



Webinar - Advancing Global Plastic Circularity: Aligning the Basel Convention and the UN Plastics Treaty for Plastic Circularity

15 April 2025
15.00 – 16.00 CET

Organised by:



Speakers



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**Douglas Woodring
Ocean Recovery Alliance**

Advancing Global Plastic Circularity

Alignment of the Basel Convention and the UN Plastics Treaty



- COP17 represents an important opportunity for creating increased alliance and planning with the Plastic Amendments of the Basel Convention, and INC5.2
- Alignment will allow the UN Plastic Treaty to clarify the reliance on the Basel Convention regulations for trade-related issues, which will have an impact on the facilitation of global circularity for plastics, the overall success of the treaty's agreed-upon objectives.

Recycling Can Help Circulate the 70% of Plastic Pollution not Achieved via Reductions and Reuse Models

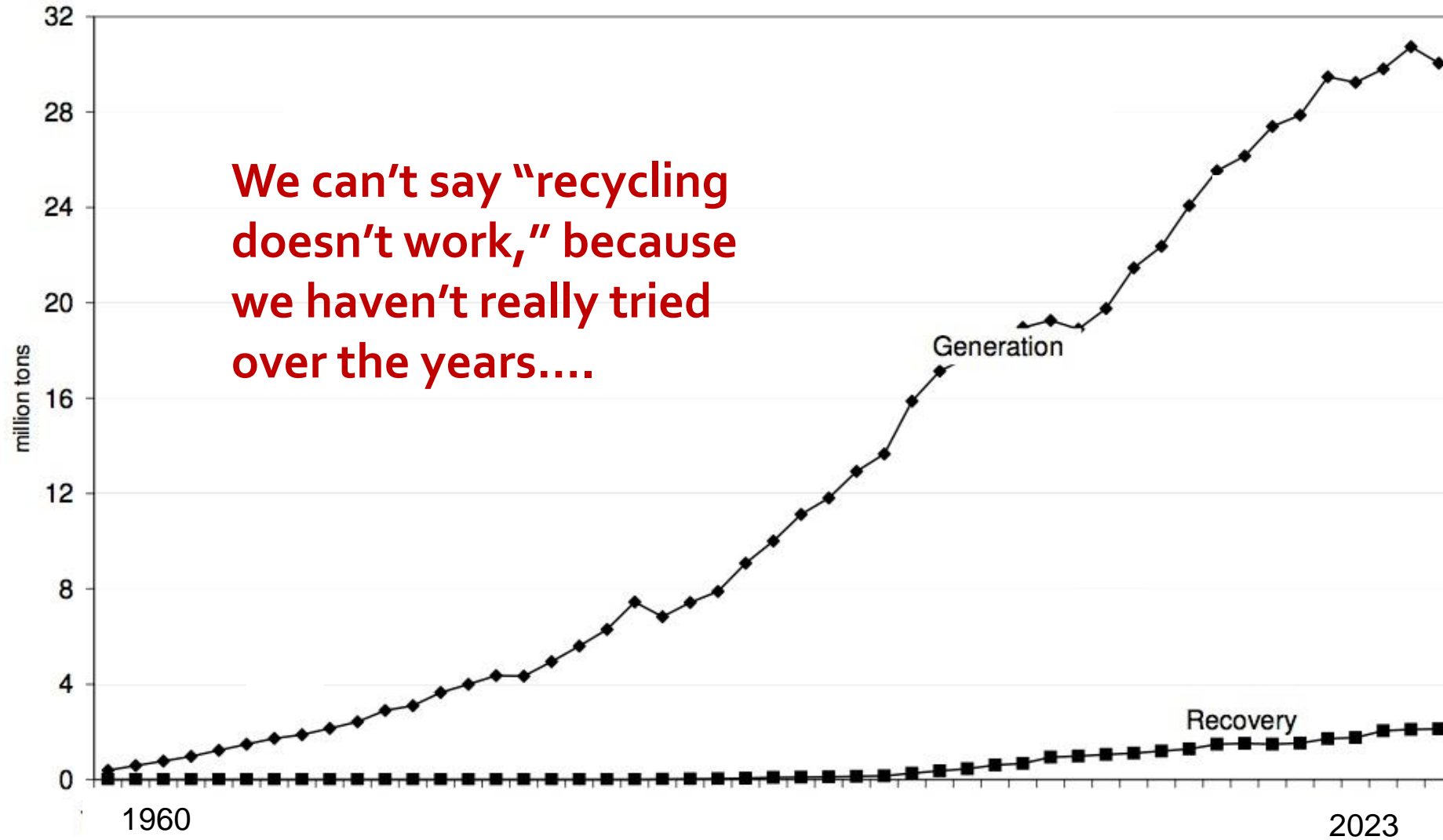


- **Recycling Can Help Circulate the 70% of Plastic Pollution not Achieved via Reductions and Reuse Models**
- Much of the UN Plastic Treaty discussions have focused on plans for reductions, reuse and some form of taxes (EPR). In the best-case scenario, studies have estimated that by 2040, this would reduce plastic use and potential pollution by **30%**.
- In the Treaty discussions, and consequent need for alignment with the Basel Convention, we have not collectively focused enough on circularity, recycling, and how to work with the other **70% of plastic waste generated**.

The Convention does not apply to materials which are not “waste”

- Unfortunately, the word “**plastic**” has become synonymous with the word “**waste,**” but this should not be the case, much due to generic interpretations from the press and interest groups
- The Convention, however, **does not apply** to trade in materials that are not “**waste,**” although (**mistakenly**) “waste” is defined broadly under the Convention **to include materials that are being moved for purposes of recycling or recovery.**

PLASTICS GENERATION AND RECOVERY



Up to 80% of Secondary Plastic Feedstock Could be Recycled by 2040



- By 2040, over **32m tons/year of mis-managed** waste are expected annually, as part of over **75m tons** of total plastic waste. Proper scaled recycling (of any technologies, including mechanical and advanced/chemical recycling) could circulate almost **80% of this volume**, or over **55m tons/year**.
- COP17 and INC5.2 can be focused to streamline and improve the Plastic Amendments of the Basel Convention to facilitate the legitimate and qualified trade of plastic feedstock for recycling, which is not **waste**.

Simplified Definitions and Trusted Standards

