

SUBMISSION FROM ISWA -
INTERNATIONAL SOLID WASTE ASSOCIATION

Name of country (for Members of the committee)	
Name of organization (for stakeholders to the committee)	International Solid Waste Association - ISWA
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I. Substantive elements

1. Objectives

a) What objective(s) could be set out in the instrument?

Proposed Objectives

1. Reduction - Restrain plastic production and consumption to sustainable levels, considering its post consumption recovery.
 - Ensure a diminished volume of plastic waste.
 - Reduce plastic not suitable for recycling or posing a risk to human health through the life cycle.
 - Avoid plastics that end up in the natural environment.
2. Circularity - Enable a circular economy for plastics that protects the environment and human health, generating valuable secondary resources and green jobs.
 - Keep plastic items in the loop as long as possible at their highest value.
 - Strengthen innovation for resource efficient solutions in the economy.
 - Prevent hazardous chemicals from circulating in the value chains.
3. Waste management and leakage prevention - Achieve environmentally sound management of waste and stop leakage to the environment.
 - Achieve environmentally sound collection of waste, sorting, preparation for reuse and recycling of plastic items to re-enter into the economy.
 - Ensure sustainable and sufficient waste management capacity and infrastructure
 - Establish capacity for final disposal of non-recyclable plastic items and thereby avoid leakage to the environment.
4. Governance and funding - Create robust governance and financing systems.
 - Establish financial tools, strategic planning and governance which reflect the local needs and are tailored to promote best practices.
 - Ensure good governance capacity at all levels.
 - Enable circular business models and overcome obstacles in funding the transition to a circular economy.
 - Ensure necessary capacity in funding for waste management.
 - Establish the polluter pays principle as the basis for financing systems.
5. Sustainable communities - Create livelihood opportunities and contribute to healthier and wealthier communities.
 - Contribute to sustainable economic development by generating jobs and wealth to cities and regions.
 - Develop resource efficient, sustainable and livable cities.

2. Core obligations, control measures and voluntary approaches

Core obligations and control measures

1. Reduction

- Obligation to reduce the production and use of single-use, high-volume, leakage-prone and short-lived plastic packaging and products, as well as plastic products produced from virgin resources, considering scientific evidence when considering bans and restrictions.
- Set clear and ambitious targets for reduction of the use of plastics.
- Increase the availability of recycled plastic and focus on the sustainable use of recycled resources for all products and sectors of society.
- Incentivize business models for reuse, such as products as a service and the sharing economy.

2. Circularity

- Apply principles of eco-design by defining common criteria and standards (such as durability, reparability, recyclability, and safety).
- Reduce the types of plastic polymers being brought onto the market, and improve the potential and infrastructures for collection, sorting and recycling.
- Ensure clearly defined and viable circular economy systems and resource recovery options for all new plastic products put on the market.
- Prevent or remove the use of chemicals that hinder progress towards a circular economy or pose critical health risks or risks to the natural environment.

3. Waste management and leakage prevention

- Regard plastic waste management as part of a holistic waste management system and not as an issue isolated from other materials and waste streams.
- Make mapping of local materials and waste resources mandatory, in terms of quantity and type of waste generated by the most relevant actors.
- Set clear and ambitious collection and recycling targets and establish a monitoring mechanism to gradually increase them over time, with mandatory deadlines.
- Ensure environmentally sound management for any residual plastic waste flow for which resources cannot be recovered in the transition period to full circularity, for municipalities as well as industry and all other relevant sectors.
- Establish adequate and sound disposal for remaining materials and those plastics not suitable for reuse, recovery and recycling.
- Improve availability and reliability of waste and resource management data.
- Ensure access for all to adequate waste collection and waste management as a global human right and as part of basic services for sustainable cities and communities.
- Ban all open dumping and open burning of wastes, including plastic waste, as part of national legislation, and create mechanisms to effectively enforce the bans.
- Separate hazardous waste from other waste types at source.

4. Governance and funding

- Finance waste management systems through a combination of waste generator/user fees, extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes and other mechanisms such as recycling credits systems and deposit schemes.
- Incentivize investment from the private sector including development of new business models in line with the treaty objectives.
- Develop financing mechanisms observing the polluter-pays-principle, where the producer has full responsibility for the packaging and product's waste management, including collection, sorting, recycling and final disposal.
- Develop EPR schemes that incentivize producers to choose and manage their plastic packaging and all products containing plastic according to eco-design criteria.
- Establish global funding mechanisms for investments in waste management systems in developing countries.
- Include waste management in all aid programs in line with other technical infrastructures such as water and energy supply.
- Develop good governance systems that rest on the three pillars of reliability, inclusiveness, and transparency, supported by a robust legal framework and a long-term viable financial and organizational model.
- Make sure that the governance model holds all policy makers, public servants, operators and users of the system responsible and accountable.

