



Open letter

24 September 2021

Regarding the Global agreement on Plastic Pollution

To Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations
To the Nairobi and New York Group Of Friends to Combat Marine Plastic Pollution

Your Excellencies,

This letter follows the Ministerial Statement of the Fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 5.2). The International Waste Platform (IWP), under their signatory parties below, support the efforts of UN member states to establish a global agreement on plastic pollution.

The IWP commits to support the implementation of a global agreement, in our special role and capacity as a network of active NGOs and waste advisory firms working to combat plastic waste. The IWP fully supports the initiative to develop a global agreement, and undertake to use our network to promote its goals and activities.

We support the reduction of single-use plastics, plastic waste and plastic litter, and the promotion of environmental education, capacity building, data collection and improvements to national and regional action plans.

Signatories from Australia, Benin, Canada, Cameroon, Democratic Republic Congo, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Kenya, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Portugal, Republic Congo, Republic of Korea, Russia, South Africa and Suriname

strongly recommend global policies to support the following interventions:

Overarching Interventions

- Development of a global roadmap to phase out non-essential single-use plastic products;
- Regulate mandatory extended producer responsibility and corporate social responsibility;
- Education for sustainable development based on climate change, waste and ocean literacy included in school curricula across all ages;
- Classify plastic waste as a hazardous material.

Interventions to reduce waste from the source

- Prioritisation of measures to reduce single-use plastics;
- Promote re-use of plastic products;
- Regulate brand-owners to introduce alternative delivery models (for example, refill systems in supermarkets);
- Regulate supermarkets to introduce alternative supply models and refill systems in their supply chain;
- Regulate packaging across retail sectors such as food delivery, take-away and e-commerce; promote re-usable packaging in e-commerce;
- Regulate waste reductions and management across retail sectors and retail distribution systems;
- Regulate the Right to Repair (electronics);
- Prohibit the use of plastic stickers, rubber bands and PE foam nets used on fruit and vegetables;
- Regulate non-functional slack filling in food items and drinks packaging; eliminate non-essential packaging;
- Regulate Deposit Return Systems;
- Regulate the use of unified packaging strategies by manufacturers;
- Phase out materials that are non-recyclable or difficult to recycle;
- Promote the use of plastic-free alternatives such as bamboo, wood, paper and other degradable materials; with the use of biomass other environmental factors including water use, food security, deforestation and land-use should also take into consideration.

Preventive measures related to the production of virgin plastics, plastics with mixed virgin & recyclable content, and bio-based plastics

- Regulate and prohibit the use of toxic additives (REACH <https://echa.europa.eu/regulations/reach/understanding-reach>);
- Simplify and harmonise recycling information used on packaging;
- Regulate accountability against greenwash and the verification of sustainability claims; harmonising terminology;
- Regulate packaging producers to disclose plastic material flows;
- Regulate and reduce the production of virgin resin pellets, or nurdles, and single-use plastics.

Litter interventions

- Tackle marine litter at its source: take upstream measures to prevent litter from entering rivers and lakes;
- Regulate cigarette producers to fund cigarette filter collection points and clean-ups;

- Clean up current plastic waste exposed under open-air in areas such as rivers, lakes, oceans, touristic sites, and rural areas.

Disposal

- Regulate landfill and in particular non-sanitary landfills;
- Address the open burning of waste;
- Discourage incineration, excluding medical waste;
- Promote effective recycling and management
 - Increase standardization of collection systems, plastic waste transportation and recycling processes, especially in rural areas
 - Promote the re-use of plastic waste, including agricultural films and pesticide packaging
 - Elevate the capacity of environmentally sound plastic waste disposal systems

Transboundary waste

- Enforcing measures to curb illicit waste trade (Basel / Stockholm Conventions);
- Regulate a waste export cap to other countries.

Marine, riverine and lake based sources of plastic pollution

- Enforce MARPOL Annex 5 - Establish waste management facilities in ports;
- Measures to reduce and prevent abandoned, lost and discarded fishing gear (ALDFG)¹.

Inclusivity

- Establish local recycling facilities in remote and rural regions in developing regions, and small island development states;
- Review the current funding systems for ocean and climate action;
- Develop an inclusive funding system, which includes grassroots organisations.

¹ Although approximately 5.7% of all fishing nets, 8.6% of all traps, and 29% of all lines are lost globally every year (Richardson et al., 2019), the actual amount of lost fishing gear is likely high due to its pervasive use. To effectively reduce the amount of ALDFG, we need to clamp down on illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing, expand no-take zones, and establish legal ramifications that will discourage and prevent ALDFG.

Signatories

Australia	Tangaroa Blue Foundation	Heidi Tait
Benin	NYONNU AGOOJIÉ (OINA)	Mélanie Glele Langanfin
Canada	Ocean Legacy	Chloé Dubois
Cameroon	Main de Rêve	Raymond Peka
Democratic Republic Congo	DRC Waste Platform, Réseau des Éco-citoyens	Guillaume-Trésor Kakesa
India	Eco Wise	Manik Thapar
Indonesia	Indonesian Waste Platform	Nina van Toulon
Kenya	Clean Up Kenya	Betterman Musasia
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Malaysia	Reef Check Malaysia	Theresa Ng
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Nepal	Nepal Waste Recovery Platform	Nabin Bikash Maharjan
New Zealand	The Aotearoa Plastic Pollution Alliance (APPA)	Ella van Gool
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Pakistan	Pakistan Waste Platform	Ali Syed, Shiza Aslam
Philippines	Philippine Waste Platform, seed4com, Zero Waste Academy Philippines, National Clean Up Day Coalition Philippines, Pusyon Kinaiyahan Internationale	Dann Diez
Portugal	Portuguese Marine Litter Network	Paula Sobral, João Frias
Republic Congo	Congo Waste Platform	Arsène Rigobert Guelele Kouene Kintono
Republic of Korea	OSEAN	Sunny Sunwook Hong
Russia	Russian Waste Platform, Taiga and My Cup, Please Russia	Olga Mironenko
South Africa	Sustainable Sea Trust	Tony Ribbink, Deidre Vos
Suriname	Green heritage Fund	Monique Pool

Contact details of all signatories can be found at <https://internationalwasteplatform.org/>