State-of-play of discussions at the WTO Dialogue on Plastic Pollution

29 May 2023

Daniel Ramos
Secretary to the Dialogue on Plastic Pollution
WTO Trade and Environment Division
Dialogue on Plastics Pollution (short overview)

- **Launched in November 2020**
- **Coordinators**: Australia, Barbados, China, Ecuador, Fiji, Morocco
  - (+ the Philippines, UK and Colombia as facilitators)
- **Objectives**:
  - To explore how improved trade cooperation could contribute to efforts to reduce plastics pollution and transition to a more circular and environmentally sustainable global plastics economy
  - To complement existing international processes in other fora
- 4 plenary and 4 pre-plenary **meetings** in 2022 (+ 4 side-events and a Workshop)
- 3 plenary and 3 pre-plenary **meetings** in 2023 (+ a Workshop)
- 76 co-sponsors, representing 85%+ of trade in plastics + **stakeholders**
- 3 informal **working groups**: (i) cross-cutting issues; (ii) promoting trade to tackle plastic pollution; and (iii) circularity and reduction to tackle plastic pollution / + two Surveys
How Trade (and Trade policies) interact with plastic pollution? [INF/TE/IDP/W/3 – Factual Report 1st year]

Flowchart 1 – Plastic Life-Cycle Stages and Trade Flows

Policy coherence

International co-operation

Trade flows:
- Trade in feedstocks
- Trade in primary, intermediate plastics & plastic goods
- Trade in second-hand goods
- Trade in waste for recovery
- Trade in secondary raw materials
- Trade in services

Waste and scrap

Plastic use

Packaging materials

Finished goods and manufacturing

Plastic-based inputs

Feedstock and primary plastics

Recycling

Product-service-systems

Reuse and remanufacturing

Eco-design

Marine and land-based litter

Flowchart 1 – Plastic Life-Cycle Stages and Trade Flows
What are Trade-related Plastic Measures (TrPMs)?

**Sustainability requirements**
- Bans/restrictions on importation [and exportation] of [recyclable] waste (incl. export licenses)
- Import licensing for plastic bag components (avoid circumv.)
- Minimum recycled content
- Requirements applicable to minimum thickness, (re)usability
- Exclusion of certain components
- Design requirements / guidelines
- Labelling requirements

**Taxes and other market tools**
- Env / chemical taxes (appl. to plastics)
- Deposit schemes [incl. EPR schemes]
- [preferential] Tariffs on certain goods (incl. Tariff quotas)
- Packaging fees
- Trade defence tools (e.g. applied to substitutes)

**Support measures**
- Preferential tax treatment to alternatives/substitutes
- Direct grants to R&D
- Government procurement requirements/preferential rates for goods with recycled content
- Expenditure on resource utilization of agricultural wastes, incl. recycling of waste plastic films
General numbers and state of play of Dialogue’s Survey on trade-related plastics measures (TrPMs)

~280

TrPMs

64

Members

From all regions and mostly developing and LDCs (75%+, by member or measure)
What are TrPMs being adopted for?

- Recycling: 109
- Eco-designing: 105
- Waste management (including its trans-boundary): 97
- Single-use plastic: 89
- Promotion of alternatives and substitutes: 74
- Chemical, toxic, and hazardous substances management: 51
- Promotion of waste management and other technologies: 46
- Reuse and remanufacturing: 47
- Other: 22
- Other: food safety: 1
- Other: waste to energy: 1
What products are [reduction] TrPMs being applied to?

[Factual summary of “reduction discussions” - INF/TE/IDP/RD/125/[Rev.1]]

109 TrPMs on Packaging

89 TrPMs on Single Use Plastics (SUPs)

26 TrPMs on other “finished goods”

• Construction materials
• Ag materials (e.g. rubber hoses, mulch films)
• eProducts
• Care products (cosmetics, diapers, toiletries…)
• Tyres
• Fishing nets
• Tobacco*
2021 Ministerial Statement calls for “concrete, pragmatic, and effective outcomes” at the latest by the WTO 13th Ministerial Conference – Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, during the **week of 26 February 2024**
THANK YOU