



Safripol Sustainability Conference 2024

World Plastics Council -
Global challenges require global solutions

Benny Mermans

Chair, World Plastics Council



Navigating the Future of the Industry

The plastics industry faces complex challenges

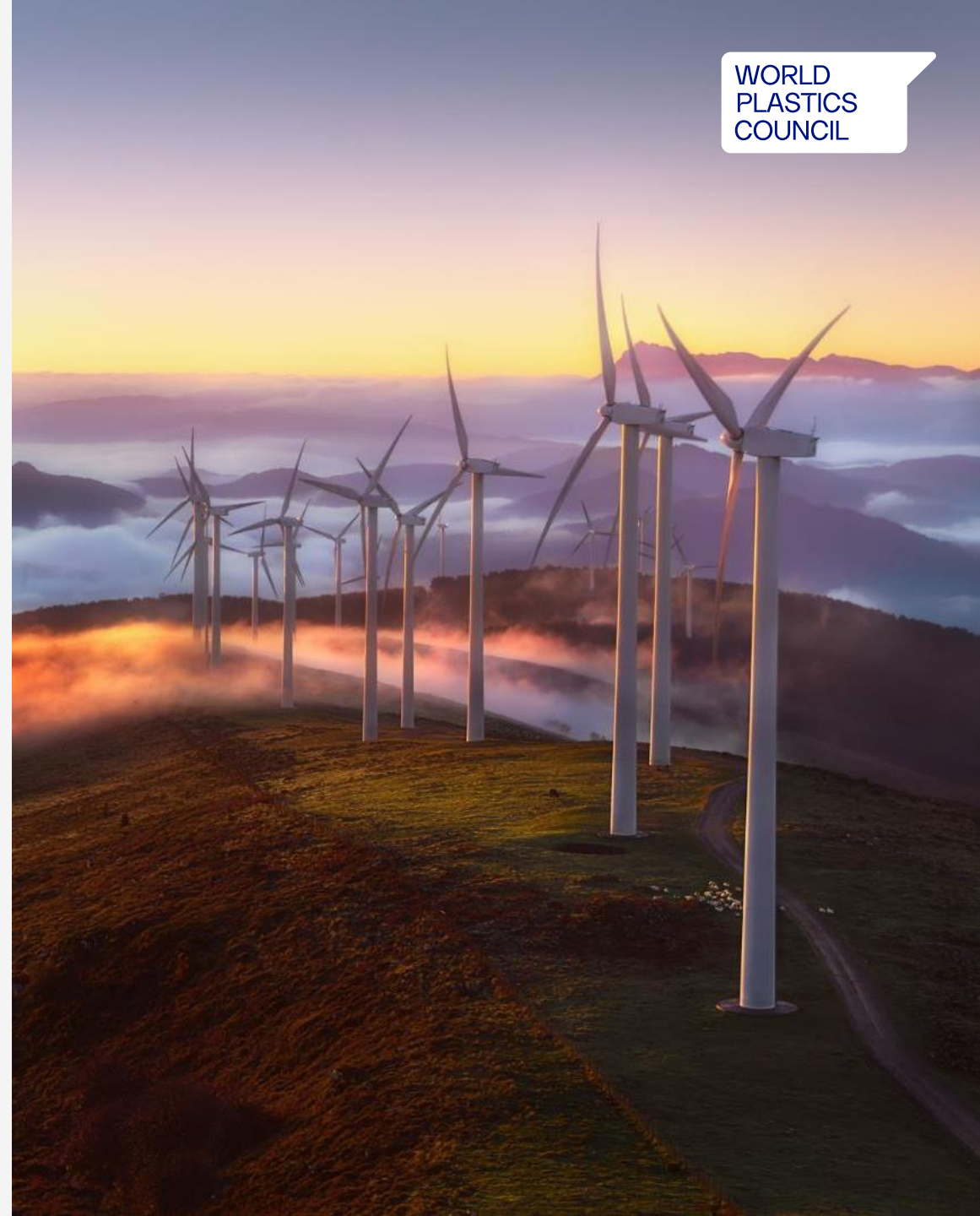
The global plastics industry is at a crossroads, being challenged by policy makers, environmental groups and the public to transform its practices.

A united global voice is essential

The Global Plastics Treaty is one of many current and future globally binding instruments that will directly impact our operations. The only way to successfully navigate these issues is by uniting behind one strong and global voice.

