

# Position Paper

## Plastics Europe Position on a Global Agreement on Plastics

*Plastics Europe is the pan-European association of plastics manufacturers. We represent close to 100 member companies producing over 90% of all polymers across Europe. At international level, we work with the International Council of Chemical Associations - Plastic Leadership Group (ICCA - PLG).*

### **Vision**

Plastics Europe prioritises efforts aimed at preventing leakage of plastic into the environment and that enable universal access to waste collection. We must ensure plastic products are valued for their contribution to achieving the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) and are sustainably produced, used, and recovered in a circular economy.

Plastics Europe supports the development of an international agreement addressing the challenge of plastic waste and marine plastic debris through sustainable consumption and production, design and technology innovation, and infrastructure investment. This requires collaboration between governments, the private sector, civil society, and academia to identify and replicate solutions at scale.

### **Plastics are Essential to Achieving Sustainability and Climate Goals**

Plastics are essential to achieving the SDGs and meeting national commitments under the Paris Agreement. Plastics are vital to addressing society's largest challenges, including improving medical outcomes, access to fresh and healthy foods, hygiene and sanitation, modern communication, transportation systems, infrastructure, and employment. For example, through lightweighting cars and insulating buildings, plastics reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. These benefits are jeopardised if plastic waste pollutes our environment.

### **Plastic Industry Support for a Global Agreement**

PlasticsEurope supports establishing a targeted goal to ensure access to proper waste management and eliminate leakage of plastic into the ocean. We believe this goal provides a clear objective for countries, industry, and stakeholders. Aligning with governments that share this goal is a priority. Reviewing current proposals, we agree with many of the recommendations included in the World Wildlife Fund, Ellen MacArthur Foundation, Boston Consulting Group [Business Case for a UN Treaty on Plastic Pollution](#). We are concerned with the [Nordic Council](#)'s focus on

international sustainability criteria, which could lead to restrictions on the production of these sustainable materials.

We support a resolution at the 5th meeting of the United Nations Environment Assembly (February 2022) beginning negotiation of a global agreement on plastics with the following key parameters.

Our Vision for a Global Framework:

- *Governments Commit to Eliminate Leakage:* Adopt the G20's 2050 Osaka Blue Ocean Vision
- *Establish National Action Plans:* Allow countries flexibility to develop regionally appropriate plans to eliminate plastic waste leakage based on local circumstances and supported by enabling policies
- *Harmonised Definitions & Reporting:* Develop, with industry input, globally harmonised definitions and reporting metrics on plastics and plastic waste, using validated and harmonised methodologies
- *Guidance to Improve Product Design:* Develop global guidance, with industry input, on product design, recycled content, and resources efficiency optimization
- *Waste Management Capacity Building:* Ensure access and improve waste management capacity
- *Technology Deployment:* Support chemical recycling technology, complementing mechanical recycling, to increase circularity of plastics
- *Achieve Climate Goals:* Support life cycle analysis to evaluate impacts of plastics and alternatives

Countries Need Domestic Flexibility to Achieve Global Goals:

- *Global Plastics Regulations:* Efforts to regulate plastics globally through the development of regulatory standards, product-specific obligations, or creation of international sustainability criteria undermine our vision of eliminating plastic waste. Flexibility is important for countries to adapt their regulatory framework and prevent adverse environmental, health, and socioeconomic impacts
- *Production Limits:* Globally mandated controls should not be imposed on production and consumption of plastics or plastic products. Impacts of proposed measures must be assessed to reduce regrettable substitutions.

As member states move forward with the development of a new global agreement, engaging business, industry associations, and other stakeholders to identify and then implement regionally appropriate measures is critical to achieving the goal of eliminating leakage of plastic into the environment

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