

September 30th 2020 17h00 – 18h30



S29: Sustainability

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Carolyn Deere Birkbeck

Global Governance Centre, The Graduate Institute

Senior Researcher

Trade and trade policy in the fight against plastic pollution: What are the challenges and opportunities?

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Speakers

S29: Sustainability



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CENTER for INTERNATIONAL
ENVIRONMENTAL LAW



PEW



September 30th 2020 17h00 – 18h30



Winnie Lau

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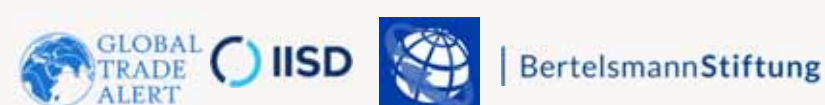
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BREAKING THE PLASTIC WAVE: A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF PATHWAYS TOWARDS STOPPING OCEAN PLASTIC POLLUTION



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UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD



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THOUGHT PARTNERS



ELLEN MACARTHUR
FOUNDATION



Common
Seas

Five proposed strategies

1

BAN/fees

2

BURN OR
BURY

3

CLEAN UP

4

RECYCLE

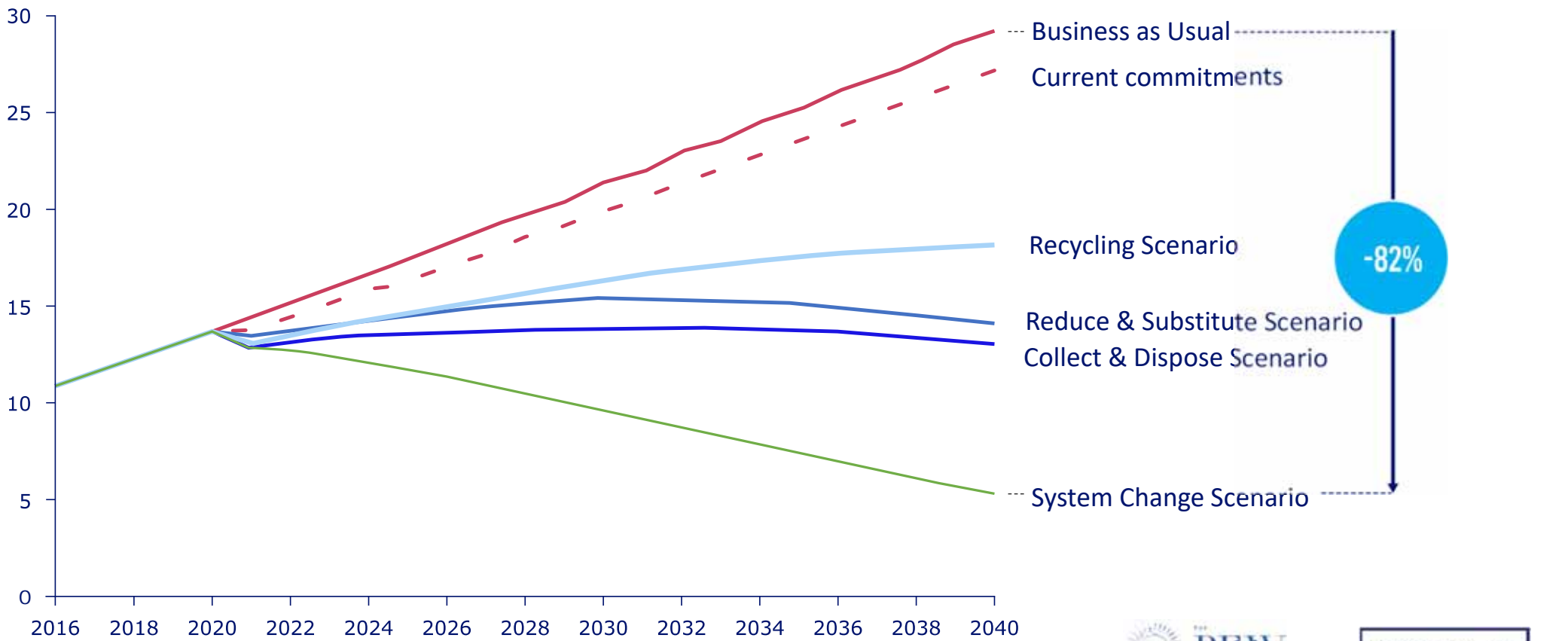
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BIOmateri
als






