



KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
Nation Religion King

Ministry of Environment

N^o : 266 MoE

Phnom Penh, 04. February 2023

Mr. Jyoti Mathur-Filipp
Executive Secretary
Secretariat for the INC on Plastic Pollution

Subject: Written Submission on the potential options for elements towards an international legally binding instrument

Dear Mr. Jyoti,

With reference to your letter dated on 9th December 2022 (Ref: UNEP-INC-2022-0005), Call for Written Submission on the potential options for elements towards an international legally binding instrument on ending plastic pollution, I would like to inform you that, the Ministry of Environment of the Kingdom of Cambodia is recognized the issue of plastic pollution and the potential threats plastic waste poses to the pristine environment, biodiversity, and human health, which require all UN member states to join hand to end plastic pollution.

In this regard, I am pleased to inform you that the Ministry of Environment of the Kingdom of Cambodia, would like to express our appreciation towards the development of an international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution.

Taking this opportunity, please find the enclosed of our official submission on the potential options for elements towards an international legally binding instrument. We looking forward to be working with INC Secretariat, other UN agencies and stakeholders around the globe.

Please accept, Mr. Jyoti, the assurances of my high consideration.

Yours sincerely,

SAO Sopheap,

Secretary of State

Call for written submissions – Proposed response template on potential options for elements towards an international legally binding instrument

On 9 December 2022, the Executive Secretary of the INC Plastic Pollution Secretariat sent a notification, which invited written submissions from members of the committee and stakeholders. The following template is intended to provide guidance to members of the committee and stakeholders in structuring the written submissions.

As requested by INC-1, written submissions will support the secretariat in preparing a document with potential options for elements towards an international legally binding instrument. It will be considered at the second session of the INC, without prejudging what the committee will decide as regards the structure and provisions of the instrument. The document will be based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastics as called for by UNEA resolution 5/14. This includes identifying objective, substantive provisions for core obligations, control measures, as well as voluntary approaches, implementation measures, and means of implementation.

The following template is meant as a guide that assists members and stakeholders to prepare their written submission. Several documents prepared for INC-1 are relevant, notably UNEP/PP/INC.1/5 on 'Potential elements, based on provisions in paragraphs 3 and 4 of United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 5/14, including key concepts, procedures and mechanisms of legally binding multilateral agreements that may be relevant to furthering implementation and compliance under the future international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment'.

The template is divided into three sections:

- I. Substantive elements
- II. Implementation elements
- III. Additional input

All written submissions must be sent to unep-incplastic.secretariat@un.org. The statements received will be compiled and made available at the INC webpage.

Please note that submission does not require all fields of the template to be answered.

Deadline for submissions:

- 6 January 2023 for written submissions from stakeholders.
- 10 February 2023 for written submissions from members of the Committee.

TEMPLATE FOR SUBMISSIONS

Name of country (for members of the committee)	Cambodia
Name of organization (for stakeholders to the committee)	
Contact person and contact information for the submission	H.E Kith Chankrisna , Advisor to Minister, Ministry of Environment, email: kithchankrisna@gmail.com Mr. Roath Sith , Deputy Director General, General Directorate of Environmental Protection, Ministry of Environment, email: roathsith@gmail.com
Date	6 th February 2023

Overall comments

On behalf of the Cambodia delegation, we would like to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the UNEP and the Government of Uruguay for hosting the important intergovernmental negotiating committee meeting to develop an international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution. We would also like to congratulate the chairman for being elected to govern the INC1 meeting.

Cambodia is gravely concerned about plastic pollution and its adverse impact on our society, environment, biodiversity, and public health. Cambodia has observed rapidly growing volumes of plastic waste, mainly generated by single-use packaging materials. Now plastic waste constitutes over 20% of general waste, adding enormous pressure on our waste management systems.

In alignment with the global aim to end plastic pollution, Cambodia has developed and implemented several measures focusing on 4R (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) actions to reduce plastic waste generation and to prevent both land- and sea-based plastic leakages:

- (1) **Enabling policies and regulations for 4Rs**, including draft National Action Plan & National Roadmap for plastic management, a draft sub decree on plastic management, and policy matrix
- (2) **Environmental education and awareness raising**: This includes dissemination of 100+ videos, strategic social media-based communication, and clean-up and outreach activities to schools, communities, and temples, with a reach of more than 2 million students and people in Cambodia
- (3) **Innovation, finance, and business development for alternatives (such as bioplastics/compostable plastics), and Circular Economy solutions** (recycling, reuse, plastic waste to energy, bricks, and asphalt production). Cambodia is also in the process of designing a voluntary Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme to mobilize technical and financial support to ensure effective collection and treatment of plastic waste

Cambodia is committed to join hands with global and regional communities to act and support the development of the international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution by 2024. Please refer to our specific comments as below. Thank you for your kind attention.

