

Cerritos Fall Conference 2019

IMO



Topic: Marine Pollution

Director: Oshini Keerthisinghe

October 12, 2019

To Delegates of Cerritos Novice 2019 Conference

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to Cerritos Novice 2019!

It is our highest honor and pleasure to welcome you all to our annual novice conference here at Cerritos High School. On behalf of the Cerritos High School Model United Nations program, we are proud to host another year of this long-standing conference, where you will become more knowledgeable on international issues, participate in intellectually stimulating discussions, and create new and everlasting friendships.

The CHSMUN program continues to compete around the world as a nationally ranked MUN program. Our delegates utilize diplomacy in order to create complex solutions towards multilateral issues in the global community. Our head chairs are selected from only the best seniors of our program, undergoing a rigorous training process to ensure the highest quality of moderating and grading of debate. Furthermore, all the topic synopses have been reviewed and edited numerous times. We strongly believe that by providing each and every delegate with the necessary tools and understanding, he or she will have everything they need to thrive in all aspects of committee. We thoroughly encourage each delegate to engage in all of the facets of their topic, in order to grow in their skills as a delegate and develop a greater knowledge of the world around them.

Our advisors and staff have put in countless hours to ensure delegates have an amazing experience at the conference. Our greatest hope is that from attending CHSMUN 2019, students are encouraged to continue on in Model United Nations and nevertheless, inspired to spark change in their surrounding communities. With 31 high school committees and 2 middle school committees, CHSMUN 2019 will provide a quality experience for beginners to learn, develop, and grow as delegates.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact us! We look forward to seeing you at CHSMUN Novice 2019!

Sincerely,

Brianna Roldan and Tess U-Vongcharoen

Secretary-Generals

IMO

Marine Pollution

A Note from the Director

Delegates,

Hello everyone! My name is Oshini Keerthisinghe and I will be your director for the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Committee. As a senior, this will be my fourth year in the Model United Nations program. Participating in the Model UN program in Cerritos allowed me to understand and discover the current events and issues around the world and shed light upon issues that never even crossed my mind. Debating in committees ranging from Ad Hoc on Terror to UNICEF, I have always been interested in environmental or humanitarian-based committees. At school, I am an officer in the club, American Cancer Society, an active member of the National Speech and Debate Association and Link Crew. Additionally, I have been a junior varsity member of the Cross Country team for 3 years. Since my sophomore year, I have aided patients at PrimeCare Senior Health Care Facility and started an internship as a student teacher in Moreno Valley's Buddhist Reservation. Apart from MUN, I enjoy listening to Khalid, watching new Netflix shows and trying new boba places around Los Angeles with my friends. With that being said, I know you guys might feel nervous, but take this conference as a learning experience by improving your speaking abilities and staying confident. Please email me if you have any questions, I am so excited to see you guys soon!

Sincerely,

Oshini Keerthisinghe

Director, IMO

Committee Introduction:

In 1948, the United Nations established the International Maritime Organization to address the on-going issues with marine and atmospheric pollution by ship or other nautical vessels and is responsible for regulating shipping globally. As a specialized agency in the United Nations, the IMO has created a framework and guidelines for the shipping industry that is universally implemented and adopted in the 195 countries that pertain to the United Nations, including the non-member observer states: the Holy See and the State of Palestine. More than 80% of the global trade to people around the world depend on international shipping transport and the IMO evaluates all aspects of international shipping to ensure that this vital sector remains safe, environmentally sound, energy efficient and secure. In any case, despite the fact that wellbeing was and remains IMO's most significant duty, another issue started to develop contamination in marine waters. The development in the amount of oil being transported via ocean and in the extent of oil tankers was of specific concern and the Torrey Canyon disaster of

1967, in which 120,000 tons of oil was spilled, showed the size of the issue. IMO presented a series of measures intended to prevent further oil tank mishaps and to limit their outcomes towards the ecosystem, including the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as changed by the Protocol of 1978 (MARPOL 73/78). It covers incidental and operational oil contamination as well as contamination by chemicals, products in plastic packages, sewage, trash, and air pollution.

Background:

Marine contamination can be defined as “the direct or indirect instigation by humans of substances into the marine environment which evidently result in harming marine life, degradation of the seawater quality and the reduction of amenities,” by the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development. Marine debris appears to be present in all marine habitats. It is estimated that the average density of marine debris varies between 13,000 and 18,000 pieces per square kilometre. There are types of marine pollution, including ocean acidification, eutrophication, and plastic waste accumulation. Ocean acidification is a term used to describe when carbon dioxide gases are absorbed by the ocean and chemically react with the seawater to generate acid which is known to cause shell growth in marine animals and is suspected as a cause of reproductive disorders in some fish. Eutrophication can be defined as a natural process that occurs when discharge of nitrates surface towards water bodies, increasing the speed of aquatic plant life, evidently depleting dissolved oxygen. Fishing nets have been a detrimental concern because plastic fishing nets are releasing toxins into the ocean; thus, many fish are more open to deadly toxins and are negatively affected by genetic mutations. Considering plastic is a viable resource even in developing countries, they are widely overused and disposed improperly. Plastic-production chemicals, including sulfur and nitrous oxide, are pollutants and poisonous. In many Asian-developing countries, more than 20% of the population inhale these hazardous gases without acknowledgement, which causes long-term health problems, such as lung cancer and other respiratory problems.