- How do strategies perform on **environmental, economic and social indicators**?
- HOW APPLICABLE ARE THEY to **MATERIALS AND GEOGRAPHIES**?
- What **costs and invest** are required?
- How **QUICKLY** can they be implemented?
- HOW do these strategies **interact**?

there are no “silver bullets”

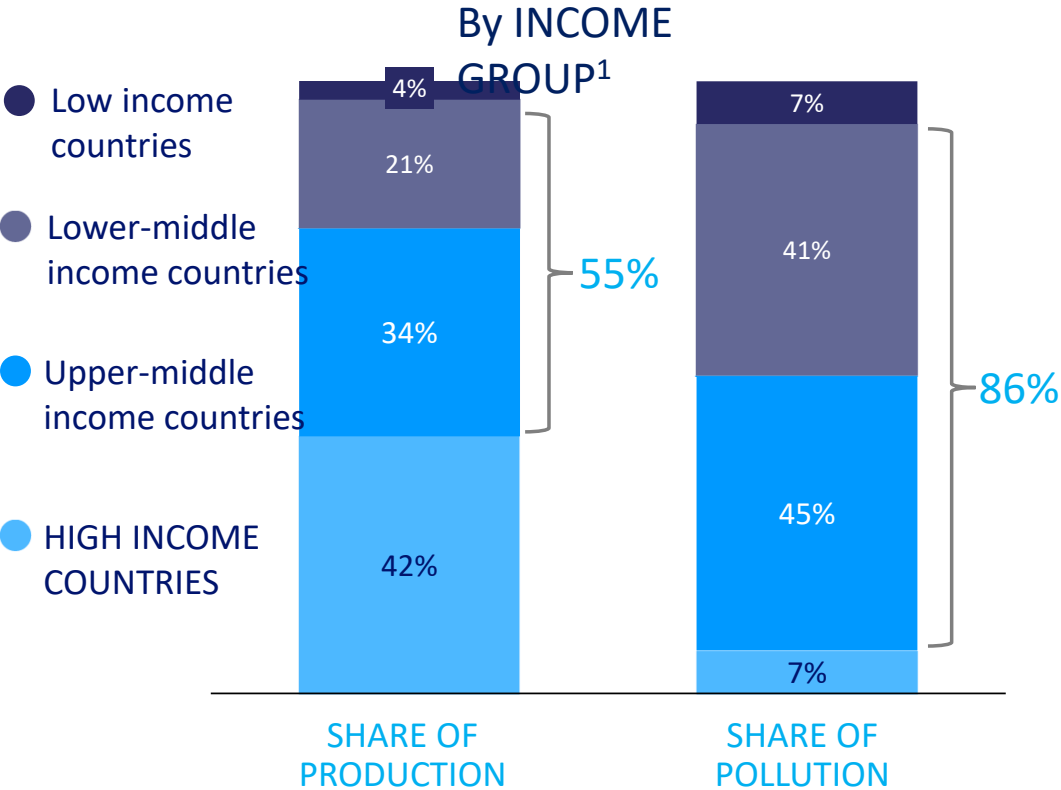
leakage to the ocean under different scenarios, Mt per year



the System Change Scenario requires applying all

	reduc	1/	Reduction in plastic production
	substitut	3/	Substitution with paper and compostable materials
	recycle	64%	Design products and packaging for recycling
		90%	Expand waste collection rates in the Global South
		2.5x	Increase mechanical recycling
		13	Develop plastic-to-plastic chemical recycling
	dispose	23	Build facilities for controlled disposal
		90%	Reduce plastic waste exports
	MICROPLASTICS	1.8 MT	Rollout known microplastics solutions

Geographic differences



Waste export reduction

■ Highly applicable
 ■ Somewhat applicable
 ■ Not applicable

Most relevant geographic archetypes

HI Urban	UMI Urban	LMI Urban	LI Urban
HI Rural	UMI Rural	LMI Rural	LI Rural

HI: High-income LMI: Lower middle-income
 UMI: Upper middle-income LI: Low-income

Most relevant plastic categories

Rigid	Flex	Multi
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Main responsible stakeholder

- National governments

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Carlos Martin-Novella

Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

Deputy Executive Secretary



BASEL / ROTTERDAM / STOCKHOLM
CONVENTIONS

How are trade and trade policy relevant to reducing plastic pollution?

