



# CONSUMER VOICES

AT THE **4TH** SESSION OF  
THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL  
NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

TOWARDS AN  
INTERNATIONAL  
LEGALLY BINDING

**PLASTICS TREATY**

# KEY PRIORITIES



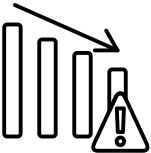
The legitimate needs of consumers are met by alignment to, and inclusion of, the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection.



Non-plastic alternatives that are safe and environmentally sound to be made available, accessible and affordable to consumers.



Consumers' right to access adequate and transparent information about plastic products and packaging to be enshrined in the Treaty. The information should be unambiguous, accurate, easily accessible and verifiable, in order to prevent misleading claims.



Agreement for reduction of plastic production with definitive targets and timelines.



Adoption of legally binding language throughout the Treaty to ensure that governments and businesses are held accountable for Treaty agreements.



# WHO WE ARE



## ABOUT CONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL

Consumers International is the global membership organisation for consumer rights groups. Founded in 1960, we bring together over 200 member organisations in more than 100 countries.

Consumers International has General Consultative Status at the United Nations and represents the consumer voice in international policy-making forums, developing international finance standards and global advocacy campaigns. Consumers International has long worked to find consumer-focussed solutions to plastic pollution through bringing together consumer advocates, governments and businesses.

Consumers International's mission is to empower and champion the rights of consumers everywhere and to build a fair, safe and sustainable marketplace.



## ABOUT CAG

Citizen consumer and civic Action Group (CAG) is a 38-year-old non-profit, non political, professional organisation working towards protecting citizens' rights in consumer and environmental issues and promoting good governance including transparency, accountability and participatory decision making.

# WHAT CONSUMERS NEED FROM THE TREATY

## REVISED ZERO DRAFT OBLIGATIONS:

### PRIMARY PLASTIC POLYMERS & CHEMICALS OF CONCERN

The key items for these obligations encompass a comprehensive consideration of safety in all stages of the plastics supply chain, including production, transportation, distribution, sale, import, export, and disposal. A clear limit and global targets for reduction, with legally binding language, are crucial, as is demonstrating that commitment by developing National Action Plans and National Implementation Plans with a sectoral approach. This also requires the disclosure of chemicals and groups of chemicals at each stage of the lifecycle, alongside the establishment of scientifically sound criteria to determine hazards to human health and the environment. These obligations should involve setting a timeframe for prohibition, phase-out, and regulation.

## REVISED ZERO DRAFT OBLIGATIONS:

### PRODUCT DESIGN, PROBLEMATIC PLASTICS AND NON-PLASTIC SUBSTITUTES

Increase the safety, durability, reusability, and reparability in practice, of plastic products and packaging; their capacity to be repurposed and recycled at scale; and disposed of in a safe and environmentally sound manner upon becoming waste. Product design should prioritise prevention of intentionally and unintentionally added microplastics which detrimentally impact consumer health. Develop a criteria to determine problematic plastics and take effective measures to ban, phase out and regulate single-use plastics including multi-layered plastics. Support supply and value chains' redesign to minimise single-use of materials alongside the research, development, and deployment of safe and environmentally sound alternatives to plastic instead of alternative plastics such as bio-based plastics. Non-plastic substitutes need to become readily available, accessible, and affordable to consumers from all walks of life.





## **REVISED ZERO DRAFT OBLIGATION:** **EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY**

The key component of this obligation is the urgent need to establish a comprehensive infrastructure that supports sustainable practices and circularity, including the end-of-use phase. We strongly support a binding obligation for mandatory Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes that include plastic polymer producers, product manufacturers and retailers. Furthermore, EPR schemes should incorporate efficient traceability and accountability mechanisms.

## **REVISED ZERO DRAFT OBLIGATIONS:** **TRADE AND TRANSBOUNDARY MOVEMENT**

We advocate for stringent control of trade through legally binding measures that prohibit the export or import of products containing hazardous polymers and chemicals; and plastic waste, including microplastics, short-lived, and single-use plastics. Any exemptions to this rule must include a provision for informed consent. It is also crucial to accurately mark and label the exported chemicals, including tracking the types, volumes, and destination. Additionally, written consent provisions and relevant harmonized labeling should be included, alongside efforts to prevent and eliminate illegal waste trade. Consultation with relevant organizations, including consumer groups, is essential. Furthermore, compliance with the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal and is a key priority.

The provision allowing for the transboundary movement of plastic waste needs to be reviewed. Furthermore, developing countries, particularly, Small Island Developing States do not possess sufficient waste management infrastructure to handle large quantities of plastic waste. Any exemptions given to transport waste should be for the benefit of Middle and Low-Income Countries and these need to be clearly defined so as to ensure environmentally sound practices and not allow High-Income Countries to delegate or transfer their plastic waste to Middle and Low-Income Countries.



## **REVISED ZERO DRAFT OBLIGATIONS:** **TRANSPARENCY AND FINANCIAL MECHANISM**

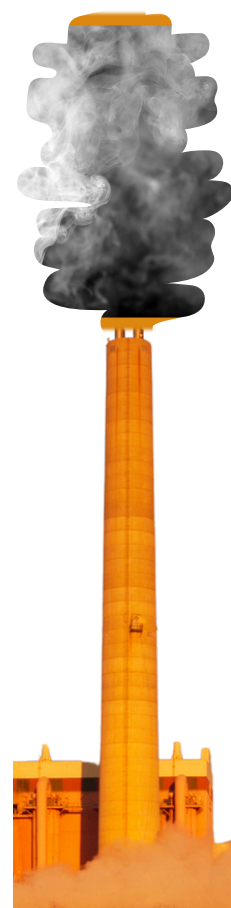
In the realm of mandated disclosure from producers, importers, and exporters across the supply chain, it is essential to establish guidelines for harmonized information on the hazardous chemical composition of all polymers, plastic products and packaging. In addition, accessible information on safe use, reuse and disposal of plastic products and packaging is crucial for sustainable consumption. This includes ensuring the availability of information in clear and accessible formats for public access, as well as implementing monitoring for digital tracking and traceability.

In the context of financing mechanisms, it is crucial to emphasize the mobilisation of resources, environmentally sound technology, financial support, and capacity-building to address plastic pollution comprehensively. The focus should particularly be on supporting developing countries and those with limited resources and capacity, such as Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries.

## **REVISED ZERO DRAFT OBLIGATIONS:** **WASTE MANAGEMENT & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

First and foremost, waste management solutions and efforts must strictly adhere to the zero waste hierarchy. In terms of waste management, there is a strong need to establish infrastructural changes aimed at guiding, facilitating, and supporting consumers towards zero waste. It is crucial that consumers are not individually or collectively held responsible for their consumption habits, especially when their choices are severely limited.

Furthermore, a pivotal aspect of the stakeholder engagement obligation involves the reference and inclusion of consumers' legitimate needs as outlined in the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection. This reframing is essential to ensure a more equitable approach to sustainable consumption. Engagement between governments, businesses and consumer groups will help to build a better understanding of how to protect, inform and empower people in the marketplace.



# WHO WE ARE

## AUTHORS

The substantive analysis of the draft text was conducted and prepared by:

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# CAG

Citizen consumer and civic Action Group



## CONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL

COMING TOGETHER  
FOR CHANGE

Consumers International brings together over 200 member organisations in more than 100 countries to empower and champion the rights of consumers everywhere. We are their voice in international policy-making forums and the global marketplace to ensure they are treated safely, fairly and honestly.

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