



SUPPORTING ASEAN ON ISSUES OF REGIONAL PLASTIC WASTE TRADE

INC3 Side event: Trade and development aspects of plastic pollution mitigation measures, non-plastic substitutes, and plastic alternatives".

November 12, 2023

CONTEXT



ASEAN Member States are facing a **plastic waste crisis** managing large volumes of domestic plastic.

After the diversion of plastic waste imports away from China (after their National Sword Policy), ASEAN countries started to develop **ad hoc measures to restrict or prohibit the import of plastic waste** –but lacking regional coordination.

Indications of **substantial plastic waste trade within the ASEAN region** - unclear if the exports carried out within the region are for the purpose of transit/rerouting or recycling.

PLASTIC WASTE TRADE

- Continuous growth in plastic waste generation
- Policy framework for plastic waste:
 - Prevention and Circular Economy
 - Environmentally sound management
 - Monitoring system for shipments of certain types of plastic waste



RESEARCH FINDINGS

- **No uniform** integration of acceptable **contamination levels**, nor consistency in the **types of plastic wastes accepted** across the region.
- No consistent **reporting or monitoring requirements** for plastic waste at a national, regional or global scale. The collection of data on plastic waste is currently being established.
- The HS codes administered by the WCO are **not aligned with waste codes** under Annexes of the Basel Convention.
- Non-hazardous plastic waste trade is currently not covered by an international agreement. **Procedures** to trade in plastic waste **outside the Basel Convention** are **not existing or aligned**.
- There is limited capacity / infrastructure for monitoring and reporting activities. A **shortage of data** on waste recycling capacities & actual recycled plastic waste and absence of a centralised database.
- **Gaps in recycling capacities**, while plants prefer imported plastic waste because of quality and price.
- Responses, like import bans, at country level, will have a **chain impact in the region** (“port hopping” effect).



- Lack of data infrastructure
- Gaps and delays in data gathering



- Lack of harmonised quality standards
- Lack of allowed levels of contamination

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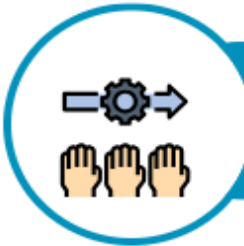
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Key take aways

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- Different regimes for imports of non-hazardous plastic waste



- Need for regional harmonized approach to avoid port hopping



- Certain plastic waste currently outside any international agreement



- Lack of appropriate ESM technologies
- Lack of plastic waste treatment capacity

REGIONAL APPROACH AS A POSSIBLE WAY FORWARD

- to **facilitate legal trade in plastic waste,**
- to agree on **common minimum criteria for plastic waste trade and management,** and
- to address the **prevention, monitoring & control** of pollution as a result of plastic waste trade.



POSSIBLE FOCUS AREAS OF A REGIONAL APPROACH