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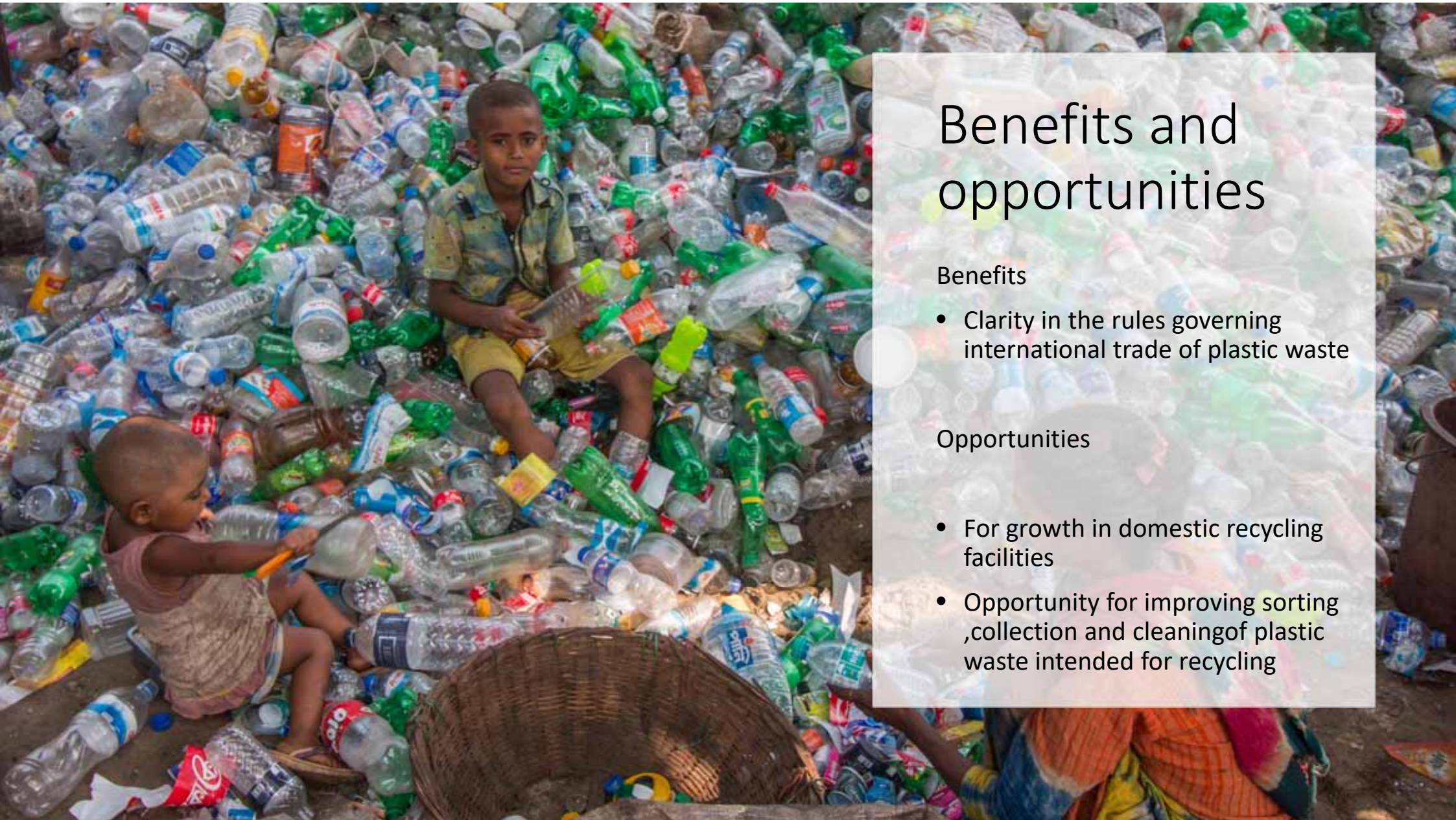


Annual global plastic production has increased from 2 to 380 million tonnes since 1950 and is projected to double by 2035.