On May 2019, underwater scientists made an unsettling discovery as they descended nearly 6.8 miles (35,853 feet/10,928 meters) to a point in the Pacific Ocean Mariana Trench, the deepest place on Earth, and found man-made material, plastic. The issue of marine pollution has become an evermore deleterious problem, where sea turtles are mistakenly ingesting plastic debris as viable food sources which cause blockage in their digestive system. Separate studies from 2013 United Nations Environment Programme suggest as many as 50% of sea turtles are ingesting plastic at an unprecedented rate, and dying because of it. Another study of the Loggerhead species found that 15 % of young turtles examined had ingested such enormous quantities of plastic that their digestive system was obstructed. In spite of these disturbing realities, the subject of how to appropriately discard these plastics still remains. One of the primary causes of this is that plastics takes a long time to break down. The normal plastic water bottle "decays" after 450 years, yet just into tiny lethal particles of bisphenol A (BPA) and PS oligomer, which marine life and people inevitably end up ingesting. However, turtles are not the only species that are declining due to plastic debris; seals, sea lions, fish and much more marine life are gradually ceasing at an alarming rate. Plastic-packing bands and rubber bands continue to deeply impact the Steller Sea Lion population. An eight-year study in Southeast Alaska and British Columbia documented 388 sea lions entangled in plastic debris, causing infections in

their digestive and respiratory system. As humans continue to consume fish, studies from the University of California, Los Angeles show that humans have ingested at one time or another ingested plastic microfibers, including brown trout, cisco, and perch.

Roughly 320 million tons of plastics were produced in 2016 alone, representing an incredible increase from 1.5 million in 1950. It is estimated that by the year 2050, there will be more plastic by weight than fish in the oceans, according to the non-governmental organization Surfers Against Sewage. Aside from industrial plastics, microplastics which are types of plastic fragments (less than five millimeters) that pollute the environment and the ocean as well. Microplastic can be found in personal hygiene products such as "scrub-off" or "exfoliating" facial cleansers and soaps. Microplastics can be seen in internal water systems around the world, considering microplastics have appeared in 83% of the world's water system and slowly flow into the oceans. Phthalates, substances added to plastics to increase their flexibility, transparency, durability, and longevity, can be found inside the bloodstream of about every adult and can be harmful to the liver, kidney, and lungs. Much more disturbing, 8 of each 10 infants are brought into the world with phthalates as of now in their bodies, despite the fact that they've never been presented to the plastic.

United Nations Involvement:

The United Nations has taken tremendous efforts to alleviate the issue with marine pollution. First, the United Nations Environment Programme roughly calculated about 51 million microplastic debris in the Pacific Ocean due to sewage systems leaking into the oceans; therefore the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, by UN Environment, unites governments, society, communities and the private area to discover practical answers for decreasing and overseeing marine litter. The association improves universal participation to decrease the effect marine litter has on economies, environments, animal welfare and human wellbeing around the world. The Clean Seas campaign, implemented by UN Environment in 2017, intends to dispose of major marine litter by 2022. The campaign, which specifically focuses on single-use plastics and microplastics in beauty care products, urges governments to pass plastic reduction arrangements and pushes the industry to limit plastic packaging. Additionally, the UNIFIL Environmental Management Unit stated more than 23% of lesser developed countries are not well educated on the causes and effects of plastic pollution; therefore they've introduced recycling and reusable bags to rural areas. UNIFIL has more than 10,500 peacekeepers coming from 42 countries and more than 2,800 residents in Nepal have been under the UNIFIL plastic sewage treatment plant.