- Basel Convention's Plastic Amendments could simplify definitions, with trusted, unified standards which allow for pre-approved sellers and buyers to trade fit-for-purpose materials.
- This is particularly important when countries do not have the capacities or resources to process their own recycling feedstock in environmentally sound, or economically viable manners.
- This valuable plastic feedstock for recycling ("pollution" if not circulated) should not be lost in non-existent waste management system or be unnecessarily restricted.

Takeaways and Opportunities for Treaty Alignment (Basel Convention and Plastic Treaty)



Member state delegations of each treaty can work together the coming months for harmonization, trust and standardization for collaborative participation in the Circular Economy, with reduced plastic pollution as the end result.



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Interconnectivity - Global Plastics Treaty & Basel Convention



Global Plastics Treaty

Towards an international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution



Basel Convention

Legally binding global instrument aiming to protect human health and the environment by controlling the transboundary movements of hazardous wastes.

Key drivers for system transition to circularity



WORLD
PLASTICS
COUNCIL



Establishing Clear Legislative Frameworks to Drive Industry Investment



Facilitating International Trade of Verified Feedstock to Scale Circularity



Implementing Recycled Content Mandates to Drive Market Demand

Establishing Clear Legislative Frameworks to Drive Industry Investment

Policy Clarity as an Investment Catalyst:

The plastics industry requires clear and consistent legislative frameworks to make informed, long-term investments in recycling infrastructure.



Current Challenge:

The absence of definitive regulations on recycling processes, trade policies, and recycled content mandates creates uncertainty, deterring substantial industry investment.



Opportunity:

Aligning national policies with international agreements, such as the Basel Convention and the forthcoming UN Plastics Treaty, can provide the necessary regulatory stability to foster industry confidence and investment.

Facilitating International Trade of Verified Feedstock to Scale Circularity



Necessity of Global Trade:

Achieving circularity at scale requires the facilitation of international trade of verified and approved recycled feedstock to optimise processing efficiencies and economies of scale.



Current Challenge:

Restrictive national policies and fragmented approaches to the trade of secondary raw materials hinder the development of a robust global circular economy.