The Basel Convention Plastic Waste Amendment

- **Annex II: Y48**, plastic waste, including mixtures of such wastes, subject to the PIC procedure (excluding those that would fall under A3210 or B3011)
- **Annex VIII: A3210**, clarifies the scope of plastic waste presumed to be hazardous and therefore subject to the PIC procedure
- **Annex IX: B3011**, plastic waste destined for recycling and almost free from contamination and other types of waste that remain excluded from the PIC procedure (certain single polymers or mixture of PE, PP and/or PET)
- **Effective as of 1 January 2021**



Benefits and opportunities

Benefits

- Clarity in the rules governing international trade of plastic waste

Opportunities


- For growth in domestic recycling facilities
- Opportunity for improving sorting, collection and cleaning of plastic waste intended for recycling



Thank you for your
attention

For more information please visit us at:

<http://www.brsmeas.org/>

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Senior Economist, UNCTAD

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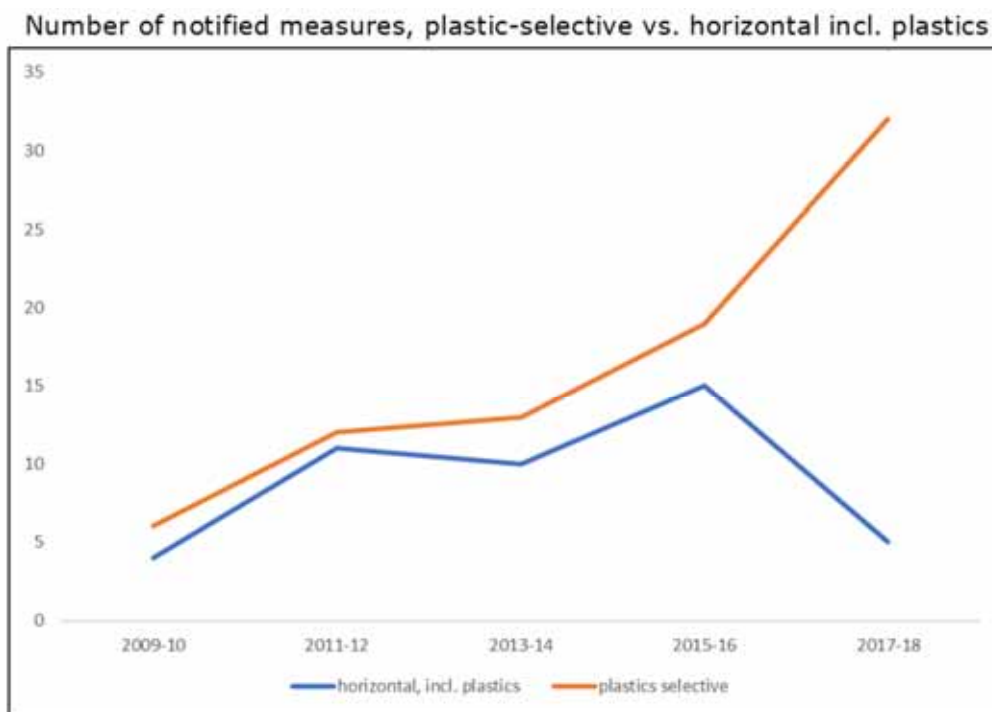


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Trends in plastic trade-related measures notified to the WTO, 2009-18



Source: UNCTAD analysis on data from the WTO Environmental Database (2020).

Trends in plastic trade-related measures notified to the WTO, 2009-18

Number and share of notified measures, by type of measure and development status of reporter

WTO Agreement	Harmonized types of measures	World		Developed economies		Developing and transition economies		Least developed countries (LDCs)	
		Number	Share	Number	Share	Number	Share	Number	Share
Government Procurement	Public procurement	3	2%	3	14%	-	-	-	-
Import Licensing Procedures	Import licences	21	17%	-	-	21	23%	-	-
	Import quotas	3	2%	-	-	3	3%	-	-
	Export licences	1	1%	-	-	1	1%	-	-
Quantitative Restrictions	Bar/Prohibition	7	6%	-	-	6	7%	1	6%
	Import licences	4	3%	-	-	4	4%	-	-
	Export licences	1	1%	-	-	1	1%	-	-
Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures	Bar/Prohibition	1	1%	-	-	1	1%	-	-
	Technical regulation or specifications	1	1%	-	-	1	1%	-	-
Subsidies and Countervailing Measures	Grants and direct payments	4	3%	3	14%	1	1%	-	-
	Tax concessions	3	2%	-	-	3	3%	-	-
Technical Barriers to Trade	Bar/Prohibition	5	4%	1	5%	2	2%	2	13%
	Conformity assessment procedures	15	12%	-	-	11	12%	4	25%
	Technical regulation or specifications	57	45%	14	67%	34	38%	9	56%
	Risk assessment	1	1%	-	-	1	1%	-	-
Total	Country group	127	100%	21	100%	90	100%	16	100%
	All sample		100%		17%		71%		13%

