

**ECUADOR'S BACKGROUND AND MOST RECENT ACTIONS TO ADDRESS
MARINE LITTER AND PLASTIC POLLUTION AND ITS PROJECTION IN
LEADING THE WAY TOWARDS A FUTURE GLOBAL AGREEMENT ON
THE MATTER**

A) Ecuador's commitment.

Our planet is going through a crisis. The effects of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution are visible and undeniable. Every day, we are witnesses to the consequences that this triple crisis has on the environment, society, and the rights of the people.

As one of the 17 countries with the greatest biodiversity in the world, Ecuador is committed to protecting the environment and preserving nature. Ecuador is the first country in Latin America and the fourth in the world to adopt a cross-cutting ecological transition policy while implementing measures to address problems such as plastic pollution throughout its whole life cycle.

Our ecological transition is implemented through policies and actions towards an environmentally sustainable economy that respects and promotes human rights.

Ecuador has consistently supported global efforts to establish a binding treaty to tackle plastic pollution. As a sign of its high commitment to environmental multilateralism, Ecuador has presented the nomination of Ambassador Luis Vayas to chair the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee that will develop that treaty.

Ecuador fully trusts that the extensive professional experience of Ambassador Vayas in environmental diplomacy will make it possible to advance appropriately and constructively in this negotiation, in which all voices must be heard.

B) Main milestones of Ecuador's environmental leadership.

Year	Milestone
2012	On behalf of all developing countries, Ecuador led the negotiation of the “Oceans and Seas” chapter of the Rio+20 Outcome Document "The Future We Want", which included a reference to the situation of marine pollution by plastics.
2011-2013	Ecuador holds the Vice-presidency of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade
2015	Ecuador and other countries supported the inclusion of important targets in the negotiations of the 2030 Agenda, related to reducing plastic marine pollution of all kinds.
2010-2017	Ecuador holds the Vice-presidency of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (three terms: 2010-2011, 2013-2015, and 2015-2017).
2017	Ecuador became part of the "Clean Seas" initiative, launched by UNEP, which promotes the change of habits, practices, standards, and policies around the globe to reduce marine litter and its negative impacts.
2018	Ecuador supported the Action Plan of the International Maritime Organization, which aims to enhance regulations and introduce measures to reduce marine plastic litter from ships. Ecuador started the development of a project called "Microplastics in the Eastern Equatorial Pacific Ocean and the Galapagos Islands", which includes quarterly monitoring, identification of origin, environmental assessment, circulation model, and assessment of aquatic ecotoxicity.
2017-2019	Ecuador holds the Vice-presidency of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal
2019	Ecuador played an important role in the adoption of Decision BC-14/12 of 2019 under the Basel Convention (amended Annexes II, VIII, and IX to improve the control of transboundary movements of certain types of recyclable plastic waste). Ecuador has been the first country to express in a formal COP statement, the need for a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution
2020	Ecuador became a founding member of the “Group of Friends to Combat Marine Plastics Pollution” to work towards a future treaty. The Organic Law for the Rationalization, Reuse, and Reduction of single-use Plastics was approved in Ecuador, with the objective of regulating the generation of plastic waste and progressively reducing its use through sustainable production and consumption.



2021	<p>At the first part of the Fifth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA5.1), Germany announced, on behalf of Ecuador, Ghana, and Germany (later joined by Vietnam), the decision to initiate preparations to convene a Ministerial Conference on Marine Plastic Pollution. This Conference was held in September 2021.</p> <p>The Organic Law of Inclusive Circular Economy, which proposes mechanisms for the transition from the linear economy to the inclusive circular economy, entered into force.</p>
2022	<p>Ecuador played a leading role in UNEA 5.2 taking into consideration the historic nature of this step towards global governance in the face of the threat of plastic pollution and its impact not only on the environment, oceans, air, and land, but also on health, tourism, trade, transportation, and the full exercise of human rights, particularly of the poorest and most vulnerable.</p> <p>Ecuador nominated Ambassador Luis Vayas, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, to be part of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) and chair the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) established by resolution 5/14 of UNEA 5.2</p>

C) Ecuador's leadership at the First Ministerial Conference on Marine Litter and Plastic Pollution in 2021.

The Ministerial Conference, carried out by the initiative of Ecuador, Ghana, Germany, and Vietnam was held on 1-2 September 2021, with the attendance of more than 140 countries and 1100 representatives and delegates from international agencies, civil society organizations, academia, and the private sector.

The most important outcome of the meeting was a Ministerial Declaration endorsed by 75 UN States Parties, which provided political impetus for the creation of an International Negotiating Committee (INC) towards a new binding global instrument to address marine litter and plastic pollution with a comprehensive approach covering the entire life cycle of plastics.

This Ministerial Declaration highlights the following points:

- Unsustainable plastic production and consumption, and the associated waste generated, are accelerating at an unprecedented rate.



- Owing to the nature of global supply and value chains, trade-in plastic waste, and the flow of plastic in the ocean, the challenge of plastic pollution and marine litter is transboundary and global in scope.
- No country can adequately address the various aspects of this challenge alone.
- Global solidarity and the involvement of all stakeholders must be guiding principles.
- A Global Agreement, aligned with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, is needed.
- Capacity building and technology transfer should be considered, as well as technical and financial assistance to developing countries
- Urgent action and commitment are needed with the aim of achieving a new Global Agreement with ambitious goals, wide participation, and means of implementation.

D) Ecuador`s participation in the Informal Dialogue on Plastics Pollution and Environmentally Sustainable Plastics Trade (IDP) in the World Trade Organization (WTO).

In 2020, a group of WTO members launched the Informal Dialogue on Plastics Pollution and Environmentally Sustainable Plastics Trade (IDP) to explore how the Organization could contribute to reducing plastic pollution and promote the transition to a more environmentally sustainable trade.

In December 2021, Ecuador, together with other WTO members, issued a Ministerial Declaration regarding the role of the IDP. This is an important milestone that is linked to the Ecuadorian leadership in the field of environmental multilateralism. In this document, a consensus was established, looking to identify collective actions to support global efforts in reducing plastic pollution, including building capacities, understanding the problem, improving cooperation, and exchanging experiences.

E) Next steps: Ecuador's commitment through the nomination of Ambassador Luis Vayas



Ecuador considers that multilateralism plays a fundamental role when facing such a significant challenge as negotiating a future binding treaty on plastic pollution.

Ambassador Luis Vayas, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador, has more than 27 years of experience as a multilateral negotiator and, in addition to having a significant academic background, he has been Vice President of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Stockholm, and Rotterdam Conventions, all of which give strength to the nomination and guaranteeing a participatory, inclusive, and organized negotiation.

Under the principles of Coordination, Collaboration, Cooperation, Concessions, and Compromises, the Ecuadorian nomination has the support of the President of the Republic and an appropriate institutional and financial structure, within the framework of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility.

Under Ecuador's vision, this negotiating process towards an International Legally Binding Instrument to address plastic pollution will require a collaborative multilateral approach, and a multi-stakeholder engagement with clear coordination across the UN System. Therefore, a leadership that can keep momentum and political willingness is needed.