



CONSUMER VOICES

AT THE **5TH SESSION** OF THE
INTERGOVERNMENTAL
NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

**TOWARDS AN
INTERNATIONAL
LEGALLY BINDING
INSTRUMENT**

TO END PLASTIC POLLUTION



KEY PRIORITIES



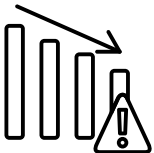
The treaty should align with and include the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection, ensuring the legitimate needs of consumers are met.



The treaty should enshrine consumers' right to transparent and verifiable information regarding plastic products and packaging.



The treaty should ensure that safe environmentally sound non-plastic substitutes are made available, accessible and affordable to consumers.



The treaty should adopt legally binding language throughout the instrument, with specific and measurable targets and indicators.



The treaty must reflect a tangible commitment for the reduction of plastic production with definitive targets and timelines



WHAT CONSUMERS NEED FROM THE TREATY

REVISED ZERO DRAFT OBLIGATIONS:

PRIMARY PLASTIC POLYMERS & CHEMICALS OF CONCERN

KEY TERMS



REDUCTION IN PRODUCTION, DISCLOSURE OF CHEMICALS OF CONCERN, CONSUMER PROTECTION

Primary plastic polymers – Reduction of primary plastic polymer production needs to be the starting point in our efforts to end plastic pollution. Without addressing the root cause of the crisis, any efforts focussed only on demand-side (consumer action) or downstream measures will be ineffective in ending plastic pollution. Therefore, the treaty needs to affirm that the lifecycle of plastics spans from extraction to disposal.

Chemicals of concern – Identifying and regulating chemicals of concern in plastic products and packaging is essential as it complements the right to safety and right to a clean environment as enshrined under the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection. Producers need to be required to adequately disclose the chemicals of concern, especially when proven to adversely impact health, such as endocrine disruptors, to enable consumers to make informed choices and to uphold their right of access to information and safe products.

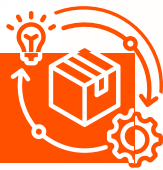


WHAT CONSUMERS NEED FROM THE TREATY

REVISED ZERO DRAFT OBLIGATIONS:

PROBLEMATIC PLASTICS PRODUCT DESIGN AND NON-PLASTIC SUSTAINABLE SUBSTITUTES

KEY TERMS



PRODUCT AND PACKAGING REDESIGN, SAFETY, AFFORDABILITY

Product Design: We call for a treaty that will effectively **require producers to redesign** their products and packaging to ban problematic and short-lived plastics such as single-use plastics, including multi-layered plastics. In addition, redesign should also focus on improving reusability, and reparability of plastic products and packaging in line with the zero-waste hierarchy.

Non-plastics substitutes: To ensure a **just transition for consumers, the development of non-plastic substitutes which are safe, easily available, accessible and affordable should be simultaneously prioritised**. It is important to prevent regrettable substitutions by replacing one single-use material with another.



WHAT CONSUMERS NEED FROM THE TREATY

REVISED ZERO DRAFT OBLIGATION:
EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY (EPR)



LEGALLY BINDING, ACCOUNTABILITY, REDESIGN, ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND
MANAGEMENT, INTERNATIONAL SUPPLY CHAINS

A **mandatory Extended Producer Responsibility regime** at a global level is necessary to harmonise efforts at ending plastic pollution. This is also crucial in ensuring accountability and traceability across international supply chains. The Treaty needs to reflect a comprehensive interpretation of EPR, including midstream measures to improve safety and circularity of product to maximise resource efficiency in line with the zero-waste hierarchy. Specific and measurable targets and timelines need to be reflected in the treaty to prevent dilution of the EPR provision.



