
- to share best practices to reduce environmental pollution, land degradation, biodiversity loss, and disease burden.

2.3.2 Sub-Priority: Circular Economy and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Implementation

Context

A circular economy is a regenerative system designed to minimise resource input, waste, emissions, and energy loss by promoting activities such as design for longevity, maintenance, repair, reuse, remanufacturing, refurbishing, and recycling. It aims to reduce the risks of resource depletion by managing the earth's resource stocks and flows sustainably. In this model, products and materials are designed for reuse, remanufacturing, recycling, or recovery (the 4-R framework), minimising waste and greenhouse gas emissions.

Despite its potential, several barriers hinder the transition to a circular economy. These include mispriced environmental costs, subsidies that promote overuse of natural resources (e.g., fossil fuel subsidies), and coordination failures across value chains, which require improved collaboration among the broader range of stakeholders, including industry, governments, and consumers. A key policy challenge is creating regulations that encourage circular economy practices and incentivise business participation.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a policy approach that places the responsibility for managing the environmental impacts of products, and it is a way for implementing a circular economy. In EPR, producers are responsible for their products throughout their entire life cycle including design, production, distribution, use and, most importantly, end-of-life management, including collection and recycling/disposal. The objectives of EPR initiatives include reducing waste generation, increasing recycling rates, conserving resources, and promoting the transition to a circular economy. EPR is about managing post-consumer waste such that it does not end in landfill sites but is instead collected for reuse, refurbishing and recycling into different other products on the same products as before.

Therefore, EPR encourages producers to design products with sustainability in mind, considering factors such as material selection, durability, reparability, and recyclability; however, "academic and policy reviews suggest that the influence of EPR on eco-design has been limited". Ultimately, EPR aims to internalise the costs of environmental externalities within fashion companies, as a means of reflecting the true environmental costs of products in their prices. Producers and fashion brands bear financial and physical responsibility for the environmental impacts of their products through a "polluter pays principle".

Expected Outcomes:

- Enhanced commitment towards the development and implementation of Circular Economy Action Plans, Regional, Sub-regional and National Plans and Roadmaps, including EPR.
- Collaboration on circular economy and EPR policies and legislative instruments development at regional and sub-regional levels.
- Capacity building and awareness raising for circular economy and EPR implementation.
- Investigating funding and other support opportunities for small enterprise support and identification of programmes for circular economy and EPR implementation.
- Enhanced collaboration and sharing of best practices on implementing circular economy and EPR in G20 countries.
- Promotion and implementation of regional and sub-regional initiatives linked to the resource efficiency, the circular economy and EPR.
- Promotion of compliance to policies and legislation and monitoring and evaluating the effects of EPR implementation.

2.3.3 Sub-Priority: Waste Management and Waste-to-Energy (WtE)

Context

Municipal solid waste (MSW) is growing globally, contributing to the climate crisis, pollution, and biodiversity loss. The impact of MSW depends on three factors: product design (which affects material use and recyclability), consumer behaviour (decisions about buying, using, and discarding products), and the effectiveness of local waste management systems. Without urgent action, the negative effects of MSW on climate, biodiversity, and human health will nearly double by 2050. This includes material flows in the product value chain, which also has impacts on waste. The production process also influences waste generation and it is also affected by household behaviour and awareness (segregation, household- level waste management and recycling, such as garden composting).

Governments can legislate for waste reduction, incentivise zero-waste businesses, and apply producer responsibility fees. Support from multinational banks and donors can help scale up successful initiatives. Municipalities should adopt inclusive waste management practices, involving informal workers and focusing on gender equity, while businesses should pursue zero-waste models and avoid greenwashing.

To reduce waste, consumers can engage in practices like reuse, waste segregation, and composting while supporting businesses that reduce waste. Ultimately, systemic changes across government, industry, and society are needed to transition toward a circular economy and safeguard natural resources.