The World Plastics Council - A Global Advocate

We are the only organization that brings together the entire industry under a global umbrella to enable the future of our industry through direct dialogue, engagement and aligned communications.



We Are Not Alone: WPC Network



The American Chemistry Council's mission is to advocate for the people, policy, and products of chemistry that make the United States the global leader in innovation and manufacturing.



The Gulf Petrochemicals and Chemicals Association (GPCA) represents the downstream hydrocarbon industry in the Arabian Gulf. Established in 2006, the association voices the common interests of more than 250 member companies from the chemical and allied industries.



Plastics Europe's mission is to be the catalyst for the European plastics industry and to deliver solutions which are safe, circular and sustainable.



The Global Plastics Alliance (GPA) aims to promote sustainable solutions and circular economy practices in the plastics industry. Members of the GPA include companies, governments, and non-profit organizations working together to reduce plastic pollution and create a more sustainable future.



China Petroleum and Chemical Industry is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation consisting of companies, institutes, sectional associations and local associations in the petroleum and chemical industry in China.

Strong partnerships, global collaboration and bold actions

GLOBAL
PLASTICS
ALLIANCE



GLOBAL
PLASTIC ACTION
PARTNERSHIP

- Signed of Memorandum of Understanding: inclusion of the Global South in WPC's network and as an extension of WPC's voice.
 - Annual WPC-GPA meetings to exchange on knowledge and on-the-ground work.
 - OCS® licensing fee support to countries and associations.
 - Inclusion of GPA members' case studies on the WPC website
-
- INC-4: World Plastics Council roundtable discussion, "Plastics 360°: Perspectives on Enabling Policies for Circularity Across the Plastic Life Cycle"
 - Opening remarks by **Clemence Schmid**, Director Global Plastic Action Partnership Centre for Nature and Climate, World Economic Forum
 - UNGA roundtable event in partnership with WEF-GPAP, focused on suitable financial mechanisms (22 September, New York, Climate week)

A Global Voice with a Global Mission

The World Plastics Council operates on a global scale

The World Plastics Council is the only association speaking for plastics producers from Asia, the Middle East, North and South America, and Europe, representing 80% of global plastics production.

We are the only global plastics association consulting the UN

The World Plastics Council has successfully engaged with UN bodies and Member States to build understanding and support for a sustainable and circular plastics industry.

Membership gives you access to global leaders that will make a difference to your business

Be it industry colleagues, national and international policy makers or green NGO leaders, the World Plastics Council helps you to build the relationships you need to move your business forward.

Global Plastics Treaty

The plastics industry is committed to an ambitious, country-driven Global Plastics Treaty with a targeted goal to ensure access to proper waste management, eliminate leakage of plastic into the environment, and promote circularity. We engage with stakeholders to ensure they understand how best to achieve this.

Basel Convention

The Basel Convention is currently the only legally binding global instrument that aims to protect human health and the environment by controlling the cross-border movements of plastic waste. However, the convention severely limits circularity goals, and, as an accredited observer, we advocate for changes to this agreement.

Operation Clean Sweep®

The WPC works in partnership with our network to prevent the leakage of plastics into our oceans and is pressing for urgent measures to address the structural causes of marine pollution, including the lack of collection and recycling of municipal waste. And together, we share best practices and work on common standards.

The Basel Convention



BASEL CONVENTION

*the world environmental
agreement on wastes*

- ❑ Only legally binding global instrument that aims to protect human health and the environment by controlling the transboundary movements of hazardous wastes.
- ❑ In 2019 specific guidelines for difficult to recycle or hazardous plastic wastes were adopted
- ❑ Sets global standards on waste management, minimization, prevention, reduction, and circularity.

Chemical Recycling

Technical guidelines on the Environmentally Sound Management (ESM) of plastic waste adopted in 2023

- ‘Chemical recycling’ section bracketed as no consensus on ESM

Opportunity for WPC to educate global policymakers on benefits of chemical recycling and address common misconceptions.

- WPC Basel Issue Team/ICCA trade working group:
 - Developed strategy paper on plastics and trade to provide guidance at multilateral venues (WTO, OECD, INC,...)
- Partnership with ORA to develop a White Paper on “How recycling ecosystems can assist countries in a just transition.”



