May 20, 2023

Dear Director Andersen and Executive Secretary Mathur-Filipp,

We are writing to you as 174 civil society groups and scientists ahead of the upcoming UN Global Plastics Treaty talks in Paris, INC-2, with a shared concern about a major threat to an impactful Treaty outcome – the role that the fossil fuel and petrochemical industries and their lobbyists are having on the negotiations. To ensure this landmark opportunity to curb the global plastic pollution crisis is not undermined, we are calling on you to take the following urgent measures:

- Recognise that the public interest in addressing plastic pollution is not compatible with the private interests of the fossil fuel and petrochemical companies that produce plastic.

Plastic pollution has flooded our planet, harming people's health, accelerating social injustice, destroying biodiversity and fuelling the climate crisis. Indeed scientists at the Stockholm Institute recently alerted the public that plastic pollution had already 'exceeded safe planetary boundaries,' threatening the very stability of the earth's system.

Despite this, the production of virgin plastics - 99% of which are made from oil and gas - is increasing year on year. And with giant fossil fuel and petrochemical companies like ExxonMobil, Dow, Shell and others reportedly investing heavily in building yet more production capacity and petrochemical facilities, this growth is set to continue. Indeed, according to industry estimates, plastic production could double within the next 10-15* years, and triple by 2050.

Scientists and civil society groups from around the world agree that it is essential that the UN Plastics Treaty agrees a roadmap for dramatically reducing plastic production, a view already supported by several governments.

It is clear that the fossil fuel lobby is actively working to prevent the Plastics Treaty from containing essential controls on plastic production. It is not just the signatories of this letter who hold this view. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights recently said “There is a fundamental and irreconcilable conflict between the interests of the plastics industry and businesses deeply implicated
throughout its supply chain and the human rights and policy interests of people affected by the plastics crisis. The plastic industry has disproportionate power and influence over policy relative to the general public.”

Given the industry’s power and influence - both within the UN and over national and regional governments - there is a strong risk that, unless measures to inhibit their influence are put in place, it will be impossible to negotiate the Global Plastics Treaty that people and the planet need.

To avoid their vested, private economic interests being placed before those of the planet and human health, the power of fossil fuel and petrochemical companies needs to be openly acknowledged and addressed.

- **Support the adoption of a strong conflict of interest policy to ensure that fossil fuel and petrochemical companies are not allowed to undermine the global response to plastic pollution.**

We urge UNEP to urgently establish an Accountability Framework, including a regime-wide conflict-of-interest policy. Limiting the influence of vested private interests has proven to have a positive impact on treaty outcomes. This was demonstrated by the World Health Organisation (WHO) when agreeing to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (UNFCTC). To prevent and address a conflict of interest between the tobacco industry and public health, the WHO instituted a firewall between the tobacco lobby and public health officials. Known as Article 5.3, it also comes with clear guiding principles on [how to apply it](#).

- **Protect official spaces at and around INCs from fossil fuel and petrochemical industry influence.**

In 2021 the UK government took measures to ensure no Oil and Gas major sponsored COP26 or took [part in the Green Zone](#). The INC process should build on this example and protect all official spaces by revoking fossil fuel and petrochemical industry sponsorship and participation.

- **Polluters out, People and Independent Science in.**

To succeed, the Global Plastics Treaty must be firmly rooted in a human rights-based approach; one that reduces inequality, prioritizes human health, and centres justice in both its creation and implementation.

As such, as well as acting to control the powerful petrochemical industry lobby, we call on you to prioritise giving seats at the table to Indigenous Peoples and impacted communities who live on the frontlines of plastic pollution - such as production sites,
plastic choked rivers and seas and toxic waste dumps - and to the independent scientists studying the impacts plastic pollution is having on our planet and our health.

This would be in line with the UN General Assembly’s Resolution 76/300 that says it is a human right to have a clean, healthy and sustainable environment and that there is an inextricable link between human rights and the environment. It would also uphold rights enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) to ensure the participation of Indigenous Peoples in decision-making matters.

Controlling polluting industries’ infiltration of negotiation spaces and ensuring the voices of independent scientists are heard would also help to ensure our right to science and support the Treaty mandate summarised in Resolution 5/14 that negotiations must rely on the best available science.

Currently too many of the scientific studies that inform Member States and decision-makers are funded by industries with vested interests - making it extremely difficult to ensure facts and data are free from industry influence. This conflict of interest effectively challenges the meaning of best available science and therefore cannot guarantee negotiations in good faith.

In summary: The Global Plastics Treaty offers an historic opportunity to end plastic pollution for all. Its success depends on Member States being able to negotiate in good faith, prioritizing input from those most affected and based on the best available, independent science. To achieve these shared goals, UNEP must implement the measures above to prevent the undue influence of the fossil fuel and petrochemical companies, which have a vested interest in perpetuating the plastic pollution crisis.