Waste-to-energy (WtE) contributes significantly to reducing waste that goes to landfills by generating energy and promoting sustainable development. WtE offers a holistic approach to resource recovery from non-recyclable and non-hazardous waste. It diverts waste from landfills, recovers metals and minerals, and produces renewable energy (from the biodegradable fraction of waste), thus becoming an indispensable link of the circular economy and creating value for society. However, it is important that the negative environmental impacts of WtE, such as the emissions of greenhouse gasses (GHGs), and the use of remaining ash need to be carefully managed and mitigated.

Improved and increased reusability, sorting, and recycling processes will play an important role in enhancing the circular economy. However, some residual waste streams, requiring safe treatment, will persist and potentially grow globally. Even with the best technologies in place, recycling will not always be possible or economically viable for certain waste. The only viable solution for treating this residual waste includes the state-of-the-art WtE plants, which close the loop of the circular economy while not resulting in harmful substance or pollution to the environment. WtE contributes to the circular economy by, among other, providing secondary raw materials from incineration residues, a process known as material recovery and the opportunities that are there on the energy recovery part of the waste hierarchy.

Expected Outcomes:

- Commitment to the development of sustainable waste management practices.
- Enhanced commitment towards the implementation of National Waste Management Plans, Regional, Sub-regional and National Plans, factoring in WtE.
- Enhanced collaboration on waste management, WtE policies and legislative instruments development.
- Capacity building and awareness raising for waste management, WtE implementation and its benefits.
- Commitment towards the implementation of WtE pilot projects that can be scaled-up.
- Commitment to sharing best practice examples on technology and other means of implementing WtE initiatives.

2.4 PRIORITY 4: CLIMATE CHANGE AND AIR QUALITY

2.4.1 Sub-Priority: Adaptation – Climate Resilient Development and Loss, and Damage

Context

Climate change adaptation involves actions to reduce vulnerability to climate impacts, such as extreme weather, sea-level rise, biodiversity loss, and food and water insecurity. Local-level measures are crucial, including practices like drought-resistant crops, regenerative agriculture, water management, wildfire prevention, and infrastructure to withstand extreme weather. At the national and international levels, adaptation requires policies, large-scale infrastructure improvements (e.g., relocating coastal areas, strengthening infrastructure), early warning systems, insurance for climate risks, and protections for ecosystems.

However, adaptation efforts face significant challenges, such as:

- **Finance**: Developing countries need much more adaptation finance estimated at between US$215 billion to US$387 billion annually until 2030 and that there is a concerning gap between climate finance flows and needs to support both large-scale and locally-led adaptation actions.
- **Information and knowledge gaps**: Many developing countries lack accurate climate data, localised risk assessments, and effective systems for monitoring and evaluating adaptation.
- **Institutional and governance challenges**: Coordination issues, lack of specialised knowledge, and fragmented planning hinder effective adaptation in many regions.

Adaptation and mitigation are means to address climate change impacts; however, impacts can be unavoidable. Loss and damage therefore refer to the unavoidable and irreversible impacts of climate change. While mitigation focuses on reducing GHGs emissions and adaptation involves measures to cope with climate change impacts, loss and damage addresses the residual effects that cannot be avoided. These impacts are often unevenly distributed, disproportionately affecting vulnerable developing countries, and involve complex, compounding risks.

To address loss and damage, initiatives include optimizing funding arrangements, driving action through science and research, providing technical assistance, and integrating adaptation and mitigation strategies.

Expected Outcomes:

- Enhanced resource mobilisation and technical partnerships to support the implementation of strategies to achieve adaptation and resilience, particularly in the global South.
- Enhanced collaboration in addressing loss and damage in developing countries, including technical support, capacity building, and sharing of experiences and best practices.

2.4.2 Sub-Priority: Climate Finance and a Just Transition for All

Context

Global climate investment needs are vast, with estimated annual requirements exceeding US$10 trillion from 2031 to 2050, a significant increase from the current flow of around US$1.3 trillion in 2021/2022[1]. While this is a notable increase from previous years, the funding is still insufficient and uneven across sectors and regions. Most of the growth in climate finance has been driven by clean energy investments in a few countries that received 90% of the increased funds. However, climate finance remains concentrated in developed economies, with the countries most affected by climate change receiving disproportionately low amounts.

