

GREENPEACE



Malaysia VS Plastik

Tindakan Strategik & Cadangan Dasar

Malaysia VS Plastics: Strategic Actions & Policy Recommendations

RINGKASAN

Kita berada dalam krisis pencemaran plastik. Di peringkat global, pengeluaran plastik tahunan telah meningkat lebih daripada dua kali ganda dalam dua dekad yang lalu, dan meningkat dengan begitu pesat sekali.¹ Plastik merupakan suatu bencana alam sekitar. Ia mencemarkan tanah, udara dan air dunia, ia mengganggu ekosistem dan membunuh hidupan liar, dan ia memudaratkan kesihatan manusia dalam banyak cara yang kita baru mula fahami. Selain itu, plastik menyumbang kepada perubahan iklim, kerana ia diperbuat daripada bahan api fosil dan menghasilkan pelepasan sepanjang kitaran hayatnya. Kajian menunjukkan bahawa pengeluaran plastik memburukkan lagi krisis iklim, dan dijangka menggunakan sehingga satu pertiga daripada baki peruntukan karbon menjelang 2050, mengatasi sektor tenaga dan pengangkutan.²

Malaysia merupakan pemain utama dalam pembuatan dan penggunaan plastik, selain menerima sisa plastik yang diimport. Jumlah plastik yang dibuang di Malaysia jauh melebihi kemampuan negara untuk menanganinya secara selamat dan bertanggungjawab. Sementara itu, kerajaan Malaysia mendakwa bahawa ia “bercita-cita untuk mencapai sasaran pelepasan gas rumah hijau (GHG) sifar bersih paling awal menjelang 2050” dan ia telah membangunkan sebuah pelan hala tuju untuk mengurangkan pencemaran plastik. Namun terdapat jurang yang ketara dalam rancangan, pelaksanaan dan penguatkuasaan yang menghalang Malaysia daripada mencapai sasaran kemampuannya.

Kita amat memerlukan penyelesaian tuntas untuk menangani krisis pencemaran plastik dari sumbernya — beralih daripada pengeluaran plastik dara. Langkah mengitar semula dan pembakaran tidak akan dapat menghalang kemudaratannya yang disebabkan oleh plastik, apatah lagi melihat pertumbuhan pesat dalam pembuatan plastik. Kita mesti menolak penyelesaian palsu dan acah hijau (*greenwashing*), dan memberi cabaran terhadap syarikat-syarikat yang menyuruh kita menumpukan hanya pada pengurusan dan pembersihan sisa. Adalah lebih jelas sekarang bahawa kita mesti bertindak dari puncanya — pengeluaran plastik mesti dihentikan dari sumbernya dan plastik sekali guna mesti diharamkan bagi menangani krisis ini dengan berkesan dan mencegah kerosakan selanjutnya akibat daripada sisa plastik toksik.



Gambar: Jumlah sisa buangan plastik tempatan melebihi kemampuan negara untuk pelupusan yang selamat.

¹ Geyer et al., 2017, OECD 2020

https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/aa1edf33-en/1/3/2/3/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/aa1edf33-en&_csp=_ca738cf5d4f327be3b6fec4af-9ce5d12&itemilG=oecd&itemilG

² <https://energyanalysis.lbl.gov/publications/climate-impact-primary-plastic>

³ <https://www.pmo.gov.my/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Malaysia-Roadmap-Towards-Zero-Single-Use-Plastics-2018-2030-m-min.pdf>

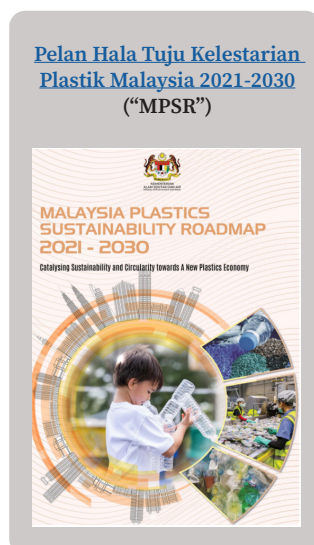
LATAR BELAKANG

Krisis sisa plastik Malaysia wujud daripada kedua-dua penggunaan domestik dan juga sisa plastik yang diimport (baik yang sah dan juga secara haram). Malaysia merupakan pemain penting dalam pembuatan plastik, dengan 1,300 pengeluar plastik dilaporkan pada tahun 2018.³ Pada tahun 2019, Malaysia merupakan antara negara yang mempunyai kadar sisa terurus per kapita tertinggi di dunia.⁴ Infrastruktur pengurusan sisa domestik di Malaysia sudah terbeban walaupun tanpa mengimport sisa plastik tambahan.⁵