WHAT CONSUMERS NEED FROM THE TREATY

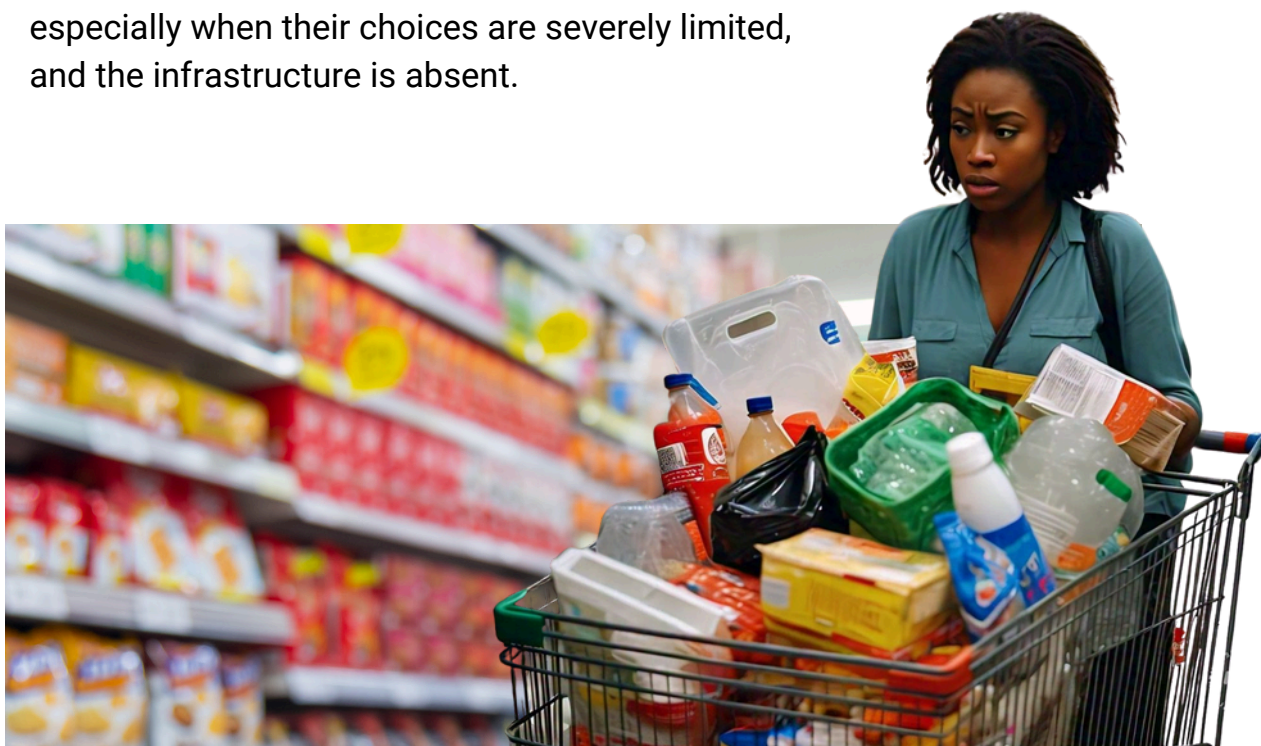
REVISED ZERO DRAFT OBLIGATIONS: WASTE MANAGEMENT

KEY TERMS



ZERO-WASTE HIERARCHY; ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND WASTE MANAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE, INCLUSIVE AND PARTICIPATORY DECISION-MAKING

Waste management measures and solutions must strictly adhere to the zero-waste hierarchy and prevent false solutions which are environmentally unsound. We recognise the pressing need to improve the existing waste management infrastructure, **especially funding for sub-national bodies often responsible for collection, such as municipalities**. Furthermore, the improvements in infrastructure need to be aimed at guiding, facilitating, and supporting consumers towards zero waste sustainable living. It is crucial that consumers are not individually or collectively held responsible for their consumption habits, especially when their choices are severely limited, and the infrastructure is absent.



