

Indonesia sends back hundreds of shipping containers full of waste

September 4 2019



Hundreds of shipping containers, such as this one sent from Australia, have been found to be filled with household trash and hazardous waste

Indonesia has sent hundreds of garbage-filled shipping containers back to their countries of origin, according to the customs agency, as the

Southeast Asian nation pushes back against becoming a dumping ground for foreign trash.

About 250 containers seized across the archipelago in recent months have already been returned and authorities are inspecting more than 1,000 others, a customs official said.

Among them, 49 containers of waste seized on Batam Island near Singapore have been shipped back to the United States, Germany, France, Hong Kong and Australia, said agency spokesman Deni Surjantoro.

The shipments were loaded with a combination of garbage, [plastic waste](#) and [hazardous materials](#) in violation of import rules.

"Imports can't be contaminated with toxic or [dangerous materials](#)," he said.

Nearly 200 containers have also been shipped out of Surabaya, Indonesia's second-biggest city, to the US, Britain and Germany, according to customs data.

Meanwhile, authorities near Jakarta are gearing up to send back about 150 containers while inspecting more than 1,000 others that could contain banned materials, Surjantoro said.

Indonesia has been tightening its surveillance of foreign trash in response to soaring imports.

Huge quantities of waste have been redirected to Southeast Asian nations after China—which used to receive the bulk of scrap plastic from around the world—closed its doors to foreign refuse last year in a bid to clean up its environment.



Dozens of shipping containers of waste seized on Batam Island near Singapore have been shipped back to the United States, Germany, France, Hong Kong and Australia

Australia has pledged to stop exporting recyclable waste amid global concerns about plastic polluting the oceans and increasing pushback from Asian nations against accepting trash.

Around 300 million tonnes of plastic are produced every year, according to the conservation organisation WWF, with much of it ending up in landfills or polluting the seas, in what has become a growing international crisis.

A particular environmental concern are microplastics—tiny pieces of degraded waste that absorb harmful chemicals and accumulate inside fish, birds and other animals.

© 2019 AFP

Citation: Indonesia sends back hundreds of shipping containers full of waste (2019, September 4) retrieved 29 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2019-09-indonesia-hundreds-shipping-full.html>

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.