In 1977, the IMO launched its first marine pollution convention in London, hoping to prevent marine pollution in the future by restricting the dumping of certain hazardous materials. Likewise, a special permitted license is required preceding dumping of various recognized materials and a general grant for different wastes. In 1996, parties received a Protocol to the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter, 1972 (known as the London Protocol) which went into effect in 2006. The London Protocol focuses on the "preparatory methodology", which requires that "proper protection measures are taken when there is motivation to trust that squanders or other issues brought into the marine condition are probably going to cause damage notwithstanding when there is no decisive proof to demonstrate a causal connection among sources of info and their belongings".(London Protocol Commissions) It additionally expresses that "the polluter should, on a basic level, bear the

expense of contamination" and underlines that Contracting Parties ought to guarantee that the Protocol must not just outcome in contamination being exchanged starting with one piece of the earth then onto the next. (London Protocol Commissions)

In order to promote low carbon economies, the United Nations established their Sustainable Development Goal 13. Goal 13 reinforces resilience to climate change and facilitates the commitment made by developed countries to achieve collectively \$100 billion annually by 2020 in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In 2018, the first global multi-agency operation was open to combat marine pollution called "30 Days at Sea", an awareness campaign strictly under UN Environment to delineate the effect marine contamination has on monetary improvements and human and environmental security. It was a month-long trial of about 276 laws to collectively mobilize and detect environmental agencies in more than 500 violations across 58 nations, including illegal oil and debris spills from vessels, shipbreaking, infringements of ship emission regulations, and pollution on waterways and land-based runoff to the ocean. More than 5,200 inspection led to serious investigations of 185 cases, including arrests and prosecutions.

Bloc Positions:

Western Bloc: Containing the United States, the Western bloc has enforced and firmly advocated for governmental reforms and initiatives by establishing UN related agencies and providing monetary fund to decrease pollutants. Considering the United States and other countries in this block has had an alarming increase of debris polluting the oceans, they have been fully involved in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Marine Trash and Debris Program. The program hopes to decrease pollutants contaminating the ocean by increasing major projects and creating groundbreaking technological solutions.

Eastern Bloc: Being in the European Union, this bloc advocates strongly to eliminate marine pollution. EU also announced plans to devote more than \$550m to protecting the health of oceans, with more than 30 initiatives including efforts to combat piracy and illegal fishing, a satellite monitoring system, and a new plastics strategy for the bloc. Another EU initiative is to establish the first marine-protected area in the Adriatic considering about 90% of fish stocks in the Mediterranean are currently over-exploited.

Latin America and Caribbean Bloc: While this block is involved in the exploitation of the oceans, marine pollution is not an extreme or dire issue for them compared to the Asian or Western bloc. Due to lack of governmental enforcement and inefficient campaigns, marine pollution is not addressed properly and the need for education and vital solution is important, considering Latin America's ocean has increased in acidification by 30% since 1998.

African Bloc: Similar to the Latin America and Caribbean bloc, marine pollution is not considered a major threat to them although they do encourage the reduction of marine pollution. South Africa is ranked 11th on the list of the world's contributors to marine debris and is involved in many illegal fisheries. However, Africa has taken initiative by the Orange River

Project in South Africa which hopes to raise awareness of South Africa's water quality and the threat of water and air pollution.

Asian-Pacific: Containing the largest amount of contributors to plastic pollution, including countries like China and Indonesia, this bloc strongly condemns marine pollution. China, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam are dumping more plastic into oceans than the rest of the world combined , according to a 2017 report by the Ocean Conservancy. As of March 2019, the new initiative, Promotion of Countermeasures Against Marine Plastic Litter in Southeast Asia and India, will build up a reenactment model for plastic spillage and screen to decide leakage hotspots along the Ganges and Mekong streams. Furthermore in India, state governments in Mumbai, Agra, and urban areas along the Ganges will receive backing to stop plastic contamination by the Japanese government aiding over USD\$1,100,000.

Basic Solutions:

The role of the ocean and its ability to affect the standard of living of people around the world cannot be overlooked. The usage of well-developed campaigns is extremely viable and the need for effective governmental reform in third world countries is important as well. Countries can promote the usage of alternatives to plastics and encourage citizens to reuse, reduce and recycle what they normally use. Consumers are unknowingly buying items that contain plastics, debris or microplastics that harm the environment. Due to the Great Pacific Garbage Patch increasing in size, the Ocean Cleanup Organization has implemented a system that consists of a 600-meter-long floater that sits at the surface of the water and a tapered 3-meter-deep skirt attached below. The floater provides buoyancy to the system and prevents plastic from flowing over it and by 2020, it hopes to reduce marine debris by 40%. In addressing marine pollution, it is important to endorse further developments of technological and scientific methods and propose incentivization in developing nations to recycle and clean up plastics. Delegates should additionally consider researching about how to restrict plastic usage through legislative framework and international advocacy programs that are hoping to reducing plastic waste.

Questions to Consider:

- 1) How is marine pollution affecting your country? What is your country doing in order to combat debris running into the ocean?
- 2) How can developing countries reduce their dependence on plastic products and encourage the reusable products? What alternatives to plastic is your nation using and how effective is it?
- 3) What types of debris is the most potent and dangerous toward marine life? What is the most affordable option for developing nations to mitigate pollution?
- 4) By what methods can we firmly advocate legal and governmental reform towards reducing the usage of plastic?
- 5) What is your country doing in order to decrease greenhouse gas emissions?

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