Mitigation finance flows primarily to energy and transport sectors, where private finance dominates, while agriculture and industry—also major emitters—receive much less funding. Emerging technologies like battery storage and hydrogen are attracting some private investment, though they remain underfunded. On the other hand, adaptation finance lags far behind, with only US463 billion allocated in 2021/2022, well short of the US4212 billion needed annually by 2030 for developing countries[1]. Adaptation finance is mostly public, with private sector involvement still minimal.

Potential solutions to address these gaps include reforms to international financial institutions, leveraging concessional finance, improving private sector engagement, aligning financial systems with climate goals, mainstreaming adaptation and resilience, phasing out fossil fuel subsidies, and improving data transparency and accessibility for

[1] Global Landscape of Climate Finance, Climate Policy Initiative, 2023

climate finance tracking, and, importantly, the exploration and development of climate finance models.

To effectively mobilise climate finance for a just transition, there is a pressing need for a new financing model that addresses the complexities of current global challenges. This model should be multilayered and consist of three distinct components to ensure equitable access and shared responsibility among nations:

Component A: Enhanced access to the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on Climate Finance

The 29th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 29), which took place in Baku, Azerbaijan, from 11 to 22 November 2024, adopted a decision on the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) for Climate Finance that will see developed countries taking the lead in raising US4300 billion a year for developing countries by 2035. The NCQG decision also calls on all actors to work together to enable the scaling up of financing to developing countries for climate action from all public and private sources to at least US41.3 trillion per year by 2035. The decision also states that the NCQG will support the implementation of developing countries', inter alia, nationally determined contributions, national adaptation plans, and adaptation communications, including those submitted as adaptation components of nationally determined contributions; contribute to increasing and accelerating ambition; and reflect the evolving needs and priorities of developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change and have significant capacity constraints, such as the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

The NCQG therefore represents a critical milestone towards scaling up the mobilisation of grant and concessional financing for developing countries. To meet the scale of climate challenges over the next ten-year period, the amount of money made available through the NCQG must be significantly and progressively increased towards the USD300 billion-a-year goal by 2035. Developing economies, including South Africa, require a fair share of these funds to implement effective mitigation and adaptation strategies, as well as their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Ensuring equitable access will enable these countries to contribute meaningfully to global climate goals while addressing their unique socio-economic circumstances.

Component B: Reducing the cost of capital

High costs of capital impede the ability of developing countries to invest in sustainable infrastructure and technologies. By advancing the implementation of the Common Framework for Debt into the financing model, the cost of capital can be lowered and

financial burdens alleviated, particularly for developing countries. Such an approach fosters greater participation from countries with significant debt obligations and encourages investment in green initiatives. Engaging major economies, within the G20, in this aspect of the development of the model could amplify its impact and promote broader international cooperation.

Component C: Valuing each country's contributions and assets

Recognising and quantifying the unique contributions and assets of each country is essential for a fair and effective financing model. By assigning value to these contributions, countries can negotiate financing terms that reflect their roles in supporting global trade and the green economy. This variable component ensures that the financing model accounts for both tangible and intangible assets, promoting a more balanced distribution of resources and responsibilities.

Expected Outcomes:

- Enhanced climate finance mobilised for and by G20 countries, particularly for adaptation and building climate resilience for developing countries.
- Enhanced collaboration and sharing of experiences and best practices, as well as resource mobilisation opportunities to support the Just Transition within G20 countries.
- Advancing proposals for a new financial model to mobilise climate finance for a Just Transition for all.

2.4.3 Sub-Priority: Air Quality

Context

Most people across the globe are exposed to unhealthy levels of air pollution. According to the 2024 State of Global Air, ambient and indoor air pollution is the second leading risk for deaths in 2021, accounting for more than eight million deaths globally. The impacts of air pollution extend beyond health, affecting climate, biodiversity, ecosystems and economic development. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has identified addressing ambient and indoor air pollution as one of the priorities under its environment and health workstream. There is an opportunity to drive climate resilience and economic growth through measures aimed at reducing air pollution.