Policy Solution:

Harmonising definitions, rules and criteria under the Basel Convention and the UN Plastics Treaty to facilitate safe and efficient cross-border movement of recycled materials, thereby enhancing global recycling capabilities.

Implementing Recycled Content Mandates to Drive Market Demand



Creating Demand Certainty:

Mandating recycled content in products ensures a stable market for recycled materials, encouraging investments in both mechanical and chemical recycling technologies.

Current Challenge:

Inconsistent policies and the exclusion of certain recycling technologies, such as chemical recycling, from mandates limit the industry's ability to meet circularity objectives.

Policy Solution:

Developing comprehensive recycled content mandates within the framework of the UN Plastics Treaty that encompass outputs from all recycling technologies, thereby promoting a holistic approach to circularity.

Interconnectivity - Global Plastics Treaty & Basel Convention



Global Plastics Treaty

- Design for circularity
- Create the Right Demand Signals
 - Mandatory recycled content targets at national level
 - Technology neutrality (acceptance of all recycling technologies)
 - Circular feedstock targets per industry sector
- Identify and Prevent High Leakage Plastic Applications
- Establish Finance and Capacity Building Mechanisms
- Enable Circularity Through Trade

Basel Convention

- Facilitate Responsible Trade of Waste and Reduce Regulatory Complexity through Harmonised Definitions, Rules and Criteria
- The establishment of more efficient PIC procedures
- Environmentally sound management (EMS) of plastic waste, incl. chemical recycling
- Harmonised end-of-waste status

Basel Convention
COP 17
Geneva, 28/4-9/5 2025



Policy Asks





Mostafa Ahmed / Carlos Silva Filho,
International Solid Waste Association
(ISWA)



Key Messages for INC 5

ISWA's contribution to
UN Plastic Pollution Treaty Negotiations



ISWA

ISWA is the world's leading network promoting professional and sustainable waste- and resource management.

ISWA represents all aspects and stakeholders within the waste management sector: the public, the private and the academic.

With more than 1,300 Members in 109 countries, ISWA has a unique global network.



**To Promote and Develop
Sustainable and
Professional Waste
Management Worldwide
and the transition to a
Circular Economy**

- Our mission

ISWA Plastic Treaty Task Force

ISWA aims to support an ambitious plastic pollution treaty to beat plastic pollution by promoting life cycle-based solutions, engaging its members, and positioning the waste and resource management sector as a key player in global circular economy efforts.

The Task Force goal is to coordinate ISWA's engagement in the plastic treaty negotiations by activating its network to share policy insights, foster dialogue with stakeholders, and prepare members for implementation through awareness, learning, and communication.



5 Key Messages and 5 areas of recommendations

ISWA stresses that a comprehensive approach must be taken to end plastic pollution, considering the entire life cycle of plastic!

Reduce plastic waste

**Ensure collection of all waste,
especially plastics**

**Upgrade illegal and open dumpsites &
ban open burning of waste**

**Increase the role and accountability
of extended producer responsibility
schemes**

**Provide waste management solutions
applicable to socio-economic &
cultural conditions**

5 Key Messages and 5 areas of recommendations



ISWA Key Messages for INC-5



Key Messages

Issued as a contribution
to Intergovernmental
negotiating committee
on Plastic Pollution
(INC-5)

