

# KEY ELEMENTS OF A GLOBAL AGREEMENT

To help end plastic pollution, while enabling society to continue to benefit from plastics, the agreement should be based on reliable and objective scientific data, incentivize action by governments, businesses and civil society and support the developing world through financing and capacity building efforts that level the playing field.

To drive meaningful change and serve as a catalyst for investment and support the development of a circular economy for plastics, we're championing a global agreement with the following key elements:

# 1. Develop National Action Plans

Countries face different challenges and require different solutions. An enabling agreement should consider an individual country's needs and responsibilities.

That is why national action plans, tailored to each country's unique circumstances and capabilities, should form the foundation of the agreement. The plastics agreement should develop common elements and reporting requirements that are consistent across national action plans to keep countries accountable for tracking progress.

# 2. Create the Right Demand Signals

To further accelerate a global transition to plastics' circularity, we need a policy and regulatory ecosystem that enables access to waste management solutions and encourages continued investment in recycling innovations and projects by the private sector.

The plastics agreement can create the right demand signals to the private sector to spur investment in collection, sortation and recycling. Such demand signals could include recycling rate targets and/or requirements for packaging to contain recycled plastic in them. These targets should be developed at the country level and step up over time.

# 3. Identify and Prevent Leakage-Prone Plastic Products

Through a common assessment framework in the form of a decision-tree, plastic products most prone to leak into the environment can be identified and the appropriate prevention measures can be taken at the national level. Such an approach would consider the societal and cultural contribution the product provides. More information about the decision-tree approach the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA) has developed can be found on the GPPC website.

Additionally, the plastics agreement can encourage parties to support participation in certified program(s), such as Operation Clean Sweep<sup>®,1</sup> to help prevent plastic pellets and materials in the value chain from entering the environment.

# 4. Provide Guidance on Products Designed for Circularity

To end plastic pollution and promote circular economy solutions, an agreement should promote circularity practices in product design that are sector specific (e.g., automotive, healthcare) so more plastics can be sustainably reused or easily remade. Implementing guidance should be aligned with consensus-based standards organizations, such as ISO and ASTM.

ICCA hosted a webinar discussing these topics on product design that can be viewed on the GPPC website.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> https://opcleansweep.org/<sup>2</sup> https://plasticscircularity.org/resources/



# 5. Establish Finance and Capacity Building Mechanisms

Approximately **2.7 billion people across the globe lack access to adequate waste management systems.**<sup>3</sup> The agreement could support a financial mechanism that brings together various financing sources, including encouraging establishment of well-designed EPR systems that fund much-needed waste management infrastructure. This will require capacity building, technology transfer and support in attracting investments.

#### 6. Enable Circularity Through Trade

Moving used plastics from countries that don't have the necessary recycling and waste management infrastructure to those countries that do can drive plastics circularity and prevent pollution. There is a significant opportunity, particularly at the regional level, to leverage trade so used plastics can become a feedstock for new plastics and other valuable products. The agreement can align the expertise of multilateral initiatives including enhancing the Basel Convention implementation and WTO capacity-building efforts. ICCA's position paper on plastics and trade, promoting a comprehensive and coordinated approach among these organizations, can be found on its website.<sup>4</sup>

# 7. Prevent Pollution Rather Than Capping Production

The implementation of government-led production caps would have unintended consequences<sup>5</sup> for many industries — from healthcare to automotive, from renewable energy to aerospace. It could also hinder sustainable development and result in regrettable substitutions with greater environmental impacts. Supply constraints have the potential to result in higher costs across many industries. End-consumers and developing nations are likely to be the ones bearing the costs of a government-imposed cap on plastic production.

# 8. Use/Establish Comprehensive Chemicals Management Frameworks

Chemical regulation is critical to protecting human health and the environment. Countries should be empowered to make decisions on chemical regulations using consistent, scientifically based criteria and harmonized classification methods. There are existing mechanisms in place to comprehensively manage chemicals across relevant uses, including in plastics, through national, regional and global frameworks, and as promoted by the newly adopted Global Framework on Chemicals. It is critical to avoid duplications across different agreements.

ICCA is developing an additives database<sup>6</sup> to support the transparency and sound management of chemicals in plastics, and hosted a webinar<sup>7</sup> on the topic in July 2024 that can be viewed on the GPPC website.

- ${}^{3}\,https://www.unep.org/resources/global-waste-management-outlook-2024$
- <sup>4</sup> https://icca-chem.org/icca-position-paper-on-plastics-and-trade/
- $^{\rm 5}\,https://icca-chem.org/news/new-economic-study-reveals-major-contributions-of-plastic-industry-to-global-economy/$
- <sup>6</sup> https://plasticscircularity.org/additives/
- <sup>7</sup> https://plasticscircularity.org/resources/



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