



## INCI Opening Statement

28 November 2022

GAIA is a network of grassroots groups, national and regional alliances representing more than 1000 organizations from 92 countries working towards a just zero waste world.

A successful INCI will:

**Deliver a negotiations roadmap that prioritizes reducing plastic polymer production and a just transition.** Time-allocation is decisive, and only a negotiations schedule that makes ample time for reduction and just transition will deliver a treaty that is effective on those fronts.

**Decide on a Specific Convention that blends binding global obligations, including reduction targets, with national action.** National action must build the reuse and toxic-free mechanical recycling infrastructure and systems needed to reduce plastic production, end plastic pollution and waste colonialism, and deliver a just transition for affected informal and formal workers.

**Establish a framework to ban plastic polymers, additives, products and waste-management processes that harm human or environmental health or perpetuate waste colonialism** including those that worsen toxic pollution or circulate toxics in the economy, threaten water security, or deepen environmental injustice (e.g., “waste-to-energy” incineration, gasification, pyrolysis and other so-called “chemical recycling”, and plastic waste exports).

**Ensure meaningful and direct participation for civil society** through financial and interpretation support for participation in negotiations as observers, and access

to contact groups for civil society to make suggestions that Member States can support. Special attention must be given to waste-pickers, fenceline and frontline communities, Indigenous and Traditional communities, and women.

Thank you for your attention.



## **INC1 - Statement on means of implementation, finance and capacity-building**

30 November 2022

GAIA is a network of grassroots groups, national and regional alliances representing more than 1000 organizations from 92 countries working towards a just zero waste world.

GAIA believes in the need for clear criteria for the financing of plastic waste-management infrastructure. Financing must support infrastructure for reusable systems that replace single-use plastics, and must **exclude technologies that harm the environment, human health, and waste resources.**

Existing but unsuccessful thermal and solvent-based recovery processes for plastics have been marketed as novel **“chemical recycling” or “advanced recycling”**, when in fact their energy requirements are colossal, and they do not tolerate mixed or contaminated inputs, making them unfit for post-consumer plastic waste, and significant emitters of hazardous waste, or at best, dirty fuel.

The **incineration** of plastic waste emits considerable carbon and also contributes to microplastic pollution. Critical new research has consistently found microplastics in incinerator ash. This translates into a high risk of microplastic pollution from incinerator smokestack emissions, as well as ashfills and hazardous waste landfills where incinerator ash is disposed of, and of course other applications of incinerator ash such as as road construction materials.

The mechanical recycling of plastic waste has **far lower toxic and climate-adverse impacts than incineration, pyrolysis, and so-called “chemical recycling”**. Mechanical recycling must also be improved, notably to exclude toxic recycling and limit polluting VOC, wastewater and other emissions.

Resource efficiency for a circular economy that limits harm to the environment and human health follows the waste hierarchy, prioritizing prevention and reuse. **The only way to prevent how much plastic waste is landfilled, incinerated or**

**otherwise disposed of is to reduce how much plastic is produced - recycling only delays final disposal but does not prevent it.**

Attempting to tackle the plastic pollution crisis through a “circular economy of plastics” is as absurd as attempting to tackle the climate crisis through a “circular economy of fossil fuels”.

Thank you for your attention.



## INC1 - Statement on technical cooperation

1 December 2022

GAIA is a network of grassroots groups, national and regional alliances representing more than 1000 organizations from 92 countries working towards a just zero waste world.

GAIA believes in the need for clear criteria for technical cooperation on plastic waste-management infrastructure. Technical cooperation must support infrastructure for reusable systems that replace single-use plastics, and must **exclude technologies that harm the environment, human health, and waste resources.**

Existing but unsuccessful thermal and solvent-based recovery processes for plastics have been marketed as novel **“chemical recycling” or “advanced recycling”**, when in fact their energy requirements are colossal, and they do not tolerate mixed or contaminated inputs, making them unfit for post-consumer plastic waste, and significant emitters of hazardous waste, or at best, dirty fuel.

