



The Role of Trade Measures in the Future LBI on Plastics Pollution

The importance of trade measures and the broader multilateral process from the perspective of Barbados

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Current state of play

- Midpoint of INC process but key questions remain on terms and MOI of future instrument
- Negotiators must move beyond procedural matters and into substance on the back-end of the future LBI



The challenge of plastics on SIDS

- “Passive import” of plastics to SIDS through marine pollution and land-based sources
- Limited fiscal and physical capacity to treat waste = exponential growth of plastic pollution
- Accumulations of plastic waste on small islands have nowhere to go



The challenge of plastics on SIDS: Social & Economic

- Plastic waste has negative impacts on marine ecosystems and biodiversity
- Marine plastic litter challenges the ability to exploit the blue economy
- Impacts of microplastics on human health still to be quantified



“Urgent and concerted legally-binding measures with a clear technical assistance pillar, are the only solution to disrupting this cycle.”

Primacy of multilateralism and partnerships

- In the absence of multilateralism, we risk an instrument that does not meet the challenge of plastic pollution
- Partnerships with specialised agencies such as WTO and UNCTAD are key to thought leadership and policy insights to guide Member States in the negotiation of the final instrument



Key trade measure options

- Dampening demand for fossil fuel-based raw materials for plastics, including phasing out subsidies and regulating sourcing and extraction
- Promoting circularity
- Controlling exports of plastic waste
- Transparency and accountability
- Adequate and sustainable financing



There WILL be friction. Partnerships will be crucial to creating an enabling regulatory environment to match our ambition.

Conclusion

- Sensible trade measures were made for moments like these
- Trade mechanisms are the only durable tool to change the business-as-usual model
- A final instrument with only voluntary commitments is not enough



Thank you, co-coordinators!

World Trade Organization, United Nations
Conference on Trade & Development, Forum on
Trade, Environment and the SDGS (TESS), Center
for International Environmental Law & Ocean
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