

Sri Lanka comments for Article 9: Existing Plastic Pollution

Sri Lanka urges the establishment of robust international support mechanisms to address the urgent challenge of legacy plastic pollution, particularly in small island developing states (SIDS) and coastal nations, which often bear a disproportionate burden of plastic waste accumulation, despite contributing minimally to the problem.

The X-Press Pearl maritime disaster, which occurred off the coast of Sri Lanka in 2021, serves as a stark reminder of the severe environmental and socio-economic damage that can result from plastic pollution during transboundary movement. The incident released billions of plastic nurdles and hazardous substances into Indian Ocean, devastating marine ecosystems, fisheries, and coastal livelihoods. To date, the cleanup remains incomplete, and the long-term ecological consequences are still unfolding. This tragedy underscores the need for clear accountability, response mechanisms, and international cooperation in dealing with pollution originating beyond national jurisdictions.

Sri Lanka emphasizes that the effective implementation of Article 9 must include:

Dedicated financial support for developing countries;

Accessible technology transfer and technical assistance;

Support for building and maintaining sound national infrastructure for plastic waste monitoring, collection, and remediation;

A mechanism for addressing pollution from transboundary incidents, including marine accidents and illegal dumping.

Sri Lanka reaffirms its commitment to the objectives of the global treaty and calls on all Parties to ensure that Article 9 is not only aspirational but also action-oriented, with meaningful support measures to protect vulnerable countries from the ongoing impact of existing plastic pollution.