Source: UNCTAD analysis based on data from WTO Environmental Database (2020)
Note: See note to figure 1. Totals may not sum up to 100 due to rounding

Illustrative list of potential top-plastic substitutes

Product	Origin	Main-uses	Properties	Health-impact	Environmental-impact
Glass	Sand-based	Food and pharmaceutical products containers, and construction material	Solid, fragile, flexible, insulating, microwavable, heavy but tradable	Very good insulating material and non-toxic	It does not contain chemicals or carbon (only minerals), reusable, degradable by erosion and recyclable
Pottery and ceramics	Mineral and water-based	Tableware, container and ornamental uses	Solid, fragile, flexible, supports heat, heavy but tradable	Non-toxic material	Reusable, degradable by erosion and recyclable
Natural fibres	Plant-based (e.g. jute, cotton, coconut, palm)	Textiles, packaging, ropes, clothes, furniture, etc.	Strong, flexible, light, and fully tradable	Non-toxic. Production can allow carbon stocks	Reusable, 100 per cent biodegradable and recyclable.
Paper and cardboard	Cellulose-based	Bags, boxes, packaging, decoration, inputs industrial products	Flexible, light, and fully tradable	Non-toxic	Reusable, 100 per cent biodegradable and recyclable. Increase in use may generate pressure on timber extraction, unless from managed or certified forests or from recycling.
Rice husks & other organic wastes	Organic wastes	Cups, cutlery, dishes, construction components and inputs for composite materials	Flexible and light, and tradable	Non-toxic with insulation properties	100 per cent biodegradable
Milk protein	Casein-based	Furniture cushions, jewels, and packaging	Flexible and light, and tradable	Non-toxic with insulation properties	100 per cent biodegradable
Natural rubber	Plant-based latex (a natural polymer)	Used before plastics as the main elastomer. Shoes, toys, containers, tubes, auto parts, and clothing	Strong, flexible, light, insulating, microwavable, and fully tradable	Natural rubber is not toxic. Toxicity comes from chemical additives applied in manufacture of by-products	Pollution effects after disposal. It can be reused, recovered and recycled with certain limitations (e.g. after vulcanisation and use but some polluting effects). Level of recyclability depends on process used and chemical additives applied. Slow biodegradability. Rebuilding caoutchouc tree farms can increase carbon stocks.

Snapshot 2018 – World exports in selected plastics along value chain (\$US)

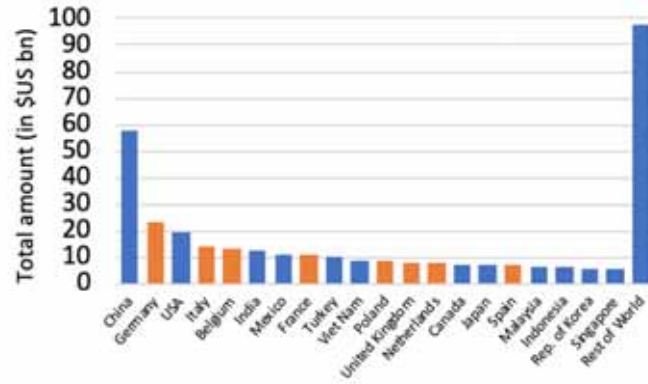
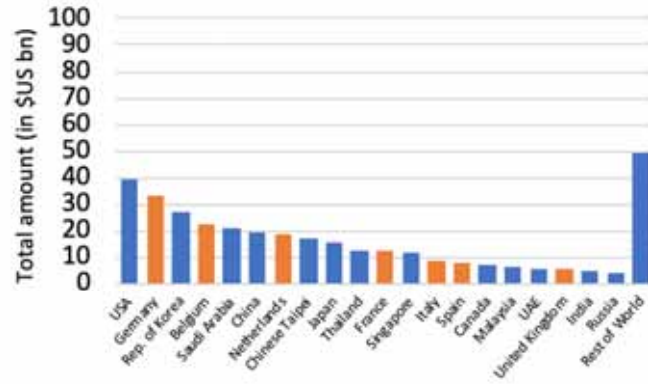
Category	Value	Volume
Primary forms	\$348 bn	196 M tons
Intermediate forms of plastic	\$168 bn	43 M tons
Intermediate manufactured plastic goods (inputs to final products)	\$67 bn	16 M tons
Final manufactured plastic products	\$422 bn	72 M tons
Plastic packaging	\$53 bn	14 M tons
Plastic waste	\$3 bn	8 M tons
TOTAL	\$1061 bn	349 M tons

