

UN Update: Moving Toward a Global Treaty on Plastics



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The
Deciding
Factor



THE FUTURE OF PLASTICS IS AT STAKE

UNEP/PP/INC.3/4

Part II

1. Primary plastic polymers

1. Parties shall take the necessary measures to prevent and mitigate the potential for adverse impacts on human health or the environment from the production of primary plastic polymers, including their feedstocks and precursors.

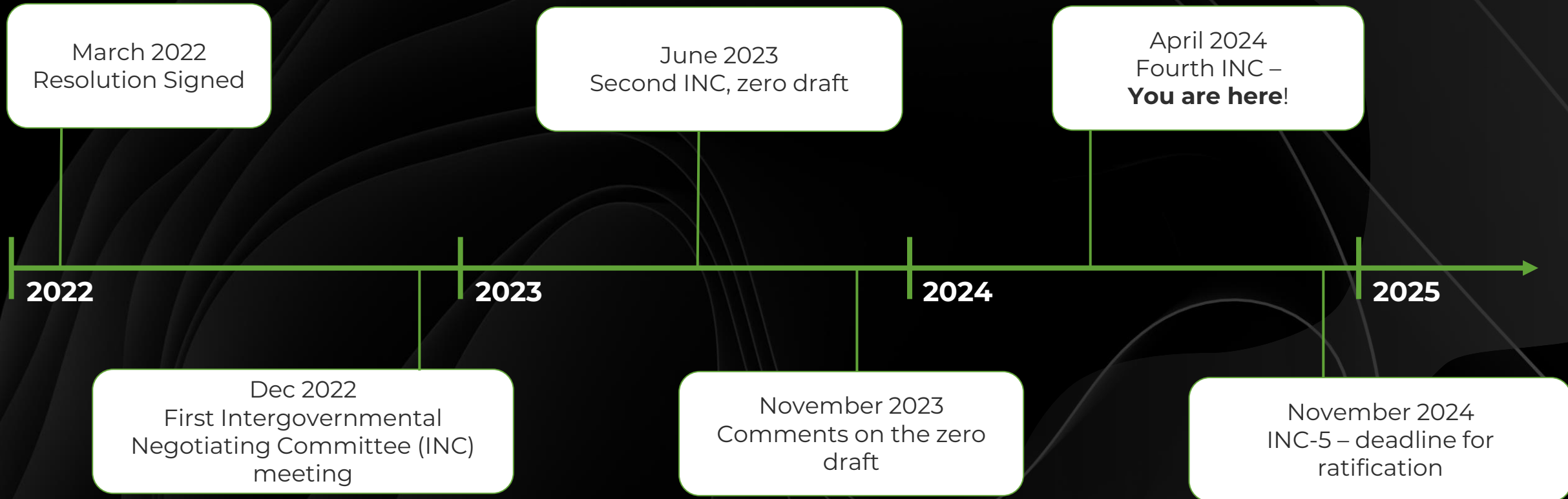
Option 1

2. Each Party shall not allow its level of production and supply of primary plastic polymers to exceed the reduction target specified in part I of annex A.³

Option 2

2. Parties shall manage and reduce the global production and supply of primary plastic polymers to achieve the global target set out in part I of annex A.⁴

WHERE ARE WE TODAY?



“ ”

We will continue to need plastic for specific uses, such as renewable energy technologies. But there is growing agreement that short-lived and single use [plastics] can go.

Inger Andersen, Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme





**Can we meet the 2024 deadline for
a binding instrument?**

DRAFTING REMAINS SLOW

The delegates made only modest progress in finalizing the zero draft

Option 1

1. In their actions to achieve the objective of the *instrument** and to implement its provisions, the Parties shall be guided, *inter alia*, by:

- a. [the principles set out in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (Rio Principles), as referred to in resolution UNEA 5/14, in general or with reference to specific principles]
- b. [common but differentiated responsibilities]
- c. [the polluter pays principle]
- d. [the precautionary approach]
- e. [the prevention principle]
- f. [respect for sovereignty over the use of natural resources]
- g. [just transition]
- h. [the protection of vulnerable communities]
- i. [shared responsibility]
- j. [intergenerational equity]
- k. [non-regression]
- l. [ecosystems approach]
- m. [Extended Producer Responsibility]
- n. [transparency]

- o. [inclusiveness]
- p. [bottom-up approach]
- q. [a gender perspective]
- r. [general principles relating to marine pollution]
- s. [circular economy]
- t. [non-discrimination]
- u. [best available science]
- v. [local and Indigenous knowledge]
- w. [access to information and transparency]
- x. [equity]
- y. [sustainable development]
- z. [Measures taken to address plastic pollution should not constitute a mean of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised restriction on international trade]
- aa. [promotion of cooperation at regional and international level]
- bb. [the three Rs of waste management]
- cc. [the principle of sovereignty of States]
- dd. [the right to choose policy mixes]
- ee. [avoidance of creating new development and environmental problems]

THE SCOPE REMAINS IN DOUBT

Regulation on primary production of plastics is the key sticking point

**Binding
Instrument
Draft**

Option 1

The scope should clearly reflect (material and territorial) the provisions of resolution 5/14 of the United Nations Environment Assembly, to end plastic pollution across the full life cycle of all plastics and addresses its effects on human health and the environment, including the marine environment. To ensure the longevity of the instrument the timebound provision may not be included in the scope but could be incorporated in other provisions of the instrument where applicable.