Import sisa plastik telah menjejaskan lagi penggunaan plastik yang sudah berlebihan di Malaysia, dan telah membawa kepada kemerosotan alam sekitar dan isu kesihatan bagi masyarakat tempatan. Penduduk berhampiran tapak pembakaran terbuka, contohnya di Jenjarom, Pulau Indah dan Kuala Langat, terdedah kepada pencemaran udara yang menyebabkan masalah pernafasan, serta bahan kimia toksik daripada plastik yang karsinogenik, mutagenik, membahayakan kesihatan reproduktif, dan boleh menyebabkan keracunan logam berat.⁶ Larian sisa toksik dari tapak pelupusan juga boleh menjejaskan komuniti tempatan. Banyak operasi kitar semula didapati melanggar peraturan alam sekitar, membakar atau membuang sisa secara tidak wajar, tanpa mengambil kira kos kesihatan atau alam sekitar yang akhirnya ditanggung oleh rakyat Malaysia.⁷

DASAR SEMASA KERAJAAN MALAYSIA

Kerajaan Malaysia menyedari bahawa kita mempunyai isu kritikal dengan sisa plastik, dan telah menerbitkan beberapa dokumen dasar seperti di bawah, yang menggariskan rancangan dan hasrat kerajaan untuk menangani krisis plastik



⁴ <https://ourworldindata.org/plastic-pollution#which-countries-produce-the-most-mismanaged-plastic-waste>

⁵ INI ADALAH 2021 <https://eia-international.org/wp-content/uploads/EIA-The-Truth-Behind-Trash-FINAL.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.ciel.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Plastic-and-Health-The-Hidden-Costs-of-a-Plastic-Planet-February-2019.pdf>

⁷ Greenpeace Malaysia. 2018. Mitos Kitar Semula. <https://www.greenpeace.org/southeastasia/publication/549/the-recycling-myth/>

KEBIMBANGAN UTAMA

Walaupun kerajaan telah mengakui keperluan untuk mengambil tindakan berhubung krisis plastik merupakan suatu langkah penting, rancangan semasa tidak cukup bercita-cita tinggi untuk membawa penyelesaian yang diperlukan bagi menangani krisis sisa plastik di Malaysia. Di bawah adalah beberapa kebimbangan mengenai rancangan ini yang menghalang Malaysia daripada mencapai kemajuan ke arah pengitaran sebenar dan pengurangan sisa plastik.

- **Takrifan “Ekonomi Kitaran” yang bermasalah & termasuk penyelesaian palsu** yang mengalihkan perhatian kita daripada menangani punca sebenar krisis plastik.
 - Kerajaan memasukkan apa yang dipanggil “penyelesaian” yang tidak benar-benar berbentuk kitaran, kerana mereka tidak membenarkan bahan benar-benar kembali dalam kitaran penggunaan semula.
 - Projek yang diterangkan dalam MPSR seperti “Kitar semula kimia” dan “Kitar semula lanjutan”⁴ pada asasnya adalah projek “sisa-ke-tenaga” atau insinerasi yang menghasilkan produk sampingan toksik dan tidak membolehkan bahan untuk digunakan semula.⁸ Ia tidak selamat, bukan merupakan proses kitaran dan tidak boleh dipanggil kitar semula, dan juga bukan penyelesaian untuk menamatkan plastik sekali guna.⁹
 - Beberapa dokumen dasar kerajaan mencadangkan pertukaran daripada

satu bahan guna tunggal kepada bahan guna yang lain: contohnya, menggunakan filem regangan nano untuk menggantikan filem regangan berbilang lapisan,⁴ bertukar kepada plastik “boleh dikitar semula”^{3,4} – walaupun kita tahu bahawa sejumlah besar plastik di Malaysia dan seluruh dunia tidak dikitar semula, dan menggantikan plastik berasaskan bio⁵ atau alternatif terbiodegradasi³ – yang masih menggalakkan penggunaan tunggal dan memerlukan sumber yang besar untuk dihasilkan.

- **Tiada rancangan jelas untuk mengurangkan pengeluaran plastik**
 - Pengeluaran plastik semakin meningkat, namun tiada komitmen atau rancangan yang jelas untuk menangani pengeluaran merupakan punca utama dan asal-usul krisis plastik.
 - Sebaliknya, dalam semua dokumen dasar, Kerajaan memberi tumpuan kepada pengurusan & pembersihan sisa, walaupun jelas bahawa inisiatif pengurusan sisa sahaja tidak akan mencukupi untuk menghentikan pengaliran plastik ke dalam persekitaran dan badan kita.
- **Tiada tindakan mandatori untuk perniagaan** (terutamanya pengilang / peruncit plastik)
 - Dalam MRZSUP, tidak ada disebut mengenai Tanggungjawab Lanjutan Pengeluar, atau EPR (*Extended*

⁸ https://www.greenpeace.org/usa/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/GP_Deception-by-the-Numbers-3.pdf

⁹ <https://www.greenpeace.org/southeastasia/story/64434/malysias-waste-to-energy-plans-are-a-wasted-opportunity/>

Producer Responsibility)), dan tiada tindakan atau menyebut tentang syarikat sama sekali.³ Ini sangat bermasalah kerana penghapusan plastik sekali guna akan memerlukan komitmen dan tindakan yang kukuh daripada perniagaan-perniagaan untuk berjaya.

