



BRIEF

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
PLASTICS POLICY • MAY 2023



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INC-2: TIME TO GET SPECIFIC

NEGOTIATORS MUST PUT FORTH BINDING MEASURES TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC HIGH-RISK PLASTICS, AND PREPARE FOR THE TREATY'S ZERO DRAFT

INC-1: OUTLINING AN AMBITIOUS VISION

At the [first session](#) of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop a global treaty on plastic pollution, states' individual and joint statements representing a total of more than **145 countries** showed strong preference for a treaty with specific, binding global rules.

States' submissions prior to the second session confirmed this alignment around a bold vision for the treaty to end plastic pollution. Three types of **binding global control measures** already received [support from two thirds of the states](#) (at least 132 countries):

- Bans and phase-outs;
- Requirements towards non-toxic plastic circularity;
- Requirements of environmentally sound waste management.

There is growing recognition that the treaty must adopt measures that **lead to a reduction in production and consumption of plastics**. Furthermore, there was overwhelming support for means of implementation, including **technical and financial assistance, technology transfers and capacity strengthening**.

Drawing on states' views, document UNEP/PP/INC.2/4, '[Potential options for elements](#)', shows a wide range of possible substantive and supporting provisions that could be included in the treaty. It is crucial that states consolidate their support for binding global rules, and focus on developing specific binding measures among the options.

At INC-2, WWF urges all States to:

- Propose binding global measures to eliminate, reduce, safely circulate and manage specific high-risk plastics;
- Prioritise plastics with high pollution risks, including product groups, applications, chemicals and polymers of concern;
- Specify high-risk plastics suitable for immediate global bans and phase-outs; for example, the group of single-use, short-lived plastic products that can be eliminated without negative environmental and socioeconomic consequences, i.e., single-use cutlery, plates, cups, cotton bud sticks, cigarette filters, etc.;
- Match strong binding measures with ambitious mechanisms to enable effective implementation, including technical and financial assistance, technology transfers and capacity strengthening; paying special attention to the needs of LDCs and SIDSs;
- Mandate the preparation of the treaty's zero draft, that includes these specific proposals, in the intersessional period before INC-3.



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Since the [Washington Declaration on Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities](#) in 1995, no significant progress has been made towards putting an end to plastic pollution, despite the numerous voluntary initiatives. While the plastic pollution crisis continues to grow rapidly, public demand for strong measures on plastic is at an all-time high. An [Ipsos survey in 2022](#) indicates that 74% of people support global bans on single use plastic items, growing from 71% in the previous survey. **There is no better time than now for negotiators to deliver what is needed, and put these specific binding measures on paper.**

INC-2: FROM HIGH AMBITIONS TO DETAILED PROVISIONS

At INC-2, states must prioritise the negotiation of **binding global measures that stipulate exactly what states must do** to end plastic pollution. The discussion must be guided by the identification of **specific high-risk plastic categories for each measure** — e.g., products, chemicals and polymers of concern. States should **start populating the treaty’s annexes of the high-risk plastic categories** to be banned, phased out, redesigned, circulated and managed. Importantly, the Committee should **request the preparation of the treaty’s zero draft** for deliberation at INC-3. With only one and a half years of negotiation time remaining, the task of translating high ambitions into detailed provisions must commence immediately.

Such a task would require the Committee and the future Conferences of the Parties to have **robust decision-making procedures**, including the two-third majority threshold when voting and deciding on substantive issues. The global community’s collective mission to protect our environment should not be held back by a single member’s veto. The multilateral cooperation against the rising tides of plastic pollution must not — and cannot afford to — be paralyzed by gridlocks.

PROPOSING BINDING MEASURES TO ADDRESS HIGH-RISK PLASTICS

The [‘Potential options for elements’](#) document proposes a wide range of substantive and supporting provisions for consideration by the INC: core obligations and control measures to achieve the overall objective; and implementation measures to ensure core obligations are implemented effectively by states. **Figure 1** illustrates WWF’s views on key elements of an effective treaty, noting the importance of **prioritising measures to reduce plastic production and consumption**, with a focus on pollution risk reduction.