5. Sustainable communities

- Ensure that means of governance and financial tools reflect the local needs and are tailored to promote best practices in diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Establish policies and mechanisms for a fair integration plan for everybody working in small-scale waste services.
- Ensure that the contribution to recycling and the livelihoods of informal waste workers are maintained through integration of the informal waste workers into the formal waste management systems.
- Use waste management as a catalyst for sustainable livelihood and economic development, as well as encourage new business models and business opportunities in a circular economy, realizing the potential worldwide for new jobs in the circular economy.
- Ensure a gender-sensitive approach as an integrated part of national legislation and policies, based on the knowledge of gender issues, barriers and gaps in waste management activities.

II. Implementation elements

Implementation at the National Level:

All countries shall be obliged to develop and implement a national comprehensive strategy to develop a circular economy for plastic, stop the release/leakage of plastics into the environment and deal with the environmental problem caused by plastic pollution.

1. Reduction

- Incentivize businesses that promote a net-zero plastic production model.
- Product design policies should be developed across sectors to optimize and simplify supply chains to avoid the use of single-use, high volume, leakage prone, harmful additives and short-lived plastic packaging and products, as well as plastic products produced from virgin resources. Industrial players should also be included.
- Establish conditions for well-functioning markets for recycled plastics, including commonly agreed quality standards, testing methods and trading conditions.

2. Circularity

- Create consistent definitions for significant terms such as recycling, recyclability, recycled materials and recycled content.
- Streamline and implement a consistent and harmonized international labeling of plastic products and packaging, and incentivize a collaboration between producers, retail sector and the waste management sector.
- Restrict the use of hazardous chemicals that hinder progress towards the circular economy, pose critical health risks or risks to the natural environment, according to e.g. EUs REACH.
- Establish a fundamental prerequisite to ensure that all plastic items at the end of any life cycle are appropriately collected and sorted to optimal forward destinations (circularity pathways) along with well-defined wider product stewardship or other EPR and recycling schemes.

3. Waste management and leakage prevention

- Establish pathways to ensure sound infrastructure for an adequate waste management system in all communities.
- Establish adequately financed waste management systems considering a reliable, inclusive and transparent governance model.
- Establish policies aimed at increasing the capacities of collection and sorting of plastic packaging. Including both increasing the total volume capacity and the material separation effectiveness.
- Strengthen labor conditions in waste management by establishing mandatory HSE (health, safety, environment) standards and training programs
- Establish public-private, as well as cross-sectoral, partnerships in order to secure a holistic approach to plastic waste management.

4. Governance and funding

- Consider funding of waste management systems with a combination of means, such as waste generator/user fees, extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes and recycling credits systems.
- Establish sound legal frameworks for EPR schemes that include transparency, level playing fields and are regulated by the government.
- When considering funding schemes; include eco-modulation through e.g. taxing and EPR fees of plastics with low recyclability, depending on the type, content of chemicals and on the level of transparency.
- Establish global funds for investment in waste management systems in developing countries or integrate funding for waste management initiatives in existing financing mechanisms.

5. Sustainable communities

- Establish a pathway to ensure a fair and just transition, for the affected formal and informal workers, with special attention to those in small-scale services.
- Incorporate the right for a fair remuneration, incorporating the payment for the services carried to prevent plastic leakage into the environment (not only for the commercialization of materials).
- Deliver comprehensive environmental education and capacity building programs and campaigns, aiming to raise awareness towards the core principles of the treaty and to promote best practices among the different stakeholders.
- Encourage enterprises and entrepreneurs to develop, pilot and put into practice locally adapted technology and solutions, as well as develop new business models and new ways of collaborating across value chains in all relevant sectors of society.