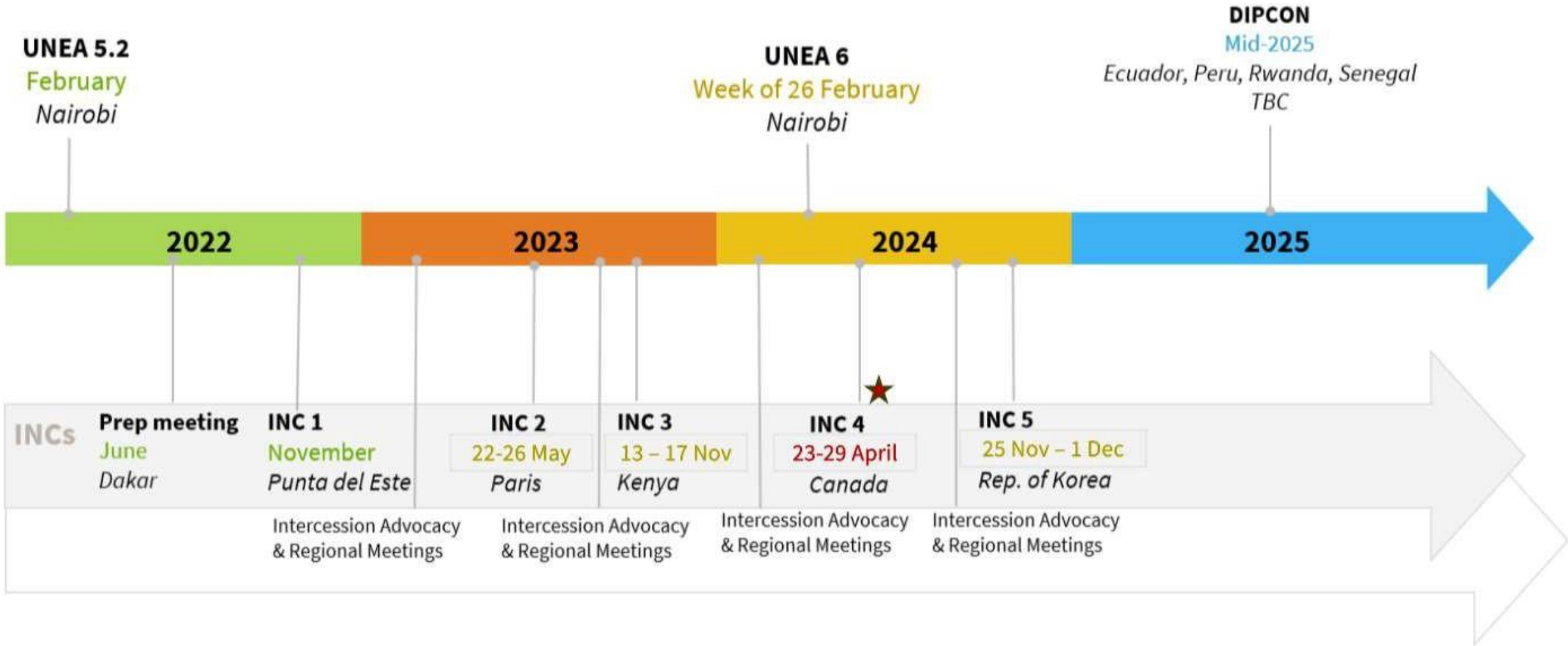
INTERNATIONAL LEGAL BINDING INSTRUMENT TO END PLASTIC POLLUTION

“Accelerating the transition to a circular economy will require ambitious goals and substantial effort from all stakeholders and can only be possible if we work together. The World Plastics Council has a vital role to play in supporting this collaboration.”