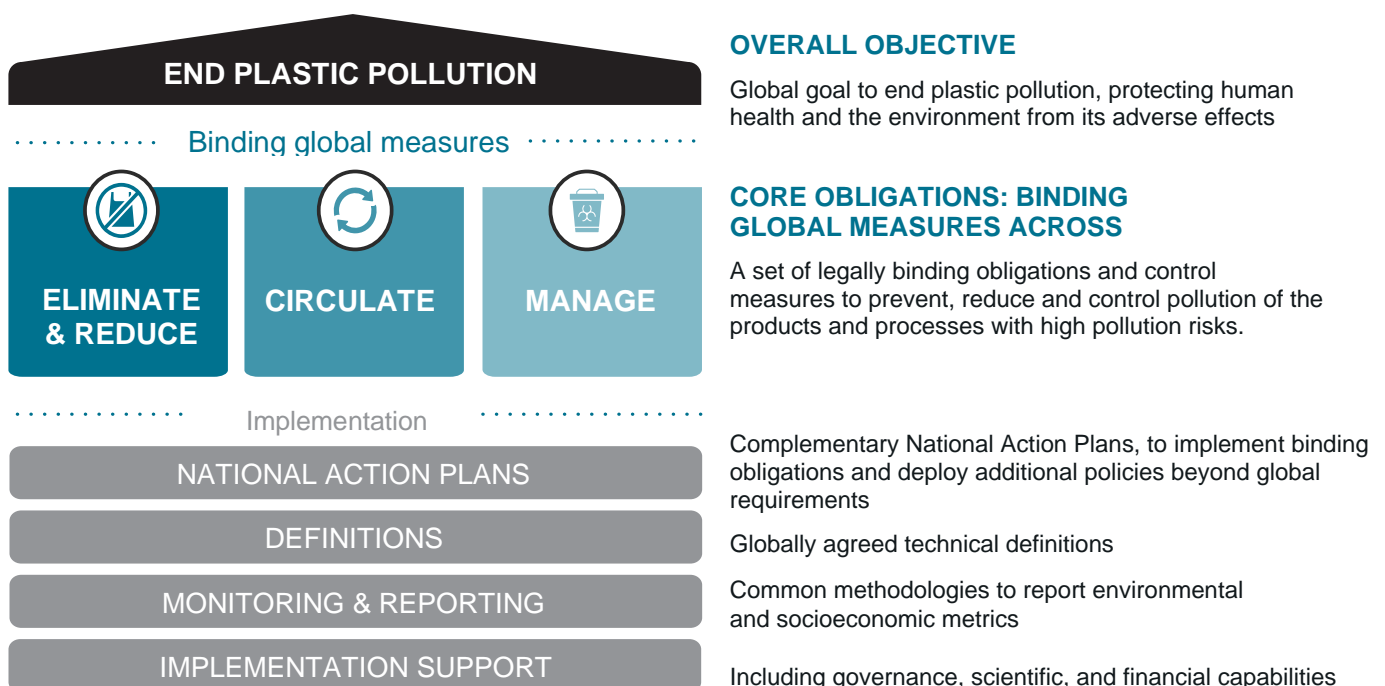


Figure 1. Key elements of an effective treaty to end plastic pollution



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The seemingly overwhelming task of developing global measures to end plastic pollution need not to be as such. WWF's two new reports, '[Breaking down high-risk plastic products](#)' and '[Regulating high-risk plastic products](#)', show how states can untangle this complex challenge by methodically dividing, prioritising and tackling specific plastic categories with global regulations.

The reports categorise plastic products based on assessment of their properties, uses, and risks in relation to pollution probability and potential harms. Specific regulations, such as global bans, phased reduction, economic instruments, and mandatory requirements and standards, are considered in light of their suitability and feasibility for each of the prioritised high-risk product groups. The combined results are a list of control measures and a list of specific plastic products, which can be considered for the treaty's core obligations and its associated annexes.

WWF strongly urges states to employ this risk-based approach, to identify high-risk plastics that must be urgently regulated by the treaty. The reports demonstrate that when the broad scope of plastic pollution is divided into specific and manageable categories, it is entirely possible for states to go beyond statements of intent, and propose detailed measures that target the plastics causing the most pollution.

This approach should also be applied to other plastic categories to develop the necessary mix of control measures targeting plastic applications, products, polymers and additives of concern. These measures would complement each other in addressing the multifaceted problems of plastic pollution, and together deliver the treaty's goal. **Further information on this approach and the suitable global measures for high-risk plastic products can be found in WWF's [extended technical paper](#) for INC-2.**



or visit:

www.panda.org/plasticreaty

for information on the treaty negotiation, including timeline, reports, briefs and quick guide to the INC process



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