

Article 6- Supply Islamic Republic of Iran

1. The Versatility and Lifespan of Plastics

Plastics are utilized in a wide range of applications, from packaged groceries to advanced medical supplies. The average lifespan of a plastic product is nearly 10 years, varying from the short-lived nature of packaging to decades-long use in construction. This lifespan significantly impacts the prevalence of plastic pollution, with short-term applications contributing substantially to waste generation.

2. Commitment to Global Plastic Guidelines

Iran acknowledges global guidelines addressing concerns about plastic products. To improve recycling rates and circularity, it is essential to focus on enhancing waste management infrastructure, facilities, and technologies. Achieving maximum circularity in each application will lead to improved waste management productivity. We can then assess Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) impacts on human health and the environment based on comparative analyses.

3. Economic Impacts of a Virgin Plastics Production Cap

A production cap on virgin plastics may lead to increased prices across all applications, including both short-lived packaging and long-lasting construction materials. Price hikes are expected to be more pronounced for polymers with limited substitutes.

4. Understanding Plastic Pollution Management

While we recognize the concerns of various countries regarding plastic pollution, it is crucial to differentiate between overall plastic waste management and primary polymer production. We believe that plastic pollution largely results from mismanaged waste. Our focus should be on effectively managing demand within the value chain rather than solely on production. In many cases, plastic products have no viable alternatives, and reducing production must be evaluated for its economic repercussions.

5. Assessing Risks of Production Reduction

Any suggestions for reducing production should include a thorough assessment of risks and consequences for nations involved.

6. Impact of Higher Prices on Alternative Materials

An increase in the price and decrease in availability of virgin polymers will likely boost demand and production of alternative materials, including recycled plastics.

7. Unintended Consequences of Material Substitution

Research indicates that switching from plastics to alternatives may introduce unintended consequences. Plastics' lightweight nature provides numerous environmental benefits, including energy efficiency and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Their versatility, strength, and durability also surpass those of many alternative materials.

8. The Limitations of Reducing Plastic Production

Curbing production alone may not effectively address the plastic pollution issue. While increased consumption significantly contributes to leakage, the World Bank identifies insufficient solid waste management and limited reuse incentives as other critical factors.

9. Importance of Policies for Circularity and Waste Management

Therefore, policies that encourage circularity and address pathways for plastic waste leakage should be central to current instruments.

10. The Need for Comprehensive Data in Plastic Policy Development

Policies like production caps require ambitious, global-scale changes, affecting the entire plastic value chain. Implementing such policies necessitates a sophisticated modeling framework, starting with a comprehensive dataset outlining the global value chain from polymer production to waste disposal. Currently, no such dataset exists, potentially contributing to misunderstandings about the plastics industry