International Solid Waste Association ISWA



INC 5-1 Outcomes: Article 8: Plastic Waste Management

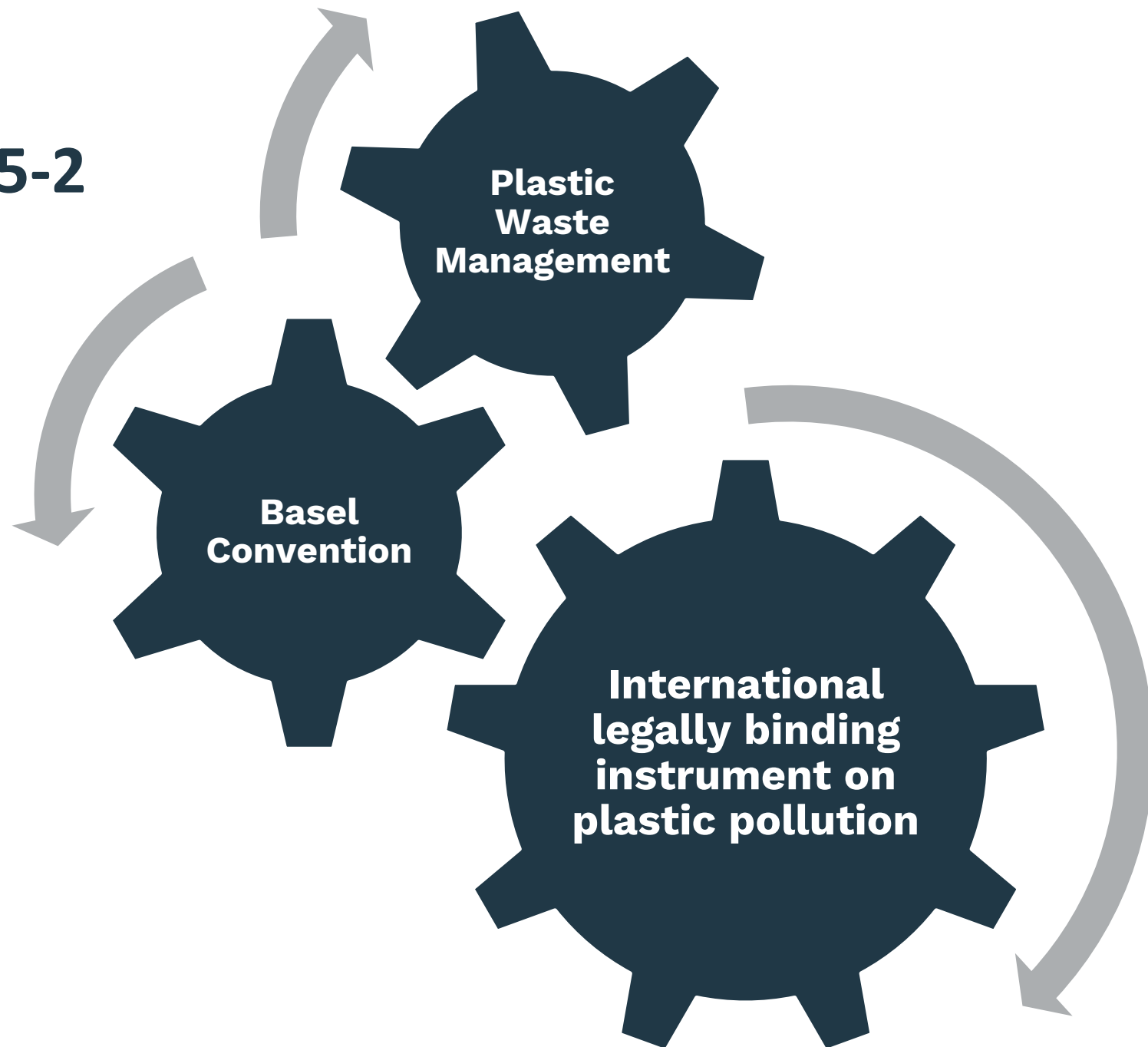
- **Establish** resilient systems and infrastructure for safe plastic waste management at all levels.
- **Promote** circular economy approaches to reduce plastic waste.
- **Set** national targets to increase plastic waste collection and recycling rates.
- **Prohibit** littering, open dumping/burning, and ocean dumping, aligned with international rules.
- **Prevent** and reduce abandoned, lost, or discarded plastic fishing gear.
- **Support** a just transition for waste workers, especially informal workers, women, and youth.
- **Promote** behavioral change and public awareness to minimize plastic waste.
- **Encourage** measures to establish or promote extended producer responsibility approaches and other economic instruments, considering the shared responsibilities of stakeholders for the environmentally sound management of plastics throughout their life cycle.