Respectfully,
Greenpeace International

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International Organisations
Asia Wild
Avaaz
Break Free From Plastic (BFFP)
Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)
Common Seas
Community Action Against Plastic Waste (CAPws)
Economy for the Common Good
Ekō
Environmental Investigation Agency
Friends of the Earth International
GAIA (Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives)
International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN)
One Earth
Population and Development Initiative
Tearfund

**African Organisations**
Appui aux Initiatives Communautaire de Conservation de l'Environnement et de Développement Durable (AICED), Democratic Republic of the Congo
Centre for Alternative Development, Uganda
Centre for Citizens Conserving Environment & Management (CECIC), Uganda
Centre For Earth Works (CFEW), Nigeria
Centre for Environment Justice and Development (CEJAD), Kenya
Front Commun pour la Protection de l'Environnement et des Espaces Protégés (FCPEEP), Democratic Republic of the Congo
Greenish, Egypt
groundWork, South Africa
Nipe Fagio, Tanzania
Sierra Leone School Green Club (SLSGC)
South Durban Community Environmental Alliance, South Africa
Sustainable Environment Development Initiative, Nigeria
Zero Waste Durban, South Africa

**Asia-Pacific Organisations**
Association For Promotion Sustainable Development, India
Bye Bye Plastic bags, Bali, Indonesia
Citizens' Climate Lobby Japan
Centre for Environmental Justice / Friends of the Earth Sri Lanka
Center for Renewable Energy and Sustainable Technology, Philippines
Consumers' Association of Penang, Malaysia
Ecosoum, Mongolia
Ecowaste Coalition, Philippines
Mother Earth Foundation, Philippines
National Fisheries Solidarity Movement, Sri Lanka
National Toxics Network, Australia
Nexus3 Foundation, Indonesia
Plastic Free Seas, China
Sahabat Alam Malaysia / Friends of the Earth Malaysia
Taiwan Watch Institute
Thant Myanmar, Myanmar
European Organisations
Arnika, Czech Republic
ClientEarth, UK
Društvo Ekologi brez meja, Slovenia
Economy for the Common Good Switzerland
Everyday Plastic, UK
Exit Plastik, Germany
Friends of the Earth Scotland
Gallifrey Foundation, Geneva
Gemeinwohl-Ökonomie, Luxembourg
Health and Environment Justice Support (HEJSupport), Germany
Humusz Szövetség, Hungary
Jane Goodall Institute France
KYMA sea conservation & research
La Fresque du Plastique, France
Let's Do It Foundation, Estonia
NoOPS.ch - No obsolescence programmée suisse, Switzerland
No Plastic In My Sea, France
Objectif Zéro Plastique, France
Ocean. Now!, Germany
Plastic Change, Denmark
Plastic Soup Foundation, Netherlands
Plastic Soup Surfer / Plastic Free Sea Foundation, Netherlands
Plastics Rebellion, UK
Pro Natura / Friends of the Earth Switzerland
Recycling Netwerk Benelux, Netherlands
Sciaena, Portugal
Seas at Risk, Belgium
She Changes Climate, England
Strandliners CIC, England
The Scarab Trust, UK
Trash Free Trails, UK
Trash Hero World, Switzerland
Vivir sin plástico, Spain
VOICE Ireland
Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF), Netherlands
ZERO - Association for the Sustainability of the Earth System, Portugal
Zero Waste Alliance Ukraine
Zero Waste Austria
Zero Waste Kiel e.V., Germany
Zero Waste Switzerland
North American Organisations
Alaska Community Action on Toxics, USA
Ascenred, Mexico
Azul, USA
Cafeteria Culture, USA
Center for Coalfield Justice, USA
CESTA Friends of the Earth, El Salvador
Conservation Law Foundation, USA
DION (NGO Network of Small Island Developing States), USA
Don't Waste Durham, USA
Fenceline Watch, USA
FoCo Trash Mob, USA
Fridays for Future USA
Friends of the Earth Canada
Fronteras Comunes, Mexico
Micah Six Eight Mission, USA
Observatorio Ciudadano de la Calidad del Aire, Mexico
Pesticide Action Network in Mexico (RAPAM)
Plastic Free Delaware, USA
Plastic Free Future, USA
PlasticFreeRestaurants.org, USA
Plastic Pollution Coalition, USA
PloggingMx, Mexico
Recycle Hawaii, USA
Red de Mujeres Periodistas del Sur de Tamaulipas, Mexico
Red Mexicana de Acción Ecológica, Mexico
Red Mexicana de Periodistas Ambientales, Mexico
Reloop, USA
Surfrider Foundation, USA
Surfrider Foundation Canada
Tearfund Canada
The Last Plastic Straw, USA
The Story of Stuff Project, USA
The Vessel Project of Louisiana, USA
Turtle Island Restoration Network, USA
Turtle Love, Costa Rica
Whale and Dolphin Conservation, USA

South American Organisations
Alianza Basura Cero Chile
Antu kai Mawen, Chile
Asociación movimiento nacional de recicladores de Chile
Cipoleños unidos por el ambiente, Argentina
Fundación Aguacílara, Venezuela
Fundación El Árbol, Chile
Fundación Lenga, Chile
Fundación Plastico. Project, Ecuador
Instituto SUSTENTAR Interdisciplinar de Estudos e Pesquisas em Sustentabilidade, Brazil
ONG Colectivo VientoSur, Chile
Reacción Climática, Bolivia
Red de Acción por los Derechos Ambientales (RADA), Chile
Taller de Comunicación Ambiental (Rosario), Argentina
Taller Ecologista, Argentina