- EPR disebut dalam dokumen dasar lain, walau bagaimanapun tanpa sebarang penerangan jelas tentang bagaimana, bila, dan oleh siapa ia harus dilaksanakan. Juga tidak disebutkan bagaimana syarikat akan bertanggungjawab untuk terus menjual produk plastik sekali guna.
- Dalam dokumen yang menyebut tentang perniagaan, ia mengatakan bahawa mereka “digalakkan” untuk beralih kepada produk dan amalan yang mampan,^{1,4} tanpa sebarang keperluan untuk berbuat demikian.
- Prinsip Pencemar-Bayar hanya disebut dalam satu ayat merentas semua dokumen polisi⁵ - tanpa penjelasan bagaimana ia akan dilaksanakan.
- **Menyalahkan isu plastik atas sebab “tahap kesedaran rendah” atau “tidak peduli”, tanpa menangani faktor lain atau mencadangkan penyelesaian**
 - MPSR menyalahkan “kekurangan integrasi kitaran dalam pembuatan keputusan korporat” atas sebab “tahap kesedaran rendah”.⁴ Walau bagaimanapun, syarikat secara amnya sudah mengetahui tentang isu plastik sekali guna dan ramai yang sudah

cuba memasarkan diri mereka sebagai berwatak “hijau”. Apa yang kurang ialah insentif, peraturan dan penguatkuasaan.

- RMK12 mencadangkan bahawa “kadar kitar semula juga kekal rendah di Malaysia disebabkan sikap tidak ambil peduli di kalangan rakyat dan perniagaan”,¹ tanpa menangani masalah serius dengan kitar semula plastik termasuk menyedari hakikat bahawa kebanyakan plastik tidak boleh dikitar semula, tanpa mengira tingkah laku manusia.
- **Kebanyakan tanggungjawab diletakkan kepada pengguna (orang ramai) & pengurusan sisa**
 - MRZSUP meletakkan kesalahan utama kepada 1) individu kerana kurang kesedaran dan membuang sampah sarap dan 2) kadar kitar semula yang rendah.³ NMLPAP juga memfokuskan pada pembersihan sampah.⁵
 - Tumpuan pada tingkah laku hiliran dan pembersihan ini mengalihkan perhatian kami daripada menangani sumber dan penyumbang terbesar kepada krisis — iaitu syarikat yang mengeluarkan dan memasukkan jumlah plastik yang berlebihan ke pasaran.
 - “Pelan komunikasi” MPSR bergantung sepenuhnya kepada “pertubuhan bukan kerajaan (NGO), masyarakat awam dan organisasi lain yang berasaskan komuniti”,⁴ bukannya syarikat menjual plastik

dan kerajaan yang bertanggungjawab mencipta dan menguatkuasakan penyelesaian.

- **Sasaran, garis masa dan tindakan adalah kabur dan kurang jelas terutamanya mengenai siapa yang bertanggungjawab dan cara kemajuan yang akan diukur.**
 - Sebagai contoh, MPSR menyatakan “proses penghapusan berperingkat akan dilakukan secara progresif” tanpa sebarang tarikh sasaran yang konkrit.⁴
 - MPSR juga menyatakan: “Kerajaan berhak untuk menyemak semula sasaran berdasarkan kemajuan yang dicapai”, pada dasarnya tidak komited kepada sebarang matlamat konkrit.
 - Kata kunci kemampanan digunakan di seluruh dokumen, tanpa definisi yang jelas. Contohnya termasuk: pengeluaran dan penggunaan mampan, atau “SPC” (sustainable production and consumption), “perolehan hijau”, “produk dan perkhidmatan hijau”.¹
- **Risiko acah hijau (greenwashing) tidak ditangani**
 - Kerajaan menggalakkan penggunaan “label hijau”,¹ tetapi tidak mentakrifkan istilah ini atau menjelaskan bagaimana cara label sedemikian disalahgunakan.
 - Tidak jelas siapa yang bertanggungjawab untuk memastikan penggunaan label “hijau” atau label berkaitan kemampanan yang tepat dan benar. MPSR berkata produk akan dinilai oleh “badan pensijilan”, dan “dijamin terhadap piawaian yang boleh dipercayai,” tetapi tidak



Gambar: Jumlah mikroplastik makan bertambah akibat kekurangan kapasiti untuk memproses sisa plastik.

menyatakan siapa badan pensijilan itu atau cara piawaian ditakrifkan dan dikuatkuasakan.⁴

Kebimbangan dan kelemahan yang dinyatakan di sini menyerlahkan isu kritikal yang akan menghalang Malaysia daripada mencapai matlamat yang dinyatakan dan - yang paling penting - akan membolehkan industri plastik terus membahayakan rakyat Malaysia. Rancangan ini tidak mempunyai cita-cita tinggi dan tidak tepat pada masanya untuk menangani krisis, dan ia tidak mempertanggungjawabkan pihak berkepentingan yang paling kritikal, iaitu syarikat perniagaan. Hakikat bahawa kita telah melihat kemajuan yang sangat sedikit sejak dokumen ini diterbitkan menekankan lagi ketidakupayaan mereka untuk membawa kepada perubahan yang kita perlukan segera.