Efficient National Reporting:

- Establish national action plans and monitoring mechanisms in order to synchronize and accelerate actions.
- Establish the requirements for a national reporting obligation on Put on Market (PoM) for the top priority types of plastic products and packaging, including establishing levels of PoM in a baseline year.
- Create a methodology for producing a plastic pollution baseline and annual reporting instructions and finance the baseline for low- and middle-income countries who agree to use the methodology and introduce legal mandates for reporting and traceability.
- Establish legally mandated auditable certification standards for EPR and other producers responsibility schemes.
- Introduce annual audits for all cities and regions for key plastic products put on market and found in plastic pollution on land and in water.
- Create a system of "traffic-light" scores for countries and an annual mapping exercise that assigns colors to countries based on the relationship between plastics unaccounted for, leaked, disposed, recycled, or tracked to waste prevention cascades.
- Apply principles of transparency to standardized reporting schemes and harmonize reporting for plastic products and waste streams.

2. Means of Implementation

Technical assistance:

- Coordination with stakeholders to develop new reporting standards and digital forms for countries and coherent with the Rotterdam and Basel Conventions.
- Technical assistance in the development of projects and in making them technically and financially viable.
- Technical assistance for institutional engineering for complying with and monitoring the treaty objectives.

Capacity-building:

- Global education campaigns with cross-generational engagement with the same relevance and importance as global diseases prevention campaigns.

Financial assistance:

- Consider creating a specific fund with technical assistance to finance research, baseline studies, assessments on plastic leakage and monitoring coherent with the Sustainable Development goals SDGs.
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) should be designed as a tool to shift the burden of managing certain end-of-life products from municipalities and taxpayers to the producers who place those products on the market. EPR should also stimulate greater engagement of producers in the overall redesign of products and packaging, in order to reduce environmental and health impacts.
- Consider fundraising by developing push-and-pull policies such as carbon tax, eco-modulations, or other instruments that feed public funds for the development of systemic solutions, infrastructure and new technologies.
- Mobilizing private capital by making projects for sustainable plastic consumption and management attractive to financial markets.
- Mitigating the financial risks through innovative financial approaches such as blended finance. In such instruments, private capital is granted securities and de-risked by using public and philanthropic funds as catalysts.

III. Additional input

ISWA (International Solid Waste Association) is a global independent and non-profit association, working in the public interest to promote and develop waste and resource management, and a transition to a circular economy. ISWA has members from public and private companies, waste management and circular economy organizations, the scientific community, as well as NGOs and individuals in more than 110 countries all over the world.

The objectives mentioned above coincide with the ones presented by the High Ambition Coalition and are aligned to the ISWA vision and the main contributions of the waste management sector to solve the triple planetary crisis:

- I. Protecting human health and improving livability;
- II. Protecting nature, biodiversity and ecosystems;
- III. Mitigating climate change;
- IV. Providing secondary raw materials, nutrients and soil quality improving materials;
- V. Producing green and renewable energy and fuels, and
- VI. Contributing to economic development by generating jobs and wealth to cities and regions.

COLLABORATION

The plastic issue affects a number of sectors. Exchange of experience and cooperation will therefore create win-win opportunities and aid in avoiding unnecessary shortfalls and failures.

In order to enhance public, technical and scientific knowledge there is a need for networking and collaboration. Mobilizing collaboration along the value chains is crucial to get results in reducing plastic pollution and increase resource efficiency and achieve the improvements the treaty aims at.

In this mission ISWA can be an instrumental resource as part of further development and implementation, aiming to engage and mobilize the waste sector as a driving force for systemic change as well as practical improvement measures. Today, the advancement of waste management ranges from complex systems under continual innovation, to having none. ISWA therefore would also like to emphasize the importance of regional and local adaptation, and yet learning from best practices across the globe.

INNOVATION, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Innovation linked to product design, resource recovery, collection logistics and finance are essential for circular economy and sustainable waste management. The UN plastic treaty should encourage creativity and innovative solutions in both the Global North and South, as well as cooperation between the two.

There is a need for research, development and innovation programs to mitigate the risk for investing in new circular solutions, and overcome market barriers for reuse and recycled products and materials.

AWARENESS RAISING

There is a need for global awareness raising, if we want the management of plastic to function effectively. Using a participatory approach is necessary to highlight the problems excessive plastic waste poses to our planet, and to inform the public of new consumption options and waste management systems. On this topic, civil society has already contributed significantly, and needs to be included in the implementation. It is also of great importance that industrial and commercial interests are involved, as they provide means of finance and ways of utilizing their resources efficiently.

EQUITY

All decisions in the treaty should be implemented in an equitable manner, with win-win arrangement and burden-sharing across sectors, geographical borders and generations. They should be feasible and viable for all nations, with risk-based and plausibility approaches as core considerations.