

Key messages ahead of INC-5.2 in August 2025



A treaty with harmonised regulations can create economic, social and environmental value at both a global and national level.

Business supports harmonised regulations because they (1) drive consistency across borders while supporting national ambitions; and (2) provide the lowest cost option to effectively address plastic pollution.

1. A robust treaty with strong obligations and harmonised regulations on key elements – including phase-outs, product design and extended producer responsibility (EPR) – can create economic, social and environmental value at both a global and national level, in comparison to a treaty based on voluntary national measures. Evidence* suggests that harmonised regulations could:

- Generate more than double the global cumulative EPR revenues between 2026 and 2040.
- Significantly increase recyclability and reusability of products across the world, with global recycled content availability projected to increase by 77% by 2040.
- Improve long-term business and investor decision-making, and lower the cost of capital.
- Lead to more than twice as many problematic and avoidable plastic products eliminated.
- Contribute to 23% less global mismanaged plastic waste.
- Support stable jobs across the plastics value chain, particularly in the waste management sector.
- Drive better public services and healthier communities.
- Support tourism and fishing via cleaner environments.

2. Business supports a treaty with harmonised regulations because it:

- Drives consistency across borders while supporting national ambitions.
- Provides the lowest cost option to effectively address plastic pollution.

3. We, 300+ companies, organisations and financial institutions of the Business Coalition for a Global Plastics Treaty, remain steadfast in our belief that a robust treaty with global rules and common obligations is the most effective way to pursue a lasting impact on plastic pollution while delivering economic, environmental and social value. Voluntary and fragmented action is not enough, and measures determined differently in each country will add significant barriers and costs for business to implement the necessary changes at scale.

4. There is unprecedented alignment between governments, businesses and civil society on the core critical elements which can and should underpin an effective treaty – a foundation on which to conclude an agreement at INC 5.2, and allow us to begin implementation. We welcome the ongoing efforts of countries around the world to engage constructively, at both political and technical levels, and strongly encourage all UN Member States to work towards an ambitious and effective agreement in August at INC-5.2 in Geneva, Switzerland. There's no time to waste.

*Based on [our modelling study](#) on the economic impacts for Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, and South Africa. The study is a comparison of a scenario with harmonised regulations for all parties to the agreement on key elements – phase-outs / eliminations (Article 3), product and system design (Article 5), and extended producer responsibility (Article 8) – with a more voluntary approach, in which each party would decide on their own measures to address plastic waste and pollution..

About the Coalition

The [Business Coalition for a Global Plastics Treaty](#) – convened by the [Ellen MacArthur Foundation](#) and [WWF](#) in September 2022 – gives voice to [more than 300 businesses from across the plastics value chain, financial institutions and NGO partners](#).

Together we are asking for an ambitious UN treaty that brings plastics into a circular economy, stopping them becoming waste or pollution.



Further background on how a robust treaty with strong obligations and harmonised regulations can create economic, social and environmental value at both a global and national level, in comparison to a treaty based on voluntary national measures is below. Evidence* suggests that:

- A globally harmonised approach for national EPR schemes, with key principles and minimum requirements, would make recycling more efficient and expand the supply of high-quality recycled content. We, as businesses, are already contributing significantly to EPR fees in many countries. However, with common principles applied at a national level, **global cumulative EPR revenues could more than double between 2026 and 2040, to \$576 billion**, compared to \$279 billion under a treaty based on voluntary national measures.
- A treaty that defines common criteria for product design could **significantly increase the recyclability and reusability of products across the world**. This consistency would help drive investment for the necessary infrastructure, reduce the compliance burden for businesses, and scale circular economy solutions. It could also improve waste stream quality, unlock larger value pools for alternative materials and business models, and reduce the cost of recycled materials. Regulatory harmonisation across markets could **increase global recycled content availability by 77% by 2040** compared to a treaty based on voluntary national measures.
- A treaty with globally harmonised obligations and criteria to phase out the most problematic plastic products **could help us eliminate more than twice as many problematic and avoidable plastic products** (compared to a treaty based on voluntary national measures).
- The elimination of problematic and avoidable plastic products and the introduction of common design requirements should enhance collection and recycling rates, while increased EPR revenues would support the expansion of waste management capacity, leading to **a potential reduction of global mismanaged plastic waste by 23%**.
- **Regulatory harmonisation across markets will level the playing field and provide much-needed certainty for businesses and investors**, improving long-term decision-making and lowering the cost of capital. This will catalyse investment and innovation towards long-term value creation.
- These improvements are also expected to deliver measurable social value through **protecting and creating stable jobs across the plastics value chain, particularly in the waste management sector**, which would benefit from improved working conditions and fair remuneration.
- Cleaner waste streams, expanded waste collection and reduced plastic pollution support **better public services and healthier communities**, with knock-on benefits to other industries, like tourism and fishing.

While globally relevant, the analysis* focuses on India, China, Indonesia, Brazil, Japan, and South Africa. In all countries modelled, the benefits at a national level of a harmonised approach exceeded those of BAU or a fragmented approach. To explore a suite of potential national examples benefits, see [here](#).

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To deliver on an ambitious treaty in line with the [UNEA resolution 5/14](#), we need an initial agreement at INC-5.2 that the Global Plastics Treaty includes - as a minimum - the following critical elements:

1. **Strong provisions to restrict or phase out problematic & avoidable plastic products as well as chemicals of concern**, defined through a global approach, and informed by clear criteria and possibly initial lists.
2. **An obligation to introduce or advance targets and systems for collection, reuse and recycling at the national level**, based on common definitions and key principles for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations, Deposit Return Systems (DRS) and other policy instruments.
3. **A comprehensive package to support the implementation of the treaty**, including through aligning financial flows with the objectives of the treaty and mobilising public and private support to ensure a just transition towards a circular economy that is fair and inclusive to everyone concerned – workers, enterprises & communities, especially by creating decent work opportunities in the plastics value chain, including for waste pickers.
4. **A mandate to develop harmonised product design criteria, to be defined in dedicated annexes, and complemented by sector-specific programmes of work** to inform future decisions at the Conference of the Parties (COP) on additional control measures needed and guidance on their implementation, targeting plastic applications where there is sufficient alignment, such as packaging and fishing gear, to start with.
5. **A sound mechanism for reporting, monitoring of progress and evaluating the treaty's effectiveness on a regular basis**, with the possibility for the governing body of the treaty to further strengthen policy measures over time. In addition, governments need to decide on the process going forward to develop further work on the immediate priorities and to prepare recommendations for adoption by the first Conference of the Parties.