PERJANJIAN PLASTIK GLOBAL

Di pentas global, para pemimpin dunia, CEO dan masyarakat sivil sedang bermesyuarat untuk mendraf [Perjanjian Plastik Global](#) yang pertama di dunia, dengan mandat untuk menangani kitaran hayat penuh plastik dan membendung pencemaran plastik.¹⁰ Malaysia telah menghantar delegasi ke mesyuarat ini, diketuai oleh Kementerian Sumber Asli dan Kelestarian Alam Sekitar (NRES)¹¹, tetapi juga turut melibatkan wakil industri petrokimia.¹²

Dalam mesyuarat terakhir pada Mac 2024 (INC-4), delegasi Malaysia memberikan sedikit atau tiada sumbangan yang bertujuan untuk benar-benar mengukuhkan teks perjanjian terbabit. Sebaliknya, ulasan delegasi Malaysia mengenai teks draf itu seolah-olah melindungi kepentingan industri plastik. Paling ketara, Malaysia meminta “Tidak sepatutnya ada sebarang peruntukan untuk mengurangkan pengeluaran polimer plastik primer.”¹³ Ini secara langsung melemahkan keperluan mendesak untuk menyekat pengeluaran plastik dalam sebarang perjanjian untuk berjaya dan mencapai sasaran. Tambahan pula, Malaysia menganjurkan untuk mengehadkan

keperluan pendedahan maklumat daripada perniagaan, dengan alasan kebimbangan kerahsiaan,¹⁴ dan berulang kali menegaskan bahawa “pelaksanaan perjanjian itu mesti didorong secara nasional,”¹⁵ supaya Malaysia akan menentukan sasarannya sendiri selaras dengan pelan hala tuju MPSRnya.

Sementara itu, rakyat Malaysia sedang mengharapkan kerajaan untuk mengambil tindakan terhadap krisis plastik. Kajian Greenpeace pada April 2024 mendapati lapan daripada sepuluh rakyat Malaysia menyokong pengurangan pengeluaran plastik dan 76% menyokong larangan pembungkusan plastik sekali guna.¹⁶ Sekarang adalah masanya untuk kerajaan mengambil tindakan dan menyeru ke arah Perjanjian Plastik Global yang kukuh selaras dengan tuntutan rakyat, bukan tuntutan industri plastik. Dengan INC-5 yang bakal berlangsung pada 25 November 2024,¹⁷ adalah penting bagi Malaysia untuk mematuhi perjanjian kukuh yang akan melindungi negara daripada akibat berbahaya daripada pengeluaran plastik yang tidak terkawal.

¹⁰ <https://www.unep.org/resources/resolutions-treaties-and-decisions/UN-Environment-Assembly-5-2>

¹¹ <https://www.bernama.com/ms/news.php?id=2288862>

¹² <https://www.greenpeace.org/malaysia/story/53982/go-big-or-go-home-malaysia-at-inc4/>

¹³ https://resolutions.unep.org/incres/uploads/my_inc-4_part_ii.1.pdf

¹⁴ https://resolutions.unep.org/incres/uploads/2-malaysias_written_submission_for_the_fourth_session_of_intergovernmental_negotiating_committee_inc-4.pdf

¹⁵ https://resolutions.unep.org/incres/uploads/my_inc-4_part_ii.3.pdf

¹⁶ <https://www.greenpeace.org/malaysia/press/52619/8-in-10-people-in-malaysia-support-global-plastic-treaty-to-cut-plastic-production/#:~:text=Dalam%20perbandingan%20ke%20tinjauan pendapat,%20angka ini%20meningkat%20ke%2087%25.>

¹⁷ <https://www.unep.org/inc-plastic-pollution/session-5>

CADANGAN



Kerajaan mesti komited terhadap rancangan yang lebih kukuh berdasarkan penyelesaian tuntas untuk menangani krisis plastik di Malaysia. Ini bermakna:

- **Pelan hala tuju untuk menghentikan penggunaan plastik secara berperingkat di Malaysia yang:**
 - Mempertanggungjawabkan perniagaan atas peranan mereka dalam krisis plastik, bukannya menumpukan kesalahan individu. Ini termasuk mentakrifkan dan melaksanakan EPR dengan jelas.
 - Melibatkan perniagaan untuk menjadi pelaksana utama penyelesaian, mewajibkan menghentikan penggunaan plastik sekali guna secara berperingkat dan melaksanakan sistem guna dan isi semula.
 - Memberi insentif (kewangan, cukai, dsb.) dan peraturan yang lebih kukuh dan akibat (denda, penggantungan lesen, dll.) untuk memastikan peraturan dikuatkuasakan dan memastikan pelan hala tuju berjaya.
 - Mentakrifkan ekonomi kitaran
- dengan tepat tanpa memasukkan proses pengurusan sisa yang tidak bersifat kitaran dan berbahaya seperti sisa-ke-tenaga (pembakaran) yang tidak membenarkan bahan memasuki semula rantai bekalan dalam kitaran penggunaan semula.
- Mentakrifkan dengan jelas label kemampunan seperti “perolehan hijau”, “produk dan perkhidmatan hijau” dan mewujudkan skim pensijilan yang telus dan tersedia untuk umum termasuk siapa yang boleh menggunakan label tersebut dan bagaimana cara pengiklanan palsu dan acah hijau (greenwashing) boleh dihalang.
- Memfokuskan pada penyelesaian yang benar-benar bersifat kitaran - terutamanya sistem guna dan isi semula, dan tidak menumpukan pada penyelesaian palsu seperti meningkatkan “kebolehkitaran semula” plastik, sisa-ke-tenaga (pembakaran) dan beralih kepada bahan guna tunggal alternatif, yang merupakan gangguan semata-mata dan tidak dapat menangani skala krisis.
- Mengambil kira sasaran dan tindakan yang khusus, boleh

diukur, terikat masa, telus, serta menamakan pihak berkepentingan yang bertanggungjawab, supaya orang ramai boleh memantau dan memastikan akauntabiliti mereka yang bertanggungjawab.

- Komited kepada sasaran yang ditakrifkan dengan jelas dan menyedari bahawa jika sasaran terlepas, tindakan yang lebih tangkas dan lebih bercita-cita tinggi mesti diambil untuk mencapainya, dan bukannya melaraskan sasaran menjadi kurang bercita-cita tinggi apabila kemajuan yang mencukupi tidak dicapai.
- **Komitmen untuk menyokong Perjanjian Plastik Global yang:**
 - Menamatkan pencemaran plastik — dari pengeluaran hingga pelupusan — untuk melindungi alam sekitar dan kesihatan manusia.
 - Menetapkan sasaran yang mengikat secara sah untuk mengurangkan pengeluaran plastik sekurang-kurangnya 75% menjelang 2040 untuk kekal di bawah 1.5° C.
 - Menamatkan penggunaan plastik sekali guna, bermula dengan perkara yang paling bermasalah seperti beg plastik.
 - Memastikan peralihan yang adil dan inklusif kepada ekonomi berasaskan karbon rendah, sisa sifar, dan berasaskan guna-semula.
 - Berakar umbi dalam pendekatan berasaskan hak asasi manusia yang mengurangkan ketidaksamaan, mengutamakan kesihatan manusia, dan memusatkan keadilan dalam penggubalan dan pelaksanaannya.

JUST BECAUSE
SOMETHING IS
RECYCLABLE
DOES NOT MEAN IT
WILL BE RECYCLED.



GREENPEACE

HOW CAN COMPANIES SOLVE THE
PLASTIC POLLUTION CRISIS?
REUSABLE SOLUTIONS
THAT ARE:



AFFORDABLE

Producers must take responsibility for the cost of the material, the refillable/reusable packaging and its collection, and not create only 'premium' reusable containers for well-off consumers.

JUST

A reusable system should value manufacturing and delivery workers, small business owners, and consumers more than profits for upper management.

DURABLE

Materials should be long-lasting and as strong as possible, to have the least amount of health and environmental impacts.

CONVENIENT

Reusable packaging should be collectible, and companies should take responsibility for designing collection systems to ensure that reusable containers don't become disposable. Retailers should allow customers to bring their own reusable containers as well as offer collectible options.

SIMPLE

A transition to an agricultural system designed around ecological principles would include more consumption of food closer to the point of production, meaning that we would need less packaging and transportation.

NON-TOXIC

Reusable containers should be free of hazardous chemicals, extending not just to chemicals that have been regulated or restricted in certain regions but to all chemicals that have intrinsically hazardous properties.

GREENPEACE # ReuseRevolution

RUJUKAN

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12. Laporan Plastik Terbiodegradasi (GPEA, 2020)
13. Laporan Kitar Semula Bahan Kimia “Penipuan Dengan Nombor” (GPUS, 2020)
14. MITOS KITAR SEMULA 2.0: Kesan Selepas Toksik Sisa Plastik yang Diimport di Malaysia (GPMY 2020)
15. Tuntutan Pekeliling Fall Flat (GPUS, 2020) (Kitar semula tidak mati, tetapi plastik membunuhnya)
16. Mitos Kitar Semula (GPMY, 2018)



