

Statement by the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) – INC-5.2

Plastic pollution is a visible and escalating consequence of inadequate waste management. Most leakage into the environment begins as mismanaged macroplastic waste, which fragments into microplastics that are nearly impossible to recover. Meanwhile, plastic production continues to rise, while progress toward circularity remains slow and limited.

Addressing this challenge requires a full lifecycle approach grounded in sound waste management, circular economy principles, and shared responsibility across the plastics value chain.

In contribution to INC-5.2, the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) has reviewed the INC-5.1 Chair's Text with a focus on four priority areas: circular product design, leakage prevention, effective waste management, and financing mechanisms. Our reflections are attached to this statement.

From a waste management perspective, the current, bracket-free text represents a positive achievement, though important gaps remain.

ISWA urges Parties to agree on a plastics treaty that becomes a reality, one that moves beyond ambition to implementation. The treaty must address the full lifecycle of plastics, from design to disposal, ensuring traceability, harmonised standards, circular economy principles, and eco-modulated financing mechanisms that support both prevention and sustainable waste management.

Achieving this will require clear commitments to universal waste collection, the phase-out of problematic plastics, robust traceability systems, and context-appropriate implementation pathways.

As negotiations near their conclusion, it is critical that commitments are framed in clear, actionable, and verifiable terms. This will enable integration with national waste systems and deliver real-world impact. Vague or non-binding language risks undermining the treaty's effectiveness.

Finally, we recognise that agreement at INC-5.2 is only the beginning. The real challenge, and opportunity, lies in implementation. ISWA remains fully committed to supporting Parties with technical expertise, practical insight, and implementation experience to help turn global commitments into concrete action.