Benny Mermans, Chairman, World Plastics Council



Timeline



NGO welcome to Ottawa

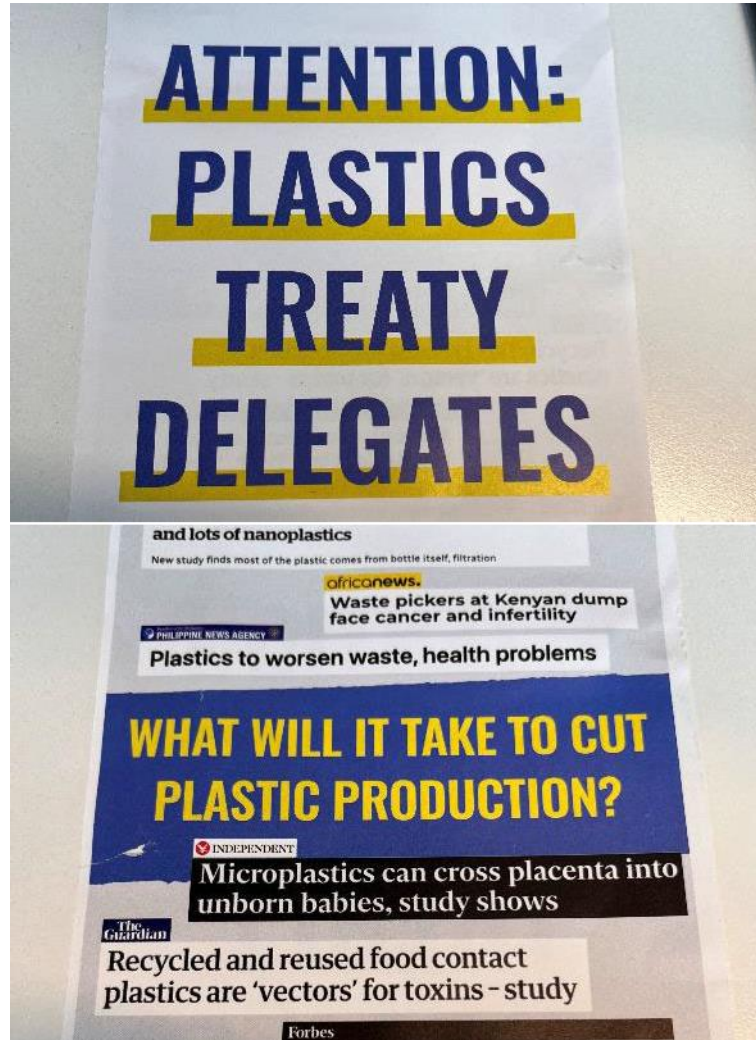


Active campaigning on the ground

Screening of Plastic People movie



Flyer at delegate hotel



Protesters in front of congress centre



WPC events at INC-4



Between both events over 300 people attended, doubling participation since INC-2

Wider diversity in audience, with stakeholders from value chain, IGOs, NGOs, financial institutions, global south, north, etc.



Main outcomes

Appropriate legislative framework

Placing value on plastic waste

Design for circularity

Waste management and recycling infrastructure

Suitable financing

Behavioral change

Transparency and communication

Design for circularity

1

Design for circularity

- We call for globally standardized criteria on design for circularity to be developed.
- To achieve circularity, we must design for it. This includes design for reuse and design for recycling.
- As there is no one-size-fits-all in this space, criteria will need to be implemented at local / national level depending on circumstances and capabilities as well as the application / product type.

Recycled content

2

Avoidable or problematic
plastic applications

3

Financing

4

Trade of plastic waste and
recycled feedstocks

5

Design for circularity

1

Recycled content

2

Recycled content

- We call for clear and timebound, national or regional targets for the inclusion of recycled content in plastic products, to create demand for recycled plastics and stimulate investments.
- Recycled content targets must be technology-neutral, i.e., allow all recycling technologies, including mechanical and chemical recycling, to contribute towards the targets.
- Combined targets of mandatory minimum recycling rates and application-based recycled content targets secure sufficient recycled feedstock availability as well as a reliable market for recycled plastics and therefore act as a driving force for circularity.

Avoidable or problematic
plastic applications

3

Financing

4

Trade of plastic waste and
recycled feedstocks

5

Policy Recommendations for a Global Plastics Agreement

Design for circularity

1

Recycled content

2

Avoidable or problematic
plastic applications

3

Avoidable or problematic plastic applications

- We call for a globally standardized approach to be developed, not arbitrary bans or restrictions on substances or materials, which are disconnected from the value that products add.
- Criteria to determine whether applications are avoidable or problematic should be based on the ability to improve circularity, on the waste management hierarchy, taking into account the essential use and societal value, the need for the application in a local context, and the life-cycle assessment.