INC 5-1 Outcomes: Article 8: Alignment with Basel

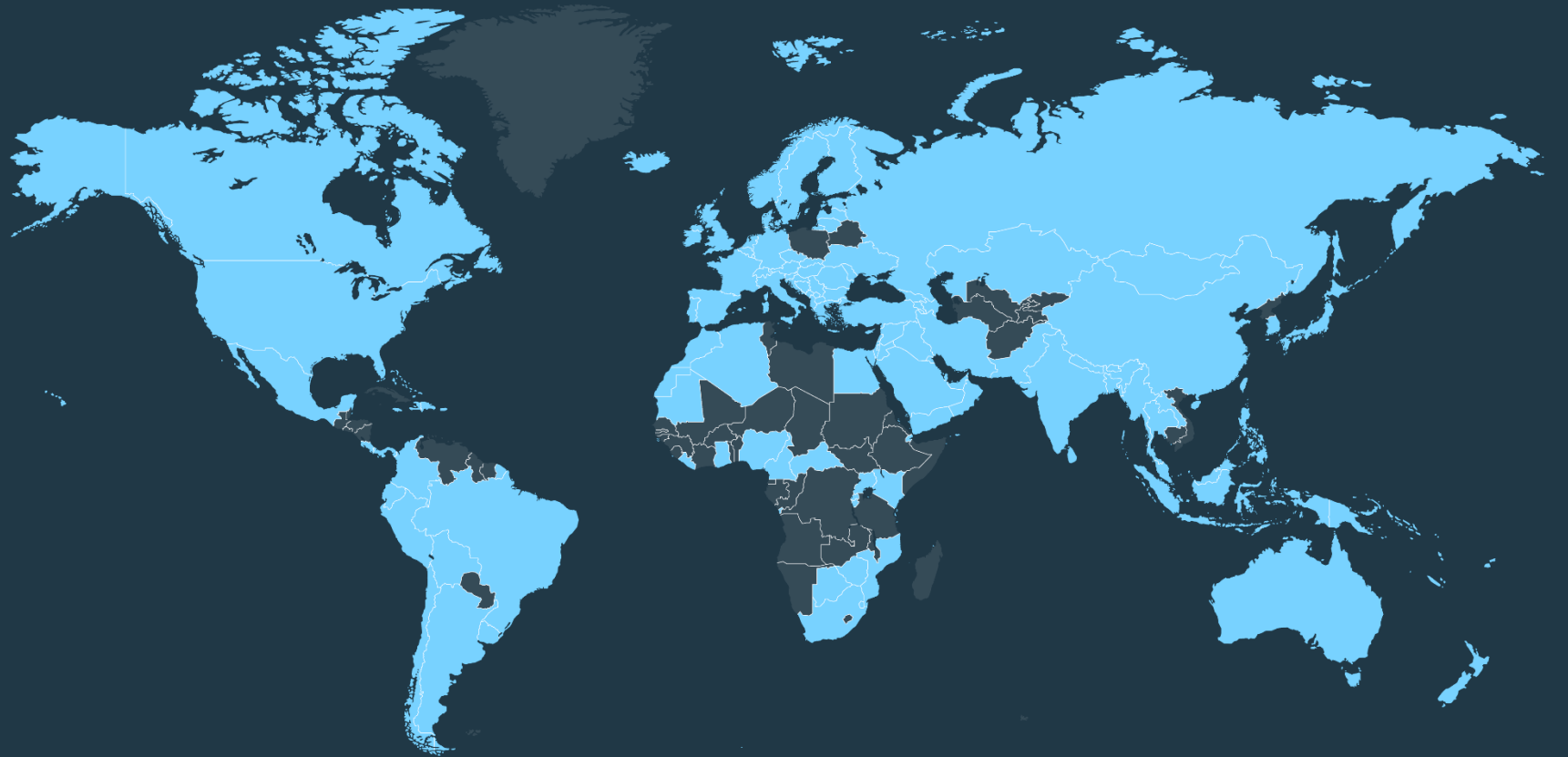
- **Ensure** environmentally sound management of plastic waste, guided by Basel Convention principles.
- **Regulate** transboundary movement of plastic waste to allow it only for environmentally sound management, in line with Basel Convention obligations.
- **Prohibit** export of plastic waste from developed to developing countries, where applicable.
- **Apply** relevant national and international rules where the Basel Convention does not apply.
- **Establish** programmes and develop guidance through the COP, in cooperation with the Basel Convention COP and other relevant bodies.