NOTE: Data in this table do not include vast array of ‘hidden’ plastic trade flows –

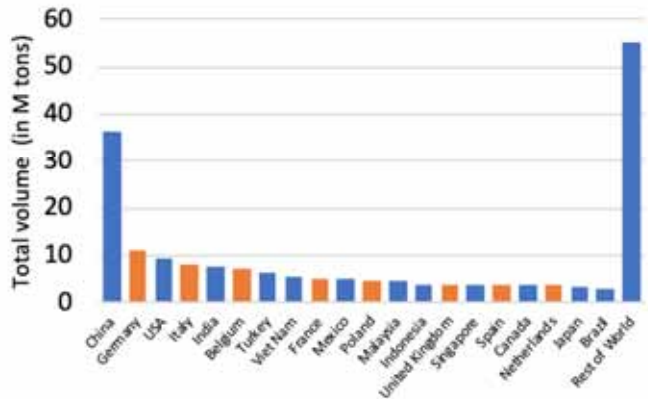
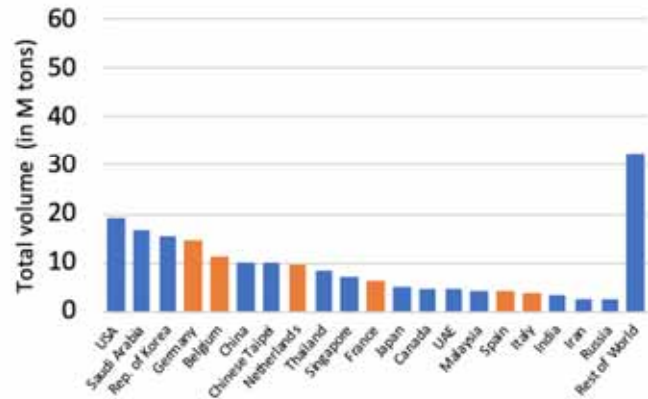
- plastic embedded in diversity of internationally traded products
- plastic packaging that is a part of intermediate and final products traded internationally (e.g., processed food) or used in transportation/distribution

Source: Christen, J. Barrowclough, D. & Deere Birkbeck, C. (2020) *Tracking Trade Flows in Plastics*, Working Paper. Data source: UNCTAD’s UN Comtrade database

Value exports (left) and imports (right) in primary forms of plastics - 2018



Volume exports (left) and imports (right) in primary forms of plastics - 2018



Source: Own computations using UNCTAD's UN Comtrade database and the BACI database

Notes: USA includes Puerto Rico and United States Virgin Islands; Belgium includes Luxemburg; France includes Monaco; Chinese Taipei is reported as "Other Asia, not elsewhere specified" in the BACI Database; Rest of World is the sum of all other countries

Source: Christen, J. Barrowclough, D. & Deere Birkbeck, C. (2020) *Tracking Trade Flows in Plastics*, Working Paper.

Promoting <i>sustainable transformation</i>	Ensuring a <i>just transition</i> to support process of transformation
Policies, rules and regulations to require and enforce shift toward more sustainable production (including taxes, charges and extended producer responsibility);	Capacity building and support for research, technical assistance and A4T support for developing countries to invested/active in GVCs involving plastics
Trade policies to support national efforts to reduce unsustainable production and consumption and encourage alternatives & substitutes;	Technology transfer and capacity build for developing countries to adapt production for greater sustainability; trade in waste management services and technologies; production of substitutes
Correct pricing to internalise real environmental impacts and strong environmental legislation (including possible regional approaches;	Clear sun-set periods for removal of existing incentives for unsustainable production or single use plastics;
Incentives for producers to adapt existing process and products to a more circular economy;	Incomes policies to support temporarily displaced workers;
Removal of existing subsidies or incentives no longer appropriate;	R&D, education and skills policies for re-training in use of new processes and products;
Support for development banks and financial institutions to finance transformative leaps toward sustainability by governments, firms and investors;	Social services for permanently displaced workers and transitional support for removal of subsidies;
Sustainability standards for products and production methods; certification of environmental standards	Information exchange, monitoring & assessment (e.g., on trade flows & related plastic pollution measures)
Procurement policies at national and regional level.	Cooperation with other international processes

Source: Derived from Barrowclough and Deere Birkbeck (2020) and Barrowclough and Kozul-Wright (2017).