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Concurrent Session 8 – New Energies, Off Shore, Environmental

MARINE DEBRIS/LITTER, CONFLICTS CHALLENGES AND MARITIME LAWS

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Understanding Marine Debris/ Marine Litter

- **Debris** is a persistent solid material; abandoned in the environment.
- **Eco-litter** – comprises of debris, litter and garbage.
- Improperly disposed debris, litter & garbage in marine environment – **Marine debris**.

Marine Debris

- Macro
- Micro

Macro Debris

- Derelict fishing gear
- Abandoned & derelict vessels

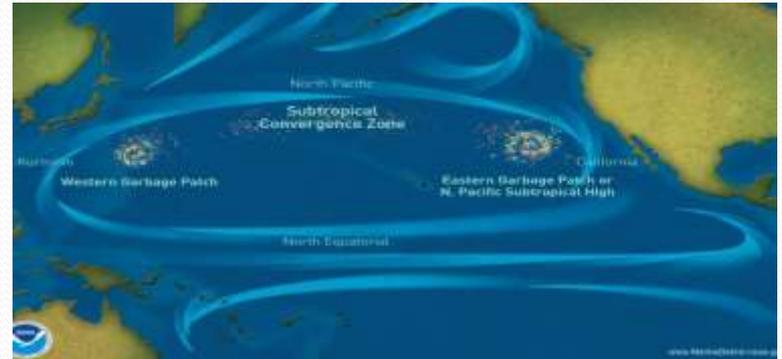
Micro Debris

- Micro plastics from plastic pellets, micro beads.
- Plastic micro fibers.



Plastic – Impact and Evolution

- ‘The Guardian’ articles by Damian Carrington, one titled ‘**Microplastics found deep in lungs of living people for first time**’ & other ‘**Microplastics found in human breast milk for the first time**’ are eye-openers of severity.
- J. W. Hyatt invented first synthetic plastic in 1869 & Leo Bacland invented Bakelite.
- Use of plastics in WWII; use of nylon, plexiglass.
- Plastic debris first found in oceans- 1960s
- **Great Pacific Garbage Patch.**
- Plastic, a serious threat to humans.
- Impact on Marine life.



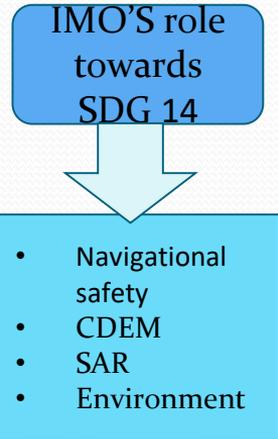
Challenges to Overcome

- Interests considered under **Marine Spatial Planning**.
- Ocean contains 1.5 million tons of plastic- **US National Academy of Sciences**. Marine Debris excluding fishing gear & vessels estimated at 23 to 25 MMT.
- As per UNEP, 1.5 billion plastic bottles & 5 trillion plastic bags are purchased – adding onto plastisphere due to single use.
- **MARPOL Annex V** deals with garbage from ships.
- UNEP's SDG 14 (Life Below Water) & Marine Protected Areas.
- **MEPC- 2021**, strategy to address marine plastic litter from ships.
- The 2021 IMO & FAOs **Glo Litter Project** with initial funding from Govt. of Norway.



Maritime Laws- Resolving Conflicts

- **Hong Kong Convention** facilitates environmentally safe ship recycling. (SDG 12)
- **IMO** contributes to reduction in waste generation - **MARPOL, LC/LP**
- **UNCLOS** obligation on member states for marine environment protection; gaps in the provision.
- The Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act.
- NOAA Marine Debris Programme emphasizes to prevent marine debris through outreach and education.
- Nairobi Wreck Removal Convention; Contractual salvage standard contract.



BBNJ – Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction

- The Agreement under UNCLOS on the **conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity** of areas beyond NJ - on 19 June 2023 (5th session of Intergovt conference)
- The agreement has provisions on marine genetic resources, cross cutting issues & institutional arrangements.
- **Art 68(1)** – 120 days after date of deposit of the 60th instrument of ratification, approval, acceptance and accession.
- Open for signature- **20 September 2023**; 82 signatories.



Key Points

- Marine genetic resources -Fair and equitable sharing of benefits
- Area based management tools
- Marine Protected areas
- Environmental impact assessments
- Capacity building
- Transfer of marine technology

Way Ahead and Case Studies

- General awareness about impact of marine debris- educational institutions, media and society.
- Airports, rail and road terminals to implement plastic free zones.
- The 'Ocean Clean up' project initiated by Boyan Slat needs to be perused.

Case Studies

Under the Nairobi International Wreck Removal Convention on the removal of wrecks.

1. **CRANE BARGE IBIS - Coastal Erosion- Artificial Reef Project- Old Mangalore Port, India.**
2. **M.V WAKASHIO Wreck Removal**



References

- Gard Hand book on Protection of the Marine Environment 3rd Edition by Edgar Gold.
- www.imo.org on Marine Litter/SDG/London convention and Protocol/Hong Kong Recycling Convention/Nairobi Wreck Removal Convention and BBNJ.
- www.marinedebris.noaa.gov on Marine Debris.
- www.bimco.org for Wreck Fixed (2010).
- www.theguardian.com articles by Damian Carrington, Environment Editor.
- www.gard.no April Newsletter.
- www.britannica.com on Plastic Pollution
- www.sciencehistory.org on History and Future of Plastics.
- maritime-executive.com - The Maritime Executive
- safety4sea.com/wakashio-wreck-removal-completed
- Panama Maritime Authority – Report M.V. ‘Wakashio’ R-029-2021 – DIAM.
- Menezes and Associates on Crane Barge Ibis.

IMAGES:

- Marine Debris in Hawaii [Marine Debris in Hawaii | OR&R's Marine Debris Program \(noaa.gov\)](#)
- Garbage Patch illustration [Garbage Patches | OR&R's Marine Debris Program \(noaa.gov\)](#)
- BBNJ <https://www.globaltunaalliance.com/>
- M. V Wakashio Wreck Removal <https://www.bbc.com/>