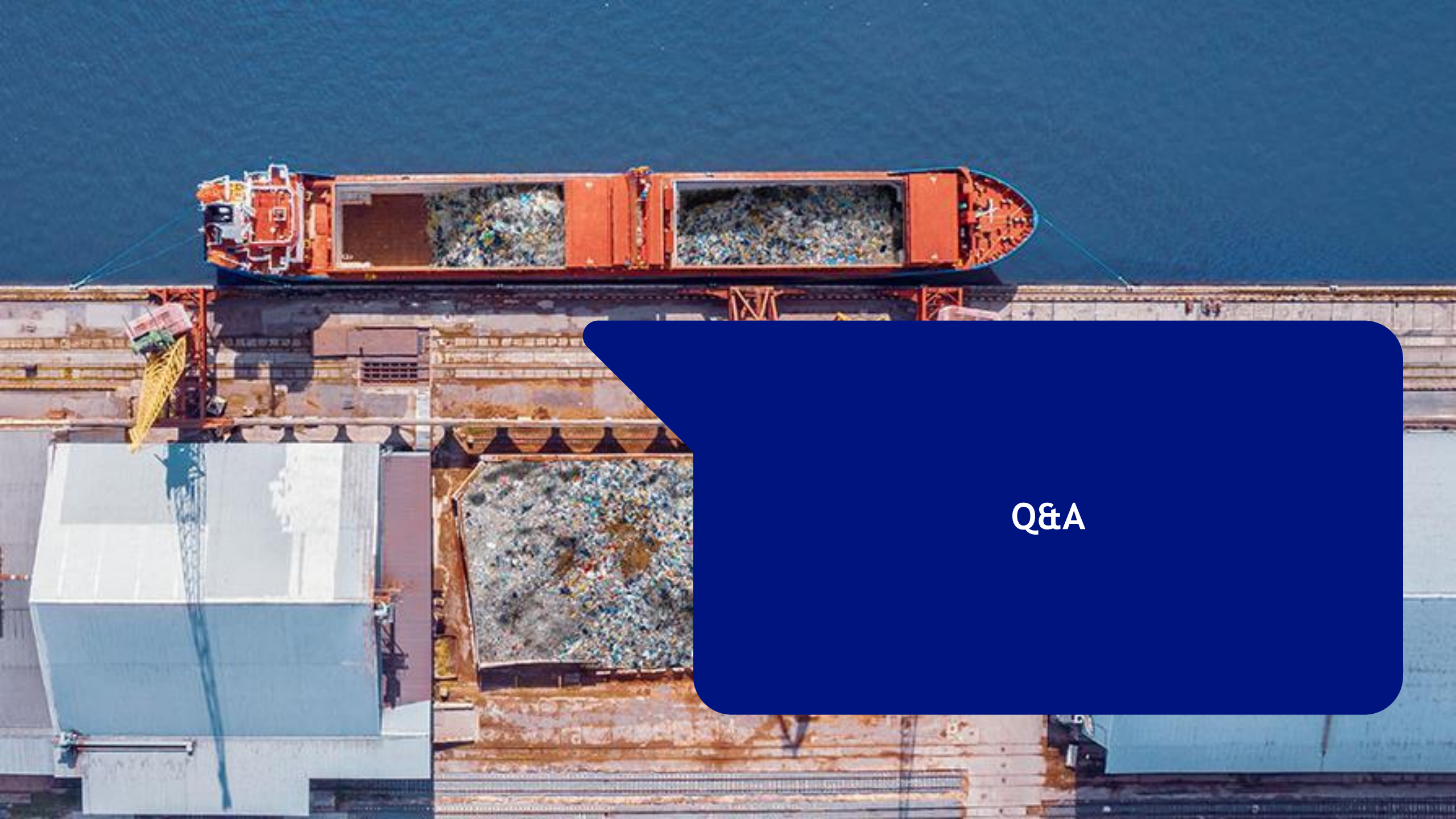
Our Position for INC 5-2

1. **Reduce plastic waste**
2. **Ensure collection of all waste, especially plastics**
3. **Upgrade illegal and open dumpsites & ban open burning of waste**
4. **Increase the role and accountability of extended producer responsibility schemes**
5. **Provide waste management solutions applicable to socio-economic & cultural conditions.**



Thank you for your attention!





Q&A

Upcoming COP17 side event

*Global Circularity for Plastics -
In-Person Discussion & Networking Reception*

Date & Time: 4 May, 18:45 - 19:45 CET

Location: Room 14

Registration: by email info@oceanrecov.org

Thank you



worldplasticscouncil.org