

UNEP-INCplastic.secretariat

From: Neydi Cruz <ncruz@hcwh.org>
Sent: Thursday, 1 December 2022 15:35
To: Francisco Vasquez; Maria Elena Samaniego Egas; UNEP-INCplastic.secretariat
Subject: HCWH intervention (Dec 1)

Gracias Señor Presidente.

I also thank the process itself and you all for having an open negotiation. HCWH is here representing thousands of people who dedicate their lives to take care of our health. We were founded on the basis of environmental health and justice.

In our day to day work, in HCWH we do capacity building within the health sector on sustainable procurement, medical waste management and other relevant climate topics.

Together with our partners, we produce data, we share experiences and we promote policy standards. As mentioned yesterday, we have created free tools to monitor different aspects of the use of plastics within the health sector; but more incentives are required at the research interface.

Many opportunities for reduction of unnecessary plastic use and for switching to safe reusable items exist in health care and solutions are already in place in hospitals across the world. Awareness in health professionals has been key.

Manufacturers must also contribute to this change by bringing new and more sustainable products to market. We will always need to provide health care and we insist that medical devices are completely detoxify so they do no harm. Unless the Treaty clearly marks the path, manufacturers will continue to follow the status quo.

The majority of health care waste is either open burned or dumped; with its own threat to human health and wildlife. Plastic waste disposal measures should be incorporated in the Treaty.

Other actions that can be strengthened by this Treaty to solve the health care plastics crisis:

- Set national procurement policies
- Enforce extended producer responsibility for manufacturers
- Set legally binding standards, accompanied by suitable penalties for non-compliance;
- Incentivize innovation to redesign plastic medical products and their packaging,
- Audit plastics use to create a plan to reduce plastic consumption
- Ensure transparency for chemical information in plastics and obligation to report for manufacturers
- Align with mechanisms under the Basel Convention for reporting waste flows and bans as needed
- Ban toxic polymers and additives

We will continue to educate and influence shops and food businesses catering to hospitals as well as training health professionals and procurement officers in hospitals. We have seen successful measures to reduce and replace the use of plastics through sustainable procurement mechanisms and health care waste management processes. We are already transforming the market and we need this Treaty to set a global legal framework.

We stand ready to contribute with science and data, but emphasize that the science is already clear about the enormous harm done to human health and the environment by plastics, and there must be no delay to commitment and action.

Thank you