



BASEL CONVENTION

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**Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention
on the Control of Transboundary Movements
of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal
Sixteenth meeting**

Geneva, 1–12 May 2023

Item 4 (b) (v) of the provisional agenda*

**Matters related to the implementation of
the Convention: scientific and technical
matters: further consideration of
plastic waste**

**Revised draft of possible further activities that could be conducted
under the Basel Convention in response to developments in
scientific knowledge and environmental information and health
impacts related to plastic waste as a source of land pollution,
marine plastic litter and microplastics**

Note by the Secretariat

1. As is mentioned in the note by the Secretariat on further consideration of plastic waste (UNEP/CHW.16/10), the annex to the present note sets out a revised version of the draft document on possible further activities that could be conducted under the Convention in response to developments in scientific knowledge and environmental information and health impacts related to plastic waste as a source of land pollution, marine plastic litter and microplastics.
2. As is mentioned in the note by the Secretariat on the outcomes of and follow up to the thirteenth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group (UNEP/CHW.16/20/Add.1), Parties and others were invited to submit, by 31 March 2023, comments on the version of the draft contained in document UNEP/CHW/OEWG.13/INF/11.
3. The revised version set out in the annex to the present note was prepared by the Secretariat, taking into account the comments received from Parties and others referred to in paragraph 2 above,¹ the work undertaken in follow-up to United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 5/14, as appropriate, and the discussions at the thirteenth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group.
4. The present note, including its annex, has not been formally edited.

* UNEP/CHW.16/1.

¹ <http://www.basel.int/tabid/9505>.

Annex

Revised draft of possible further activities that could be conducted under the Basel Convention in response to developments in scientific knowledge and environmental information and health impacts related to plastic waste as a source of land pollution, marine plastic litter and microplastics

I. Consideration of possible further activities that could be conducted under the Basel Convention

1. Recent scientific knowledge and environmental information highlight the severity of plastic pollution as a global environmental problem. The Basel Convention has a unique role in addressing this issue due to its legally binding status in controlling the transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and other wastes, including its environmentally sound management.
2. The fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) decided that an intergovernmental negotiating committee is to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including provisions to promote cooperation and coordination with relevant regional and international conventions, instruments and organizations, while recognizing their respective mandates, avoiding duplication, and promoting complementarity of action. UNEA also reaffirmed the importance of cooperation, coordination and complementarity among relevant regional and international conventions and instruments, with due respect for their respective mandates, including the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm conventions.
3. A study funded by the Government of Norway is being conducted to identify gaps and complementarities in global governance of plastics and associated chemicals.¹
4. Technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of plastic waste² are being updated and are opportunely placed to provide guidance based on new developments in scientific knowledge and environmental information related to plastic waste to minimize leakages into the environment in the waste phase.
5. The Plastic Waste Partnership,³ established by the Basel Convention, has four project groups⁴ working on prevention and minimization, plastic waste collection, recycling, financing and related markets, transboundary movements and outreach and awareness raising.⁵ The Partnership provides a multistakeholder platform for knowledge sharing, capacity building, and technology transfer related to plastic waste management. The Partnership's broad mandate also highlights the need for coordination and collaboration, as appropriate, on activities with other organizations and initiatives to establish synergies and prevent duplication. Further activities could be conducted within the framework of the Partnership, should this be mandated by the Conference of the Parties.

II. List of possible further activities that could be conducted under the Basel Convention

6. Reflecting on recent developments in scientific knowledge and environmental information and taking into account the activities conducted under the Basel Convention, including the Plastic Waste Partnership and by other international and regional entities, it is suggested that further activities be considered under the Basel Convention. The activities should prioritize those that support the implementation of the Plastic Waste Amendments, and they should complement the new international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment,⁶ as well as the

¹ UNEP/CHW.16/INF/58–UNEP/FAO/RC/COP.11/INF/41–UNEP/POPS/COP.11/INF/59; <http://www.basel.int/tabid/8335>.

² UNEP/CHW.16/INF/11/Rev.1.

³ Decision BC-14/13.

⁴ <http://www.basel.int/tabid/8410>.

⁵ UNEP/CHW.16/INF/34.

⁶ UNEA Resolution 5/14.

science-policy panel for chemicals, waste and pollution prevention⁷ that are currently under development. These activities are listed below:

- (a) Information collection, monitoring and reporting:
 - (i) Invite Parties, on a voluntary basis, to collect and transmit the following:
 - a. Information on the generation, management of plastic waste;
 - b. Information on the trade of plastic waste covered by entries A3210 and Y48 and of plastic waste covered by entry B3011;
 - c. Information on the capacities of importing countries to deal with imported plastic waste;
 - d. Information on illegal traffic and mismanagement of plastic waste;
 - e. Information on potential challenges in the application and implementation of the existing provisions, such as determining which types of plastic waste are covered by the various entries in the Basel Convention and distinction between waste and non-waste in relation to plastics;
 - f. The extent to which the above-mentioned entries on plastic waste have contributed to protecting human health and the environment against adverse effects which may result from the generation and management of plastic wastes;
 - (ii) Invite Parties, on a voluntary basis, to adopt the following measures:
 - a. A procedure for reducing plastic discharges into the environment by supporting civil society organizations and consulting firms specializing in environmental pollution, innovation, energy and climate change through a financing fund;
 - b. A regulation and accountability system for private sector with an aim of enhancing the sound management of plastic waste;
 - c. Promotion of the installation of plastic waste recovery units using local resources, and specialized state-affiliated structures;
 - d. Promotion of the sorting of plastic waste in households;
 - (iii) Request the Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to support Parties:
 - a. To quantify or estimate the quantities of plastic waste generated, managed, exported and imported, recycled and disposed of, including through the development of plastic waste inventories, to inform national action plans addressing minimization, environmentally sound management and control of transboundary movements of plastic waste;
 - b. To quantify or estimate the quantities of plastic waste leaked into the environment and to identify priority areas for reducing such leakage;
 - c. To disseminate the information referred to in subparagraph 6 (a) (i) above through the clearing-house mechanism;
- (b) Support for the implementation of the Basel Convention provisions relevant to plastic waste:
 - (i) Conduct an assessment based on the existing practical guidance and activities under the Convention, notably the practical guidance available in the ESM toolkit, activities under the Plastic Waste Partnership, practical guidance for the implementation of the Basel Convention, the provisions within the Convention and its technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of plastic waste, on the following:
 - a. Prevention and minimization of plastic waste and its hazardous constituents;

⁷ UNEA Resolution 5/8.

- b. Environmentally sound management of specific waste streams where plastic is relevant;
 - c. Technologies for the recycling of plastic waste;
 - d. Transboundary movements of plastic waste, including information on illegal traffic;
 - e. Financing the environmentally sound management of plastic waste, e.g. through extended producer responsibility;
- (ii) Invite the Basel Convention regional and coordinating centres for training and technology transfer and the Stockholm Convention regional and subregional centres for capacity-building and transfer of technology to continue their activities relevant to addressing plastic pollution.
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