Financing

4

Trade of plastic waste and
recycled feedstocks

5



Financing

- Lack of waste management infrastructure is a key issue driving the plastic pollution challenge. Funding to develop infrastructure is an important part of the solution.
- We call for the mandatory, effective, and inclusive implementation of financing mechanisms, which could include EPR or EPR-like systems at a national or local level applying standardized guiding principles, as an effective tool to finance necessary investments in the collection, sorting, and recycling of plastic waste.
- While leaving flexibility to adapt to local circumstances, these systems should be based on a common set of design and governance principles, including the use of revenues to increasing circularity of plastics while also ensuring material and technology neutrality





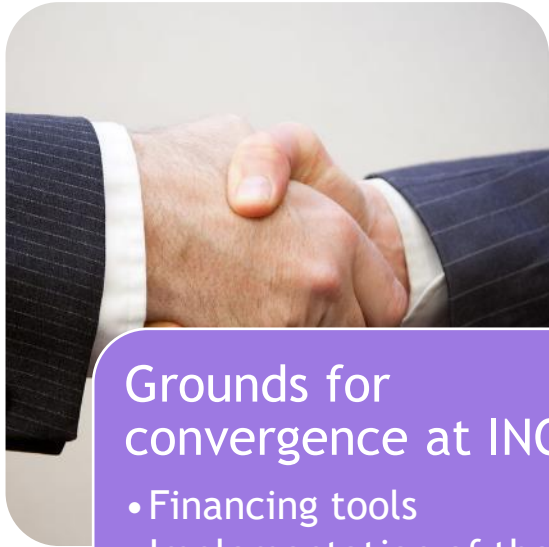
Trade of plastic waste and recycled feedstocks

- We call for measures to support trade of plastic waste and recycled materials, so that plastic waste and recycled feedstock can find their way to an environmentally sound waste management solution and into production of recycled plastics across national borders. Measures need to be based on national capabilities and industry sector application.
- This includes standardized end-of-waste definitions and criteria and the simplification of measures foreseen in the Basel Convention.



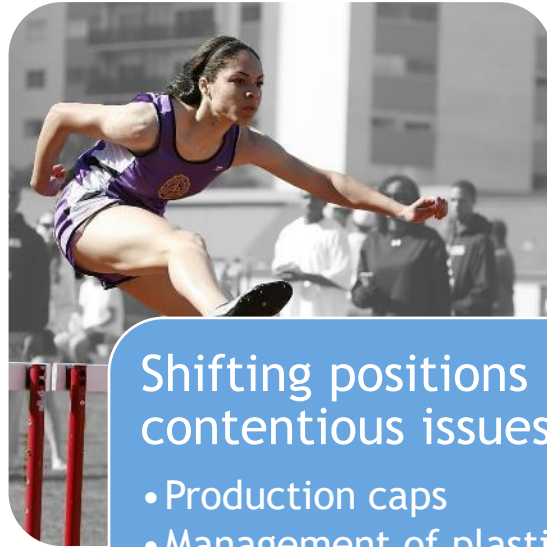
Road to Busan - Bangkok intersessional meetings output and INC5 impact