**UNEA
Resolution
5/14**

3. *Decides* that the intergovernmental negotiating committee is to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, henceforth referred to as “the instrument”, which could include both binding and voluntary approaches, based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastic, taking into account, among other things, the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, as well as national circumstances and capabilities, and including provisions:

CORPORATE LOBBYING RAMPS UP

Large corporate presence at INC-4 draws minor backlash

Fossil Fuel Lobbyists Outnumber National Delegations, Scientists, and Indigenous Peoples at Plastics Treaty Negotiations

With limited time left for the negotiations, we suggest tackling three areas as a priority:

- A core obligation for all parties to the treaty to implement restrictions and phase-outs in a globally coordinated manner where plastic-containing products hinder progress towards a circular economy, pose critical health risks or have a high risk of ending up in nature.
- A core obligation for all parties to the treaty to implement mandatory product design requirements, based on clear definitions and harmonised criteria.
- A core obligation for all parties to the treaty to implement Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations based on common modalities, yet differentiated timelines for their implementation.

**BUSINESS
COALITION
FOR A
GLOBAL
PLASTICS
TREATY**

“ ”

...if countries... don't act between now and INC5 in Busan, the treaty they are likely to get is one that could have been written by ExxonMobil and their acolytes.

Graham Forbes, Greenpeace Head of Delegation to the Global Plastics Treaty negotiations



INTERSESSIONAL WORK WILL CONTINUE

These efforts have not been fully supported throughout the process



KEY TAKEAWAYS

1

The deadline is in doubt.

We are not on track to have an approved version of the instrument by the end of INC 5 in Busan.

2

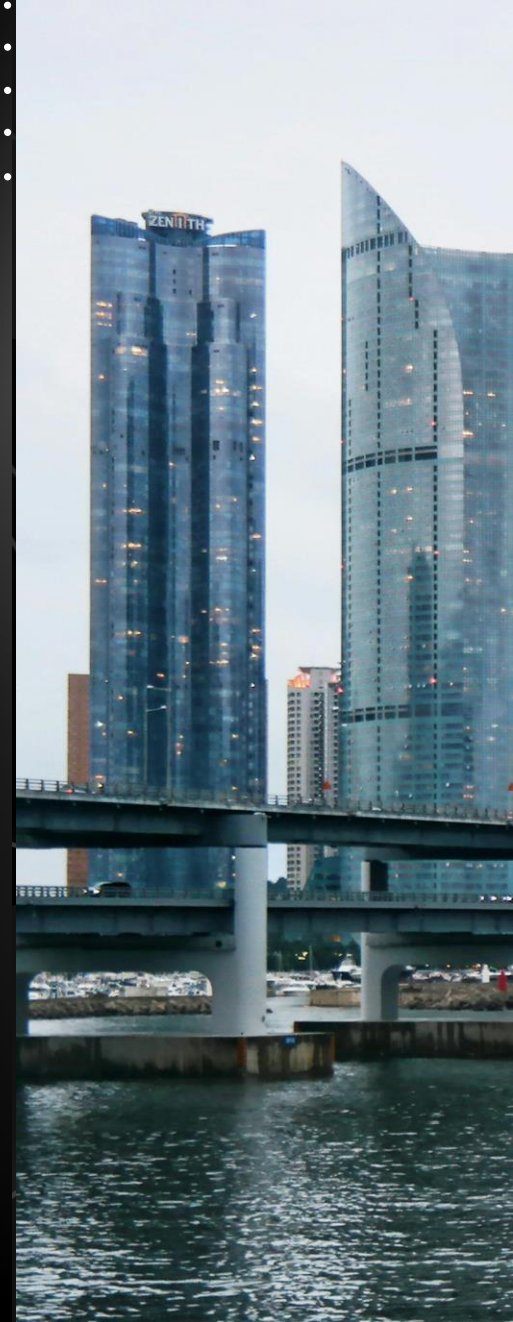
Plastics production limits are still in the mix — barely.

It's hard to say where we stand on any major element of the instrument. Provisions for plastics limits remain, but there may be no hope of getting them into the finished instrument.

3

Intersessional work will be key to meeting deadlines.

Major decisions need to be made to streamline the draft into a final document — the more that gets done before Busan, the more possible an agreement is.



Thank you

A link of the webinar recording will be emailed within 24–48 hours.

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