

What Is a Working Paper?

A working paper is an **informal document** written and submitted by delegates (called sponsors) during committee sessions.

Its main purpose is to organize and present ideas, proposals, or possible solutions related to the topic being debated. It helps the committee move toward drafting a formal resolution later on.

A **working paper does not require the official UN format** (no preambulatory or operative clauses yet).

PURPOSE OF A WORKING PAPER

- To share initial ideas and build alliances.
- To combine similar proposals from different delegations.
- To prepare for the creation of a draft resolution.
- To guide moderated and unmoderated caucuses toward concrete solutions.

WHO CAN SUBMIT A WORKING PAPER?

A working paper must have:

→ Sponsors:

The **authors of the paper**. They write it, agree with its content, and will defend and present it to the committee.

→ Signatories:

Delegates who support discussing the paper but may not fully agree with all its ideas. Their signatures mean, *"I think this should be debated."*

STRUCTURE OF A WORKING PAPER

While the format is flexible, a good working paper should include the following sections:

Section	Content	Example
Header	Committee name, topic, sponsors, and signatories.	Committee: UNEP Topic: Combating Plastic Pollution in Oceans Sponsors: France, Mexico, Japan Signatories: Brazil, Kenya, Canada,
Introduction or Rationale	A brief paragraph stating the issue and the general goal of the paper.	This working paper aims to address marine plastic pollution by promoting international cooperation, sustainable alternatives, and public awareness.
Proposals / Recommended Actions	Bullet points or numbered ideas divided by themes or time frames (short-, mid-, long-term).	Short-term actions: - Establish a Global Ocean Cleanup Fund under UNEP supervision. - Launch a public awareness campaign in coastal areas. Mid-term actions: - Encourage Member States to ban single-use plastics by 2030. - Support research on biodegradable materials. Long-term actions: - Develop regional recycling hubs in developing countries. - Create educational programs on sustainable consumption.
Conclusion	A closing statement reaffirming the goal of cooperation.	Delegates believe that these measures will strengthen global collaboration and protect marine ecosystems for future generations.

WRITING TIPS

- Use **clear and diplomatic language**.
- Focus on **solutions**, not restating the problem.
- Avoid overly long paragraphs—use **bullet points** for clarity.
- Make sure proposals are **realistic and align with your country's policy**.
- Coordinate with other delegates before submission to **gain more signatories**.
- Remember: this is **a collaborative, evolving document**—it can be merged or revised later.

SAMPLE WORKING PAPER

Committee: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Topic: Combating Plastic Pollution in Oceans

Sponsors: France, Mexico, Japan

Signatories: Brazil, Kenya, Canada, Indonesia

Introduction:

Recognizing the urgent need to address marine pollution caused by single-use plastics and microplastics, this working paper proposes coordinated international measures to reduce, manage, and prevent further plastic waste in oceans.

Proposed Actions:

Short-term

- Establish a Global Ocean Cleanup Fund under UNEP supervision, financed through voluntary contributions from developed nations.
- Launch a public awareness campaign targeting coastal populations and industries to reduce single-use plastics.
- Encourage corporate responsibility agreements with major plastic producers to limit plastic packaging.

Mid-term

- Support research on biodegradable materials and provide incentives for companies adopting sustainable alternatives.
- Promote regional cooperation to develop recycling infrastructure in developing countries.
- Encourage Member States to ban or restrict single-use plastics by 2030.

Long-term

- Integrate plastic waste management into national development plans and educational curricula.
- Create a UNEP-led database for monitoring plastic waste and sharing best practices.
- Develop international partnerships for technology transfer in sustainable waste management.

Conclusion:

This working paper emphasizes collaboration, innovation, and responsibility as the foundation for protecting global oceans and achieving Sustainable Development Goal 14: *Life Below Water*.