

Co-Hosts and Co-Facilitators Summary

Ministerial Conference on Plastic Pollution and Marine Litter

28. October, Cali

Co-Hosts: Canada, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Germany, Ghana

Extent of full life cycle – Co-facilitators: France/Germany

- There was an overwhelming recognition that the projected increase in polymer production is not sustainable.
- While many participants strongly stated the need to curb primary polymer production to sustainable levels, others focussed on the need to implement more powerful downstream measures.
- In this regard, some supported global target(s) for plastic production, while others preferred a global target on ending plastic pollution.
- There was a recognition that downstream measures to prevent leakage into the environment, supported by significant financial flows, were important.
- There were strong calls to implement measures that disincentivize the production of unnecessary plastic products and particularly harmful polymers or products.
- There was general recognition that differing approaches are needed for different products and polymers.
- Some suggested that innovative new techniques might be a solution.
- Many saw practical and financial effects on the production of harmful and unnecessary polymers or products, e.g. through regulation (like measures on product design) or financial consequences (like through EPR schemes or incentives for eco design), as positive. Such measures give clear guidance to industry as to which products are not sustainable.
- Further, these participants considered the financial impact on consumers as necessary to make industry change production patterns. They mentioned the polluter pays principle as significant.
- Others cautioned that such financial impacts might not be socially acceptable and emphasised the need to focus on the economy.
- Many argued that there was a need for effectiveness, transparency and flexibility in finding solution and regulation.
- There was a call to clearly set out what it means to “end plastic pollution” in order to focus the measures in the international legally binding instrument.

Relation of upstream and downstream measures – Co-facilitators: Colombia/Japan

- The importance of managing plastic pollution effectively across the entire lifecycle was emphasized.

- There was strong agreement on the important role of globally harmonized actions, with the need to agree on a common global criteria and introducing legally binding rules and procedures stressed by some.
- Some called for agreed global lists on the restrictions of certain plastic products and chemicals of concern, while others stressed the need to take into account different national circumstances to ensure broad implementation.
- There was wide agreement on the need to tackle single use plastics. and broad recognition that transitioning to a safe and circular economy for plastics should be the general direction.
- Some highlighted the fact that calls for harmonized global rules and actions were coming from a wide range of stakeholders including businesses, regional governments and civil society. Creating a level playing field on safe and circular plastics can be expected to lower costs of compliance and implementation by ensuring consistency and predictability.
- When taking actions across the life cycle of plastics, the importance of following the waste hierarchy from the top was mentioned
- Some further stressed that improving waste management alone, including enhanced recycling, cannot solve the problem by itself.
- There was strong expectations towards the role which product design can play throughout the life cycle of plastic products from production, use, recycling and disposal. General design principles could guide overall considerations, while sector specific design and performance requirements and a dedicated programme of work could promote further actions for high impact sectors, for example, packaging.
- Some highlighted the effectiveness for identifying low hanging fruit actions, while others flagged the need for studies and research on socioeconomic impacts to ensure smooth implementation.
- That said, some mentioned that there is already a wealth of knowledge and experience including in guidelines based on existing MEAs, which we should make the best use of.
- Many highlighted the importance of incorporating the Polluter Pays Principle, including through establishing Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) systems as a vital tool for improving waste management and expectations on the provision of guidance and support for the establishment of EPR systems.
- Many members acknowledged that various actions to address legacy and cross-border waste in the environment, including rivers and oceans, already exist, and should be further strengthened.

Historic and future roles of states and private sector – Co-facilitators: Ghana/Maldives

- There was an overwhelming recognition that there is an important role for both private and public sector and the need to send the right signal to the private sector on its role on the mobilization of financial resources.
- Some felt that the treaty must create an enabling environment through regulatory or policy measures to catalyse private sector funding:
 - o There was widespread agreement that deposits with return schemes show promising results for others to take up”
 - o number of participants felt that the treaty should also establish regulatory mechanisms that are based on the polluter pays principle.
 - o Some raised the potential of further mobilizing finances and resources through EPR systems and measures that incorporate the polluter pays principle.
 - o It was mentioned that the private sector can be better mobilized at the upstream of the plastic life cycle, while the public sector can concentrate on the downstream section of collection and sorting plastic waste

- The opinion was voiced that the private sector can help with better product design and alternatives to plastics
- Some suggested that a fund could provide incentives to the private sector for promoting innovation and for developing viable alternatives to plastic.
- Some member states indicated that a dedicated standalone multilateral fund could be used for the implementation of the treaty. Others also indicated that existing funds could also support the implementation of the treaty.
- Some stated that the financial mechanism should help towards ensuring just transition, technology transfer and capacity building
- Some mentioned that there is the need to indicate what the funds will be used for. The financial mechanism must fit the purpose, i.e. the outcomes that we define for the treaty.
- Some stated that the financial mechanism can also help towards building infrastructure for plastics waste management and to help managing legacy plastics.