SUMMARY

We are in a plastic pollution crisis. Globally, annual plastic production has more than doubled in the last two decades and is increasing exponentially.¹ Plastic is an environmental catastrophe. It pollutes our land, air and water, it disrupts ecosystems and kills wildlife, and it harms human health in many ways that we are only just beginning to understand. Additionally, plastic contributes to climate change, as it is made from fossil fuels and produces emissions throughout its lifecycle. Studies show that plastic production is fueling the climate crisis, and is expected to consume up to one-third of the remaining carbon budget by 2050, surpassing energy and transportation sectors.²

Malaysia is a major player in plastics manufacturing and consumption, in addition to receiving imported plastic waste. The amount of plastic discarded in Malaysia is far beyond the country's capacity to safely and responsibly deal with it. Meanwhile, the Malaysian government claims that it “aspires to achieve a net-zero greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions target earliest by 2050” and it has developed roadmaps to reduce plastic pollution, but there are significant gaps in the plans, implementation, and enforcement that are preventing Malaysia from meeting its sustainability targets.

We urgently need real solutions to address the plastic pollution crisis at the source - transitioning away from virgin plastic production. Recycling and incineration will never be able to prevent the harm caused by plastic, especially given the rapid growth in plastic manufacturing. We must reject false solutions and greenwashing, and push back against corporations telling us to focus only on waste management and cleanup. It is clearer now more than ever that we must turn off the tap — plastic production must be halted at the source and single-use plastics must be banned in order to effectively address this crisis and prevent further damage from toxic plastic waste.



Image: Malaysia produces more plastic waste than it is able to process safely and responsibly.

¹ Geyer et al., 2017, OECD 2020

https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/aa1edf33-en/1/3/2/3/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/aa1edf33-en&_csp=ca738cf5d4f327be3b6fec4af-9ce5d12&itemIIG=oecd&itemIIG

² <https://energyanalysis.lbl.gov/publications/climate-impact-primary-plastic>

³ <https://www.pmo.gov.my/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Malaysia-Roadmap-Towards-Zero-Single-Use-Plastics-2018-2030-m-min.pdf>

BACKGROUND

Malaysia's plastic waste crisis exists from both domestic consumption as well as imported plastic waste (both legal and illegal). Malaysia is a significant player in plastic manufacturing, with 1,300 plastics manufacturers reported in 2018.³ In 2019, Malaysia was among the countries with the highest rate of mismanaged waste per capita in the world.⁴ Domestic waste management infrastructure in Malaysia is already overwhelmed even without importing additional plastic waste.⁵

Plastic waste imports have further strained the already excessive plastic consumption in Malaysia, and have led to environmental degradation and health issues for local communities. Residents near open burning sites, for example in Jenjarom, Pulau Indah and Kuala Langat, are exposed to air pollution that causes respiratory problems, as well as to toxic chemicals from plastic that are carcinogenic, mutagenic, harm reproductive health, and can cause heavy metal poisoning.⁶ Toxic run-off from dumpsites can also affect local communities. Many recycling operations have been found violating environmental regulations, burning or improperly disposing of waste, with no regard for the health or environmental cost Malaysians are paying for their activities.⁷

CURRENT MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT POLICY

The Malaysian government recognises we have a critical issue with plastic waste, and it has published several policy documents below, which outline the government's plans and intentions to address the plastics crisis.



⁴ <https://ourworldindata.org/plastic-pollution#which-countries-produce-the-most-mismanaged-plastic-waste>

⁵ INI ADALAH 2021 <https://eia-international.org/wp-content/uploads/EIA-The-Truth-Behind-Trash-FINAL.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.ciel.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Plastic-and-Health-The-Hidden-Costs-of-a-Plastic-Planet-February-2019.pdf>

⁷ Greenpeace Malaysia. 2018. Mitos Kitar Semula. <https://www.greenpeace.org/southeastasia/publication/549/the-recycling-myth/>

KEY CONCERNS

While it's an important step that the government has acknowledged the need to take action regarding the plastics crisis, the current plans fall short and are not ambitious enough to bring about the necessary solutions to address Malaysia's plastic waste crisis. Below are some of the concerns with these plans which are preventing Malaysia from making progress towards true circularity and plastic waste reduction.

- **The definition of "Circular Economy" is problematic & includes false solutions** that distract us from addressing the true source of the plastic crisis.
 - The government includes so-called "solutions" which are not truly circular because they do not allow materials to actually return in a cycle of reuse.
 - Projects described in MPSR such as "Chemical recycling" and "Advanced recycling"⁴ are essentially "waste-to-fuel" or incineration projects that produce toxic byproducts and do not enable materials to ever be reused again. These are not safe, not cyclical and should not be called recycling, nor are they a solution to ending single-use plastic.
 - Several of the Government's policy documents propose switching from one single-use material to another: for example, using nano stretch film to replace multi-layered stretch film,⁴ switching to "recyclable" plastics^{3,4} — even though we know that the

vast majority of plastics in Malaysia and globally are not recycled, and substituting bio-based plastic⁵ or biodegradable alternatives³ — which still promote single use and require significant resources to produce.