Noting the domestic and international aspects of the G20 agenda, countries must take action to reduce air pollution at home and support low- and middle-Income countries with air quality reduction efforts. This international agenda must include policy and regulatory reforms, coordinated action on key sectors (industries, transport, waste management, household cooking/heating, etc.), financial investments via national domestic finance institutions and Multilateral Development Banks and other international development finance. In this regard, G20 countries must shape the international agenda to address air pollution by removing harmful substances from and/or mitigating their impact on the living and working environment of people and safeguarding human health.

Expected outcomes:

- Best practices on the development of integrated air quality information systems for decision-making.
- Identifying capacity gaps or needs and interventions to improve implementation of legislation.
- Harnessing synergies to climate action programs with air quality co-benefits.
- Developing programmes and sharing best practices that address air pollution from all sources (ambient as well as indoor settings in rural and urban areas). Policy and regulatory reforms that can drive air pollution reduction in the highest-emitting sectors (industries, transport, waste burning and household cooking and heating).
- Recommendations to support the development of air quality monitoring data sets and tools.
- Understand the equity dimensions of air pollution and how to support the most affected communities.
- Emerging technologies and technical solutions for air pollution reduction.
- Mobilising financing to deal with air pollution.

2.5 PRIORITY 4: OCEANS AND COASTS

2.5.1 Sub-Priority: Marine Spatial Planning – Ocean Governance

Context

Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) offers an integrated approach to improving the rational planning, management and governance of the ocean space and marine resources. MSP improves decision-making and enables the co-existence of different human activities

while protecting the environment. The outcomes on MSP from the Brazilian G20 Presidency include the development of a toolkit to support countries in the development of MSP as a tool to best manage marine areas. It may be imperative to build on what is achieved to share global experiences that would improve the developed toolkit to adapt to various unique socio-economic circumstances, including from, for, and in developing countries. Therefore, the G20 may be a platform to exchange best practise in establishing marine area plans and marine protected areas. In addition, the '*G20 High-Level Principles for Sustainable and Resilient Blue/Ocean-based Economies'* adopted under the Indian G20 Presidency in 2023 may be of relevance for the MSP processes.

Expected Outcomes:

- Best practices on the development of comprehensive MSP processes.
- Identify capacity gaps or needs and interventions to improve implementation of MSP
- Development of a guidance tool for the approach to spatial management system for marine areas planning.

2.5.2 Sub-Priority: Addressing Marine Plastic Pollution

Context

Plastic pollution poses a significant threat to coastal and marine environments, affecting marine life, human health, and economies. It leads to the entanglement of animals, the ingestion of microplastics, and disruptions to industries like tourism, shipping, and fishing. Without intervention, plastic pollution will continue to increase.

International efforts are underway to adopt a legally binding global agreement to tackle plastic pollution, including its impact on marine environments. The goal is to address the entire lifecycle of plastics, with completion expected by the end of 2024.

A specific focus is on Abandoned, Discarded, and Lost Fishing Gear (ADLFG), which is primarily plastic and causes environmental harm through entanglement, "ghost fishing," and damage to the seafloor. ADLFG also contributes to the spread of invasive species and adds to the microplastic problem. Additionally, plastic waste from ships remains a key source of marine pollution despite international regulations, such as the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), which require governments to ensure proper disposal facilities at ports. Effective

implementation of these rules is essential to reduce plastic pollution from maritime sources.

Expected outcomes:

- Sharing best practices, scientific research, and technologies on management of marine plastic pollution.
- Improved understanding of plastic losses and leakage from Abandoned, Discarded & Lost Fishing Gear (ADLFG) and measures (practical and policy-based) to address ADLFG.
- Improved management of plastic waste from ships, especially in commercial harbours
- Strengthened implementation of the International Maritime Organisation Strategy to Address Marine Litter from Ships.