



**Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention
on the Control of Transboundary Movements of
Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal
Twelfth meeting**

Geneva (online), 22–25 June 2020*

Item 3 (b) (iv) of the provisional agenda**

**Matters related to the work programme of the
Open-ended Working Group for the biennium 2020–2021:
scientific and technical matters: plastic waste**

Further actions to address plastic waste under the Basel Convention

Note by the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. By its decision BC-14/12, the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal amended Annexes II, VIII and IX to the Convention. Except for those Parties that have, before 24 March 2020, notified the depositary that they are unable to accept the amendments, the new entries Y48 in Annex II, A3210 in Annex VIII and B3011 in Annex IX become effective as of 1 January 2021, while entry B3010 is effective until 31 December 2020.

2. In addition, the Conference of the Parties adopted decision BC-14/13, on further actions to address plastic waste under the Basel Convention, in paragraph 34 of which it included, in the work programme of the Open-ended Working Group for 2020–2021, consideration of the following:

(a) Whether, how and when the Conference of the Parties should assess the effectiveness of the measures taken under the Convention to address the plastic waste contributing to marine plastic litter and microplastics;

(b) Which further activities could possibly be conducted under the Convention in response to developments in scientific knowledge and environmental information related to plastic waste as a source of land pollution, marine plastic litter and microplastics.

3. In paragraph 35 of the same decision, the Conference of the Parties invited Parties and others to submit to the Secretariat, by 1 June 2020, information on certain plastic wastes referred to in entry Y48 in Annex II and entry B3011 in Annex IX to the Convention. The Secretariat will compile the information received from Parties and others for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting and make it available on the website of the Convention¹ by 1 September 2020.

* Owing to the electronic correspondence procedure to be applied during the twelfth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group, the meeting may run beyond 25 June (but no later than 5 July 2020).

** UNEP/CHW/OEWG.12/1.

¹ <http://www.basel.int/tabid/8350/Default.aspx>.

4. The Conference of the Parties at its fourteenth meeting adopted a number of other decisions referring to plastic waste.²

5. In related developments, at its fourth session, the United Nations Environment Assembly, in paragraph 7 of its resolution 4/6, on marine plastic litter and microplastics, decided to extend until its fifth session, to be held from 22 to 26 February 2021, the mandate of the ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastics established by its resolution 3/7, and requested the expert group, building on its previous work, to undertake the activities specified in that paragraph. The third meeting of the group was held in Bangkok from 18 to 22 November 2019, and the fourth and fifth meetings are scheduled to take place from 4 to 8 May 2020 in Lima and from 9 to 13 November 2020 in Kigali.

II. Implementation

6. To assist the further consideration of plastic waste by the Open-ended Working Group pursuant to paragraph 34 (a) and (b) of decision BC-14/13, the Secretariat has prepared a document setting out background information related to a possible future assessment of the effectiveness of the measures taken under the Basel Convention to address plastic waste and to possible further activities that could be conducted under the Convention in response to developments in scientific knowledge and environmental information related to plastic waste as a source of land pollution, marine plastic litter and microplastics (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.12/INF/20).

7. In addition, the Secretariat has been conducting technical assistance activities to support further actions by Parties on plastic waste – for example, in Bangladesh and Ghana³ – thanks to the generous financial support provided by the Government of Norway. Generous financial contributions have also been provided by the European Union and the Governments of France, Japan, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland in support of the activities related to plastic waste. Information on the implementation of the technical assistance activities is available on the website of the Convention⁴ and will be presented at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention.

8. Information on other activities related to plastic waste for consideration by the Open-ended Working Group is included in the notes by the secretariat on technical guidelines (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.12/4), on draft practical guidance for the development of inventories of priority waste streams (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.12/5), on providing further legal clarity (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.12/10), on the Basel Convention Partnership Programme (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.12/12) and on cooperation with the World Customs Organization on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.12/13).

9. Furthermore, the Secretariat communicated the decisions of the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties related to plastic waste to the ad hoc open-ended expert group on marine litter and microplastics at its third meeting and, as requested by the Conference of the Parties in paragraph 37 of decision BC-14/13, will also communicate those decisions to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its fifth session, to be held in Nairobi from 22 to 26 February 2021. Information on those meetings can be found in document UNEP/CHW/OEWG.12/INF/21.

III. Proposed action

10. The Open-ended Working Group may wish to consider the draft decision related to agenda item 3 (b) (iv) set out in the compilation prepared by the Secretariat of proposed actions to be considered by the Open-ended Working Group at its twelfth meeting (UNEP/CHW/OEWG.12/15).

² Decisions BC-14/3, BC-14/9, BC-14/10, BC-14/18, BC-14/19, BC-14/21 and BC-14/23.

³ <http://www.basel.int/tabid/8343/Default.aspx>.

⁴ <http://www.basel.int/tabid/8340/Default.aspx>.