- **No explicit plans to reduce plastic production**
 - Plastic production is soaring, yet there is no clear commitment or plan to address production - the primary and original source of the plastics crisis.
 - Instead, in all of its policy documents, the Government focuses heavily on waste management & cleanup, even though it's clear that waste management initiatives alone will never be enough to stop the flow of plastic into our environment and our bodies.
- **No mandatory action points for businesses** (esp. plastic manufacturers/retailers)
 - In the MRZSUP, there is no mention of EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) and no action points or mention of companies at all.³ This is very problematic as the elimination of single-use plastics will require strong commitments and actions from businesses to succeed.
 - EPR is mentioned in other policy documents, however without any clear description of how, when, and by whom it should be implemented. There is also

⁸ https://www.greenpeace.org/usa/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/GP_Deception-by-the-Numbers-3.pdf

⁹ <https://www.greenpeace.org/southeastasia/story/64434/malaysias-waste-to-energy-plans-are-a-wasted-opportunity/>

no mention of how companies will be held accountable for continuing to sell single-use plastic products.

- In the documents that do mention businesses, it says they are “encouraged” to shift to sustainable products and practices,^{1,4} without any requirement to do so.
- The Polluters-Pay-Principle is only mentioned in one sentence across all the policy documents⁵ — with no explanation of how it would be implemented.
- **Attributes plastics issues to “low awareness” or “apathy”, without addressing other factors or proposing a solution**
 - MPSR blames the “lack of circularity integration in corporate decision-making” on “low awareness”.⁴ However, companies generally already know about single-use plastic issues and many already try to market themselves as “green”. What is lacking is incentives, regulations and enforcement.
 - The Twelfth Plan suggests that “the recycling rate also remains low in Malaysia due to the apathy among the people and businesses”,¹ without addressing the serious problems with plastics recycling including the fact that most plastics cannot be recycled, regardless of human behaviour.
- **Most of the responsibility is put on consumers (the public) & waste management**
MRZSUP places primary blame on 1)

individuals for lack of awareness and littering and 2) low recycling rates.³ NMLPAP also focuses on litter cleanup.

⁵

This focus on downstream behaviour and cleanup distracts us from addressing the source and biggest contributors to the crisis - namely, companies that produce and push excessive amounts of plastic into the market.

The “communication plan” of MPSR relies entirely on “non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil societies and other community-based organisations”,⁴ instead of the companies who are responsible for selling us plastic and the government who is responsible for creating and enforcing solutions.

- **Targets, timelines and action points are vague, and lacking clarity, especially regarding who is responsible and how progress will be measured.**
 - For example, the MPSR says the “phasing-out process will be done progressively,” without any concrete target dates.⁴
 - MPSR also states: “The Government reserves the right to revise the target based on progress made”, essentially not committing to any concrete goals.
 - Sustainability buzzwords are used throughout the documents, without clear definitions. Examples include: “SPC” (sustainable production and consumption), “green procurement”, and “green products and services”.¹

- **Risk of greenwashing not addressed**
 - The government encourages the use of “green labels”,¹ but does not define these terms or address how such labels are misused.
 - Unclear who is responsible for ensuring accurate and truthful use of “green” or other sustainability-related labels. MPSR says products will be assessed by “the certification body”, and “assured against credible standards,” but doesn’t say who the certification body is or how standards are defined and enforced.⁴

The concerns and shortcomings noted here highlight the critical issues that will prevent Malaysia from achieving its stated goals, and most regrettably, will enable the plastics industry to continue harming Malaysians. These plans are neither ambitious nor timely enough to address the crisis, and they do not impose requirements on the most critical stakeholders — businesses. The fact that we’ve seen very little progress since these documents were published further underlines their inability to lead to the change we urgently need.



Image: The presence of microplastics in our surroundings keep growing due to improper disposal of plastic waste.



GLOBAL PLASTICS TREATY

On the global stage, world leaders, CEOs, and civil society are meeting to draft the world's first [Global Plastics Treaty](#), with the mandate to address the full life cycle of plastic and curb plastic pollution.¹⁰ Malaysia has been sending a delegation to these meetings, led by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability (NRES)¹¹, but also including representatives of the petrochemical industry.¹²

At the last meeting in March 2024 (INC-4), Malaysia's delegation gave very little to no contributions that sought to actually strengthen the text. Instead, the Malaysian delegation's comments on the draft text seemed to be protecting the plastics industry's interests. Most notably, Malaysia requested "There should not be any provision to reduce the production of primary plastic polymers."¹³ This directly undermines the urgent need to restrict plastic production for any treaty to be successful and for targets to be met. Furthermore, Malaysia advocated to limit disclosure requirements from businesses, citing confidentiality concerns,¹⁴ and repeatedly asserted that "the implementation of the treaty must be nationally driven,"¹⁵ such that Malaysia would determine its own targets in line with its MPSR roadmap.