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Resource efficiency for a circular economy that limits harm to the environment and human health follows the waste hierarchy, prioritizing prevention and reuse. **The only way to prevent how much plastic waste is landfilled, incinerated or otherwise disposed of is to reduce how much plastic is produced - recycling**

**only delays final disposal but does not prevent it.**

Attempting to tackle the plastic pollution crisis through a “circular economy of plastics” is as absurd as attempting to tackle the climate crisis through a “circular economy of fossil fuels”.

Thank you for your attention.



## INC1 - Statement on sequencing

2 December 2022

GAIA is a network of grassroots groups, national and regional alliances representing more than 1000 organizations from 92 countries working towards a just zero waste world.

**To be successful, this INC must deliver a negotiations roadmap that prioritizes reducing plastic polymer production and a just transition.** Time-allocation is decisive, and only a negotiations schedule that makes ample time for reduction and just transition will deliver a treaty that is effective on those fronts.

**Funding available for INC work should be spent on bringing at least three delegates per country, to allow three contact groups, as well as interpretation in contact groups, to have effective negotiations.** This will be essential to have more focused and effective progress, and cover all elements within our 2-year timeframe.

At INC2, in our view, there should be one contact group on scope and objectives, one on institutional framework (including finance, monitoring, enforcement and science), and a final contact group on managing plastic production and uses (overall quantity, polymers, additives, and applications).

While negotiation time must focus on treaty measures that will reduce plastic polymer production, **clear and sufficiently-broad defining criteria** are needed to support effective negotiations and avoid loopholes. In particular, the treaty scope must cover **both intentional and unintentional plastic additives, composite materials** that contain plastics, plastics made from **semi-synthetic polymers** (e.g., vulcanized natural rubber, cellophane, viscose) and hybrid inorganic-organic polymers (e.g. **silicones**), **in all their states of matter and water solubility.**

Other elements needed for an effective global plastics treaty to be negotiated at future INCs include a framework for robust and harmonized reporting, monitoring and transparency, a dedicated scientific body free from conflicts of

interest, a fund for developing country compliance and remediation of legacy plastic pollution, and an enforcement mechanism.

Thank you for your attention.





## INC1 - Statement on stakeholder engagement

1 December 2022

GAIA is a network of grassroots groups, national and regional alliances representing more than 1000 organizations from 92 countries working towards a just zero waste world.

Firstly, the term stakeholders conveys a false equivalence between rights-holders and perpetrators from industries that produce plastics. As in the Tobacco Framework Convention, companies that produce the problem should be excluded from negotiations .

The priority for civil society rights-holders is **direct access to negotiations as observers**, to make suggestions that governments can consider. Effective access to negotiations involves lowering administrative barriers to accreditation and visas, travel support and interpretation, and access for key constituencies including informal sector waste workers and Indigenous peoples.

GAIA also requests that **funding is prioritized for at least 3 delegates per country** as well as **interpretation in contact groups** to ensure effective negotiations with several parallel contact groups, and allow for the completion of negotiations within the short timeframe afforded to us by our UNEA mandate. Expensive drawn-out and in-person multi stakeholder forums take funding away from these priorities.

Multi-stakeholder engagement should follow the **principles of non-duplication and coordinating with existing bodies**, as required under UNEA resolution. On this basis, we believe that the Basel Convention Plastic Waste Partnership and UNEP GPML are best-placed to co-organize the INC multi-stakeholder engagement, in consultation with rights-holders, notably waste-pickers, and independent scientists.

While an intersessional, virtual format will lower cost as well as some barriers to participation, we urge the organizers to ensure that **the voices of most-impacted communities are those most clearly heard**, included where

needed through in-person side events at the start of future INCs.  
Multi-stakeholder events should feed into, but not encroach upon, precious time allocated for negotiations.

Thank you for your attention.