I. Substantive elements

1. Objective(s)

a) What objective(s) could be set out in the instrument?

Proposed Objective:

Scope: We support the proposed comprehensive approach of “addressing the full life cycle of plastics,” *inter alia*, covering the design, production, trade, consumption, and waste management (collection, disposal and recycling) of plastics. Particular attention should be paid to reducing the total volume of global plastic production, targeted at single-use plastics as well as supporting low- and middle- income countries to enhance plastic waste management and prevent land- and sea- based leakages.

Objectives: We support the proposed overall objective: “protect the environment and human health from plastic pollution with the ultimate goal to end plastic pollution.” We also support 4R and circular economy approaches, sustainable production and consumption, environmentally sound management of plastic waste, and a just transition with green job-creation to achieve this goal.

Explanatory Text:

Scope: The total volume of global plastic production shall be reduced/controlled since the current total volume far exceeds the global waste management capacity. This is also clear from substantial amount of plastic waste (8-12 million metric tons) entering the ocean every year. According to OECD (2022)¹, out of 8 billion metric tons of plastic produced, only 9 % was recycled, 19 % was incinerated, and 50 % went to sanitary landfills, with 22 % ending up in the environment (lands, rivers, oceans) Hence, it is crucial to address the root cause of the problem, by controlling and minimizing the total production of plastic materials/products, especially targeted at non-essential single-use plastic items and harmful chemical additives and substances. Equally important is to provide technical and financial support to low- and middle-income countries in enhancing collection and management capacities of plastic waste and legacy plastics.

Objectives: Cambodia has been implementing a wide range of circular, socially inclusive, and just measures to promote the 4R (refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle) actions against plastic pollution and to protect its environment and public health. We also have promoted a multi-stakeholder approach and a just transition towards a circular economy and sustainable consumption and production through engaging the government, citizens, private sector, development partners, civil society, educational institution and academia, and the informal sector in jointly providing solutions to this challenge.

¹ <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/de747aef-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/de747aef-en>

2. Core obligations, control measures and voluntary approaches

a) *What core obligations, control measures and voluntary approaches would provide a comprehensive approach to addressing plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, throughout the full life cycle in line with the future objective(s) of the instrument?*

We support the combination of legally binding core obligations, control measures and voluntary elements, allowing for a flexible approach to implementation, by enabling countries to design and implement measures and actions outlined under a National Action Plan (NAP) that reflects national circumstances and priorities. We would also like to highlight the need for financial and technical assistance to low- and middle-income countries in implementing the necessary actions.

Core obligations: We support core obligations including:

- 1) Phasing out non-essential plastics including single-use plastics,
- 2) Bans and elimination of non-economically recyclable plastic items, harmful substances and additives,
- 3) Making other plastics reusable and recyclable along with product standards/labelling,
- 4) Promote the use of biodegradable and compostable products to replace plastic,
- 5) Promotion/adaption of circular measures (e. g. environmentally friendly alternatives, recycling, reuse, repair of plastics),
- 6) Bans and enforcement of illegal trade, dumping, and disposal of plastic waste, and
- 7) Environmentally sound management of plastic waste including legacy waste.

Control measures: We propose the following control measures:

- Controlling and reducing the overall global plastic production,
- Bans on the production and trade of harmful substances and additives,
- EPR obligations for global multi-national corporates which produce oil and plastics to support low-and middle-income countries in achieving effective collection and recycling of plastic waste, and
- Bans and enforcement of prohibition on illegal trade, dumping, and disposal of plastic waste.

Voluntary approaches. We suggest the following voluntary approaches to be outlined under the NAPs, reflecting national circumstances and financial and technical capacities

- Design and implementation of regulatory, fiscal, and economic measures and eco-standards,
- Awareness raising and outreach activities for behavior changes towards sustainable consumption and production,
- Promotion/adaption of circular measures (e. g. environmentally friendly alternatives, recycling, reuse, repair of plastics, green procurement),
- Mobilization of the private sector engagement for innovation, finance, and technical assistance for product development, EPR, and waste management.