Meanwhile, Malaysians are looking for the government to take action on the plastics crisis. A Greenpeace study from April 2024 found that eight out of ten Malaysians support cutting plastic production and 76% support a ban on single-use plastic packaging.¹⁶ Now is the time for the government to take action and call for a strong Global Plastics Treaty in line with the people's demands, not the demands of the plastics industry. With INC-5 coming up on 25 November 2024,¹⁷ it is critical that Malaysia commits to a strong treaty that will protect the country from the dangerous consequences of unregulated plastic production.



Image: An increase in online shopping has resulted in more single-use plastics due to product packaging.

¹⁰ <https://www.unep.org/resources/resolutions-treaties-and-decisions/UN-Environment-Assembly-5-2>

¹¹ <https://www.bernama.com/ms/news.php?id=2288862>

¹² <https://www.greenpeace.org/malaysia/story/53982/go-big-or-go-home-malaysia-at-inc4/>

¹³ https://resolutions.unep.org/incres/uploads/my_inc-4_part_ii.1.pdf

¹⁴ https://resolutions.unep.org/incres/uploads/2-malysias_written_submission_for_the_fourth_session_of_intergovernmental_negotiating_committee_inc-4.pdf

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¹⁶ <https://www.greenpeace.org/malaysia/press/52619/8-in-10-people-in-malaysia-support-global-plastic-treaty-to-cut-plastic-production/#:~:text=Dalam%20perbandingan%20ke%20%20tinjauan%20pendapat,%20angka%20ini%20meningkat%20ke%2087%25.>

¹⁷ <https://www.unep.org/inc-plastic-pollution/session-5>

RECOMMENDATIONS



The government must commit to a much stronger plan based on real solutions to address the plastic crisis in Malaysia. This means:

- **A roadmap for phasing out plastics in Malaysia that:**
 - Holds businesses responsible for their role in the plastics crisis, instead of focusing the blame on individuals. This includes clearly defining and implementing EPR.
 - Engages businesses to be the primary implementers of the solution, requiring a phase-out of single-use plastics and implementing reuse and refill systems.
 - Includes incentives (financial, tax, etc.), stronger regulations, and consequences (fines, suspension of licenses, etc.) to ensure regulations are enforced and enable the roadmap to succeed.
 - Accurately defines circular economy without including non-circular, harmful waste management processes like waste-to-energy (incineration) which does not allow materials to
- re-enter the supply chain in a cycle of reuse.
- Clearly defines sustainability labels such as “green procurement”, and “green products and services” and establishes a transparent, publicly-available certification scheme including who can use such labels and how false advertising and greenwashing are prevented.
- Focuses on truly circular solutions - particularly reuse and refill systems, and does not focus on false solutions such as increasing the “recyclability” of plastics, waste-to-energy (incineration), and switching to alternative single-use materials, which are distractions that alone cannot address the scale of the crisis.
- Includes specific, measurable, time-bound, transparent targets and action points, as well as naming the responsible stakeholders, such that the public can monitor and hold those responsible to account.



Image: Businesses play a pivotal role in reducing plastic pollution from production to disposal.

- Commits to clearly defined targets and recognises that if targets are missed, accelerated and more ambitious action must be taken to meet them, rather than adjusting targets to be less ambitious when sufficient progress isn't made.
- **A commitment to advocate for a global Plastics Treaty that:**
 - Ends plastic pollution – from production to disposal – to protect the environment and human health.
 - Sets a legally binding target to reduce plastic production by at least 75% by 2040 to stay below 1.5° C.
 - Ends single-use plastics, starting with the worst offending items like plastic sachets.
 - Ensures a just and inclusive transition to a low-carbon, zero-waste, reuse-based economy.
 - Is firmly rooted in a human-rights-based approach that reduces inequality, prioritises human health, and centers justice in its creation and implementation.

JUST BECAUSE
SOMETHING IS
RECYCLABLE
DOES NOT MEAN IT
WILL BE RECYCLED.



GREENPEACE

HOW CAN COMPANIES SOLVE THE PLASTIC POLLUTION CRISIS? **REUSABLE SOLUTIONS** THAT ARE:



AFFORDABLE

Producers must take responsibility for the cost of the material, the refillable/reusable packaging and its collection, and not create only 'premium' reusable containers for well-off consumers.

SIMPLE

A transition to an agricultural system designed around ecological principles would include more consumption of food closer to the point of production, meaning that we would need less packaging and transportation.

NON-TOXIC

Reusable containers should be free of hazardous chemicals, extending not just to chemicals that have been regulated or restricted in certain regions but to all chemicals that have intrinsically hazardous properties.

JUST

A reusable system should value manufacturing and delivery workers, small business owners, and consumers more than profits for upper management.

DURABLE

Materials should be long-lasting and as strong as possible, to have the least amount of health and environmental impacts.

CONVENIENT

Reusable packaging should be collectible, and companies should take responsibility for designing collection systems to ensure that reusable containers don't become disposable. Retailers should allow customers to bring their own reusable containers as well as offer collectible options.

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ReuseRevolution

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