ILBI-PP negotiations: intersessional meetings trends and developments



Grounds for convergence at INC4

- Financing tools
- Implementation of the Treaty



Shifting positions & contentious issues

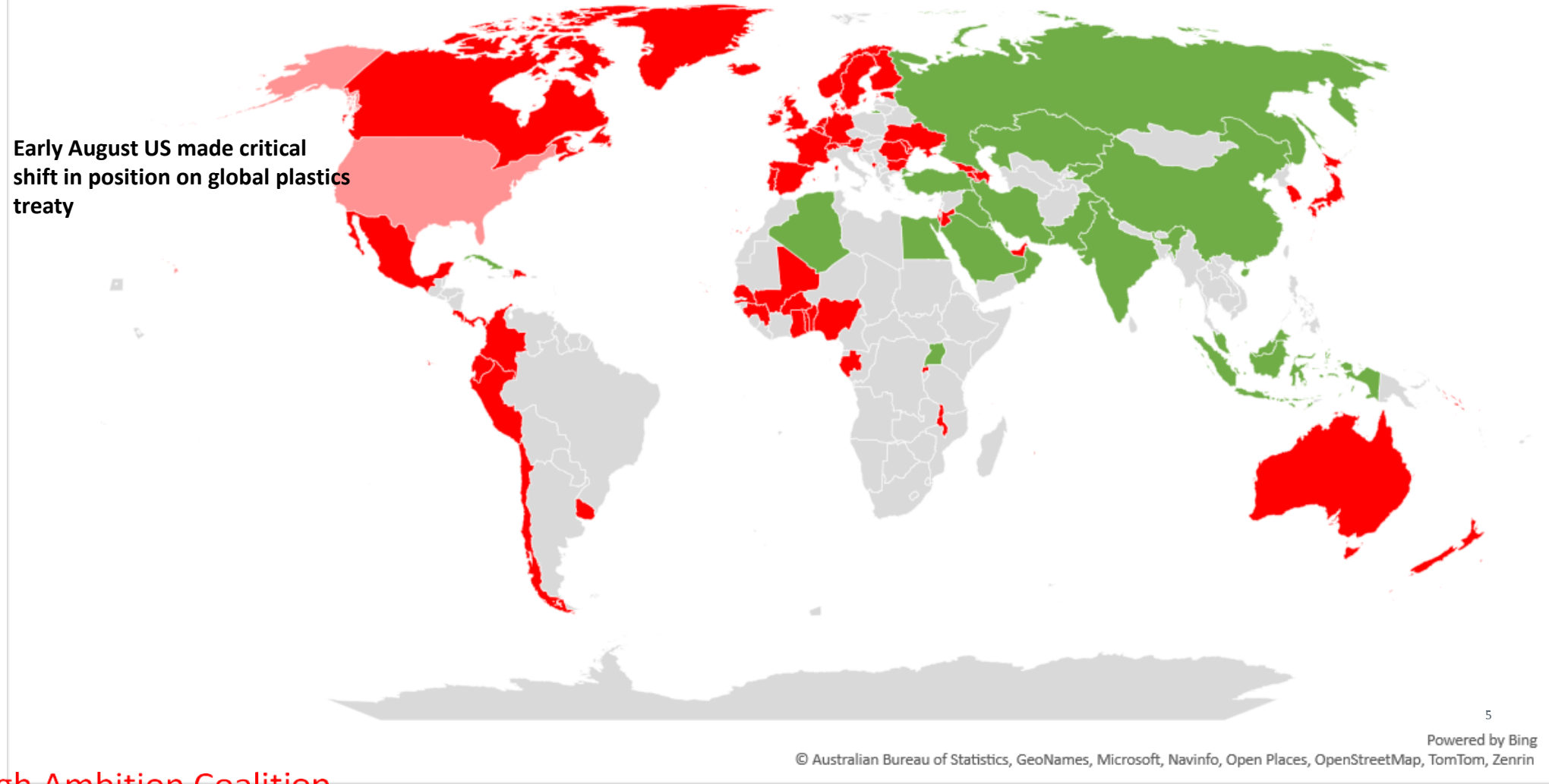
- Production caps
- Management of plastic-associated chemicals



Outcome of intersessional work

- Discussions hosted at technical level - not political
- No concrete conclusions
- Listing of possible policy interventions and ambition levels

Balance of power



High Ambition Coalition

Like-Minded Group (unofficial, based on statements and positions)

Takeouts from Expert Group 1: Financial Mechanisms



Emphasis placed on the need for a robust financial mechanism



A range of financing sources will be required to cover the \$2.1TL (1) investment



Spotlight on public/private financing and innovative “blended” financing models



ILBI must create an enabling investment environment and framework

- [\[1\]](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6a_hYt_K9U) The Circulate Initiative, “Financing Considerations to Support an ILBI on Plastic Pollution,” April 2024. Webinar. Data provided by OECD.

Takeouts from Expert Group 2: Criteria and non-criteria based approaches regarding plastic products and product design



Convergence on Product Design - based on good quality design rules & applying the same criteria to alternatives.



More divergence on Product Classification - diverse national circumstances & definition specificity



On going debate on Chemicals of Concern - five possible approaches identified by national experts

Outlook towards INC5

- **No conclusions** so far
- **Importance of a shared understanding of key definitions, avoiding regrettable substitutions.**
- **Focus on innovation, new technologies, and improved recycling and waste management infrastructure.**
- **Need for balanced global obligations and support for countries with fewer resources. Just transition.**
- **View that existing MEAs (e.g. Stockholm) or the Globally Harmonized System of Classification & Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) don't cover all the bases.**
- **Some convergence around control of chemicals in plastics**
- **In some of these approaches, ban and restriction lists could be avoided**, whilst still aiding developing countries to protect human and environmental health.
- **Adopting a constructive, middle-ground position** is advisable, exploiting the current shift in positions globally.



A final summary report will be developed by the co-chairs and is expected to be **published on 14th October**

Questions

“Plastics have undeniably transformed lives, yet, regrettably, this remarkable material has been marred by misconceptions. It is in this context that organizations like the World Plastics Council (WPC) assume a paramount role as the guardians of responsible plastic use, striving to ensure that humanity continues to reap the benefits of this versatile material while addressing these misconceptions, combating plastic pollution, and fostering the development of a global circular economy.

Ajay Shah, Reliance Industries

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Thank you
