

INC-2 Side Event 12, Thursday, 1 June 2023 from 1:30 to 2:45 pm, Hall 12, UNESCO

Socio-economic and employment considerations of a life cycle approach to plastics, including human and labour rights of all workers in waste services

Objectives

This side event aims to discuss socio-economic aspects of a life cycle approach to plastics focusing on the rights issues in the world of work. The side event will identify: (1) key policy considerations for the INC process resulting from the event, including the INC-2 discussions, and outstanding gaps to address in moving forward towards an international legally binding instrument; and (2) what are the key knowledge products and resource tools that are currently available to inform negotiators in this process?

Context

A just transition to sustainability is necessary and urgent. A human rights-based or a human-centered approach is essential for achieving economic, social, and environmental sustainability through the life cycle of plastics. A human rights-based approach focuses on capacity development, both of duty bearers to meet their obligations and of individuals to claim their rights. Additionally, it emphasizes prioritizing individuals in marginalized or vulnerable situations who face significant barriers to realizing their rights. For example, the *ILO Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all* serve as a means to implement a human-centred approach by promoting just transitions. Well-managed, environmentally sustainable economies and societies' response to plastic pollution can ensure decent work for all, social inclusion, and the eradication of poverty. The four pillars of the Decent Work Agenda—social dialogue, social protection, rights at work, and employment—are crucial components of sustainable development and should be central to policies aimed at fostering robust, inclusive, and sustainable growth and development. In order to achieve a just transition, it is crucial to ensure that enterprises and workers, including those in the informal economy, are not left behind during the transition. Addressing the informal waste sector, which plays a significant role in managing plastic waste, particularly in developing countries, is a key aspect of the just transition. Workers, trade unions and stakeholders can play vital roles in addressing plastic pollution through a just transition. In this regard, along with the international human rights law, the ILO's international labour standards offer a robust framework for addressing the challenges to the world of work associated with the greening of the economy and, more broadly, with the transition towards sustainable development and poverty eradication. They serve as a testament to the power of collective action, vision and a deep understanding that progress holds true meaning only when no one is left behind.

Agenda

Time	Topic	Speaker	
1:30-1:35	Welcome	Yasuhiko Kamakura, Chemicals Industry Specialist, Sectoral Policies Department (SECTOR)	International Labour Organization (ILO)
Prospects from governments			
1:35-1:40	Government of South Africa	Mamogala Jennifer Musekene, Head of Delegation, Deputy Director-General: Chemicals and Waste	

		Management, Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment	
1:40-1:45	Government of Kenya	Michael Thuo Kinyua, 3rd Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora Affairs	
Perspectives from UN entity/UNEP partner organization			
1:45-1:50	Leaving no one behind - just transition of informal waste sector under the plastic treaty: what is possible?	Nao Takeuchi, Human Settlements Officer (Waste Management)	United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN- HABITAT)
1:50-1:55	A comprehensive geographically tailored capacity-building program promoting a Just Transition of the Informal Recycling	Maria Tsakona	GRID-Arendal
Perspectives from business associations and trade unions			
1:55-2:02	What is the role of the treaty, and of stakeholders, to address socio-economic considerations for the informal sector?	Ben Jordan	International Council of Beverages Associations
2:02-2:09	Workers as actors to tackle plastic pollution with a Just Transition	Bert De Wel, Global Climate and Environment Policy Coordinator	International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)
2:09-2:14	The contribution of public service workers in tackling the global plastic pollution crisis	Daria Cibrario and Gerardo Juara	Public Services International (PSI)
2:14-2:40	Questions and Answers		
2:40-2:45	Wrap up and closing		