II. Implementation elements

1. Implementation measures

- a) *How to ensure implementation of the instrument at the national level (e. g. the role of national action plans in meeting the objectives and obligations of the instrument?)*
- b) *How to ensure effectiveness of the instrument and efficient national reporting?*
- c) *Please provide any other relevant proposals or priorities here on implementation measures (for example for scientific and technical cooperation and coordination as well as compliance).*

Similar to the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) used under the Paris Agreement, National Action Plans (NAPs) shall be used as a key policy instrument for countries to outline national commitments, goals, and proposed sets of measures to contribute to both national and global goals to end land-and sea- based plastic pollution.

NAPs should also entail clear plans for M&E and reporting to track and report the progress and results towards the set goals with references to linkages to the NDC GHG targets (waste sector).

Due to limited capacity and finance for data collection and management, technical and financial support is required for low- and middle-income countries to be able to collect baseline data on plastic pollution (types of plastics generated, pollution sources, status of treatments) and to build adequate capacity for M&E, monitoring and reporting.

2. Means of Implementation

With respect to means of implementation, document UNEP/PP/INC.1/5 covers the following elements: capacity-building, technical assistance, and technology transfer on mutually agreed terms and financial assistance.

- a) *What measures will be required to support the implementation of the instrument?*

Policy, regulatory, fiscal, and economic measures (led by national and subnational governments): Besides NAP, a range of policy and regulatory instruments shall be required such as regulations on single-use plastics, standards for recycling operations, green procurement, and eco-labeling. Fiscal and economic measures are also essential to deter environmentally harmful plastic materials/products and to promote environmentally friendly alternatives and CE measures.

Environmental education and awareness raising: The measures mentioned above will be effective only when adopted and implemented by target stakeholders (e. g. citizens, businesses, informal sector). This requires enhancing the knowledge of problems and solutions for plastic pollution. Systemic efforts are also required in support of behavior change.

Measures to foster private sector engagement: the private sector plays a pivotal role in fostering innovation in product design, technology and production, and mobilizing required finances/investments for resource efficient production, and effective collection and treatment of plastic waste. Various instruments (regulations, levies, taxes, subsidies, EPR schemes) can be used

to promote environmentally friendly products and practices, and to deter the production and sale of hazardous/non-essential plastic materials/products.

Support for innovation, finance, and technology: Financial and technical assistance is needed for low- and middle-income countries in implementing the obligations of the ILBI.

In addition to finance, transfer of technology and knowledge, and institutional capacity building are another enabling factor for the least developed and developing countries to promote environmentally sound management of plastic waste (e. g. plastic recycling, plastic waste into bricks/asphalt production, waste to energy) and providing environmentally friendly alternatives and circular solutions.

In the case of Cambodia, most recycling business are operated by micro- and small enterprises, with limited capacity to process the rapidly growing volume of plastic waste. Like other countries, Cambodia faces a challenge in providing environmentally friendly alternatives due to limited availability of price competitive options. Finance and technical support is an integral element to upgrade the related business operations, ensure environmentally sound standards, and achieve economy of scales required for the products to be competitive.

Lastly, while many innovative solutions are emerging (e. g. environmentally friendly alternatives, plastic recycling, mixing plastic waste into bricks and asphalt production, waste to energy), there is limited knowledge about the feasibility of business models, their possible environmental impacts, and appropriate environmental standards.

III. Additional input

Please provide any other relevant proposals or priorities here (for example introductory elements; awareness-raising, education, and exchange of information; research; stakeholder engagement; institutional arrangements and final provisions).

Further research, knowledge, and technology transfer are needed in the following areas

- Scientific evidence on the impacts of micro-plastics on our environment and human health
- Clear definitions and guidelines for environmentally friendly alternatives (uncertainty remains about environmentally friendly alternatives, bioplastics, biodegradable and compostable plastics)
- Best practices to engage the private sector, for innovation, finance and investments, sustainable production and consumption, EPR schemes, plastic credit schemes, etc.
 - o Plastic credit schemes: What is the role of the emerging, voluntary plastic credit scheme under the ILBI?
- Best practices to engage the informal sector into CE measures to meet lifestyle interests and aspirations while also providing social and economic security,
- Research and development of bioplastic technology and investment in bioplastic production,
- Capacity building and fellowship/internship in the field of biodegradable and compostable plastic management and circular economy.