



General Assembly

Distr.: General
15 March 2018

English only

Human Rights Council

Thirty-seventh session

26 February-23 March 2018

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by the Next Century Foundation, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement, which is hereby circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[8 March 2018]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.18-04034(E)



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Please recycle A recycling symbol consisting of three chasing arrows forming a triangle.



Plastic Planet: A Sustainable Future?

Mr President. The destruction of the environment is no longer a distant possibility; its degradation has harmed vital ecosystems and impacted the livelihoods of the people that depend on them and has also had negative effects on human health and well-being. It is no exaggeration to say that the environment is now very much a human security concern.

The Next Century Foundation commends the profound commitment of the UN to combat the threat of environmental degradation through the sustainable development goals and through the remarkable work carried out by the Environment Programme.

However while good ecological practices are becoming more mainstream and humanity is becoming more aware of the extent to which human action is harming the planet, the NCF wishes to particularly emphasize the dangers posed by the increasing scale of global plastic pollution.

According to the UN's own figures, there will be more plastic than fish in the world's oceans by 2050 unless people stop using single-use plastic items. The danger posed by plastic waste entering the world's seas and oceans is not only harmful to wildlife; it is also moving up the food chain and threatening human sustenance. Oceans and seas are crucial resources for human existence and their maintenance makes the Earth habitable.

The NCF believes that improper care of these resources could make humankind's future unsustainable. Despite the vast number of pledges and promises made by nations to reduce the amount of plastic waste entering the oceans, the distinct lack of timetables and lack of legally binding agreements has hampered any resolute and meaningful action.

While we are encouraged by the reuse of resources through recycling, this solution alone is not enough. We instead urge nations to consider more front-line solutions; to adopt a legal commitment to the environment; to move towards a plastic-free world and perhaps most crucially to establish a realistic time frame for when this will be achieved.

We echo the opening statements of the Stockholm Declaration, that man is both creature and moulder of his environment. We have all played a part in creating this problem, we must therefore work together to find the solutions.
