Rethinking the need for single-use plastics: standards for sustainable plastic alternatives and non-plastic substitutes

Tentative Agenda

26th November 2026, 09:30 a.m. to 04:00 p.m. (Geneva Time)

Room E, World Trade Organization Building, Geneva Switzerland

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Thursday, 26th November (Invitation-Only Event)

09:30 - 10:00 hrs.	**Registration of participants**
10:00 - 10:15 hrs.	**Opening Remarks: DPP Coordinators, OECD, UNCTAD (5mins each)**
Description	Opening remarks and presentation of the workshop purpose and expected results.
10:15-11:15 hrs.	**Panel A:** Key insights and trade data for understanding plastic alternatives and non-plastic substitutes replacing single-use plastics
Panelists	**Moderator: Mr. David Vivas Eugui,** Chief a.i. of the Ocean and Circular Economy Unit, Trade, Environment, Climate Change and Sustainable Development Branch, UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) **Mr. Michael Shaver,** Director of Sustainable Materials Innovation Hub, University of Manchester **Ms. Petra Kynclova,** Statistician, UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) **Ms. Luciana Pellegrino,** President, World Packaging Organization (WPO) **Mr. Adi Reza Nugroho,** CEO, MYCL, Indonesia
Q&A	Clarification questions follow.
Key Questions	• To which extent does existing data capture trade in plastics, plastic alternatives, and non-plastic substitutes, and what are the main data gaps? • What are the main technical, trade, economic, and financing barriers to scaling up sustainable plastic alternatives and non-

plastic substitutes, and which incentives (such as investment and finance) could help overcome them?

- Which tradable product categories are critical for plastic substitution to lower plastic pollution and leakage, how can we ensure additives and chemicals of concern are responsibly governed in plastic alternatives and substitutes, and what role could marine-based alternatives and substitutes play?

11:15-11:30 hrs. **Coffee Break**

11:30-12:30 hrs. **Panel B:** Distinguishing genuine progress from regrettable substitution

Moderator: Ms. Manuela Kiehl, Environmental Economist, OECD

Government Representative, Thailand – TBC

Ms. Sophie Huysveld, Professor at University of Ghent

Mr. Axel Marx, Deputy Director Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies

Mr. Henrique Pacini, UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

Q&A Clarification questions follow

Kez questions

- What are the key environmental and human health risks and impacts associated with plastic alternatives and non-plastic substitutes across their lifecycle? How do these compare to each other and to those of fossil-based plastics?
- How can the environmental performance of alternatives and substitutes be improved through standards and other measures?
- Can trade in environmental services be key to reducing risks and impacts related to potentially regrettable substitution?

12:30-14:00 hrs. **Lunch Break**

14:00-15:30 hrs. **Policy roundtable:** Using trade-related policy to promote sustainable progress on plastic alternatives and non-plastic substitutes

Panellists **[Moderator] DPP coordinator**

Ms. Carolyn Deere Birkbeck, Founder and Executive Director, Forum on Trade, Environment, & the SDGs (TESS)

Government representative, EU – TBC

Government representative, Costa Rica – TBC

Private Sector representative, TBC

Ms. Ieva Baršauskaitė, Lead, Trade and Green Transition, IISD

Mr. Ebenezer Laryea, Reader in Sustainable Development Law**,** Aston University, West African Plastics Alternative Initiative - WAPAI

Q&A Clarification questions follow

Kez questions

- How can standards and regulatory measures for plastic alternatives and non-plastic substitutes (including their chemical additives) be developed, used and improved?

Rapporteur	• How can international co-operation, regional initiatives and private-public partnerships help reduce fragmentation in standards on plastic alternatives and non-plastic substitutes and reduce unnecessary trade barriers? • How can economies and regional communities use trade-related policies to support the adoption and scaling of sustainable plastic alternatives and non-plastic substitutes, as part of a broader policy package to address plastic pollution?
15:30-15:45 hrs.	**Closing remarks: OECD, UNCTAD, DPP (5mins each)**
16:00 hrs.	**End of Workshop**