

180 nations agree UN deal to regulate export of plastic waste

May 10 2019



Plastic waste is seen floating on a sewage canal in the Haitian capital Port-au-Prince, on April 23, 2019. Around 180 governments Have agreed on a new UN accord to regulate the export of plastic waste

Around 180 governments on Friday agreed on a new UN accord to

regulate the export of plastic waste, some eight million tonnes of which ends up in the oceans each year, organisers said.

The 1,400 representatives, meeting in Geneva reached the agreement after 12 days' discussion on what Rolph Payet, Executive Secretary of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) called "one of the world's most pressing [environmental issues](#)".

The Geneva meeting amended the 1989 Basel Convention on the control of hazardous wastes to include [plastic waste](#) in a legally-binding framework.

"I'm proud that this week in Geneva, Parties to the Basel Convention have reached agreement on a legally-binding, globally-reaching mechanism for managing plastic waste," said Payet.

The IPEN umbrella group seeking to eliminate hazardous, [toxic chemicals](#) said the new amendment would empower developing countries to refuse plastic waste dumping".

"For far too long developed countries like the US and Canada have been exporting their mixed toxic plastic wastes to developing Asian countries claiming it would be recycled in the receiving country

"Instead, much of this contaminated mixed waste cannot be recycled and is instead dumped or burned, or finds its way into the ocean," said IPEN science advisor Sara Brosche.

Plastic waste pollution has reached "epidemic proportions" with an estimated 100 million tonnes of plastic now found in the oceans.

The Geneva meeting also undertook to eliminate two toxic chemical groups—

Dicofol and Perfluorooctanoic Acid, plus related compounds. The latter has been used in a wide variety of industrial and domestic applications including non-stick cookware and food processing equipment, as well as carpets, paper and paints.

The European Union coordinates and directs [environmental protection](#) for its members, through the regulation of industry and the setting of green policy goals.

© 2019 AFP

Citation: 180 nations agree UN deal to regulate export of plastic waste (2019, May 10) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2019-05-nations-export-plastic.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--