WHAT CONSUMERS NEED FROM THE TREATY

REVISED ZERO DRAFT OBLIGATIONS: TRADE AND TRANSBOUNDARY MOVEMENT

KEY TERMS



PROHIBIT EXPORT OF HAZARDOUS POLYMERS, CHEMICALS AND PLASTIC WASTE, DISCLOSURE ON TRANSBOUNDARY MOVEMENT AND TRADE, HARMONISED LABELLING AND TRACEABILITY

Control measures on trade and transboundary movement of listed polymers, chemicals, products and plastic waste should be included in the treaty to ensure transparency and accountability across international supply chains. Underscoring the lack of technical, financial and infrastructural capacity in waste management in low and middle-income countries and the small-island developing states, legally binding measures to prohibit and regulate transboundary movement of plastic waste, export and import of products containing hazardous polymers and chemicals, to these countries should be mandated.

Additionally, any exemption given in this regard should be specific, clear and must require the prior-informed consent of the receiving State along with the assurance of environmentally sound management of plastic waste. Consultation with relevant civil society organisations, including consumer groups, is essential.



WHAT CONSUMERS NEED FROM THE TREATY

REVISED ZERO DRAFT OBLIGATIONS:

TRANSPARENCY TRACKING MONITORING AND LABELLING

KEY TERMS



**IMPACT ON HUMAN HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT, ACCESSIBLE AND VERIFIABLE
INFORMATION, HARMONISATION OF LABELS TO PREVENT MISLEADING CLAIMS**

The treaty needs to account for a strong binding mechanism to ensure transparency throughout the lifecycle of plastics. For a just transition to sustainable consumption and living, consumers need access to information that is verifiable and easily accessible. In addition to the disclosure of chemicals of concern and other safety aspects, producers must be required to provide adequate information on the safe use and environmentally sound management of plastic products and packaging. This includes ensuring the availability of infrastructure, technology transfer to guarantee the provision of information of the products and packaging in clear and unambiguous language and in accessible formats available in the public domain. Consumers also need to be empowered with easy access to tools enabling traceability of plastic waste as well as mechanisms to partake in reverse value chains.



WHAT CONSUMERS NEED FROM THE TREATY

REVISED ZERO DRAFT OBLIGATIONS: FINANCIAL MECHANISM

KEY TERMS



COMMITMENT TO MOBILISE RESOURCES, FINANCIAL & TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERS, CAPACITY-BUILDING, AWARENESS RAISING

As the **financial mechanism is the backbone** of the treaty, particularly in its implementation, we are emphatically calling for a tangible commitment to mobilise financial, technological and capacity building resources - domestic and international, private and public. **We advocate for the establishment of a dedicated fund and a transparent mechanism to ensure predictable, sustainable, adequate, accessible and timely flow of finance, infrastructure and capacity-building** for the implementation, in particularly in favour of developing countries and Small Island Developing States, and to sub-national and local bodies of implementation. The polluter pays principle, rooted in customary international law, needs to be incorporated in the treaty by way of mandating a plastic pollution fee on polymer, chemical and product producers. Additionally we are calling for additional binding measures for decrease in financial flows from all sources to projects that result in emissions and releases to the environment from plastics and plastic products across the life cycle, including microplastics.



WHAT CONSUMERS NEED FROM THE TREATY

REVISED ZERO DRAFT OBLIGATIONS: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

KEY TERMS



ZERO-WASTE HIERARCHY; ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND WASTE MANAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE, INCLUSIVE AND PARTICIPATORY DECISION-MAKING

The **stakeholder engagement provision** must reference and include consumers' legitimate needs as outlined in the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection and ensure that the engagement process is transparent, fair and inclusive. Inclusion of consumer groups in the stakeholder engagement process will be pivotal to the successful and effective implementation of the treaty, as this is essential to ensure a more equitable approach to sustainable consumption. Engagement between governments and consumer groups will help build a better understanding of how to protect, inform and empower consumers in the marketplace.



WHO WE ARE

AUTHORS

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

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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.



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.

Consumers International is a charity (No.1122155) and a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee (No. 04337865) registered in England and Wales

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