

Reducing Global Plastic Pollution

YOUR CHALLENGE

Represent your assigned country and help negotiate a fair, practical global response.



ISSUE OVERVIEW

Plastic is inexpensive, durable and useful in medicine, food safety, transport and daily life. It also creates a long-lasting pollution crisis. The world produces about 430 million tonnes of plastic each year, and most quickly becomes waste. When collection and disposal fail, plastic enters rivers, oceans and soil. Larger items injure wildlife. Smaller fragments spread as microplastics.

The issue is bigger than litter or recycling. Production, product design, use and disposal all matter. Countries must balance environmental protection with affordability, jobs, trade, public health and unequal

CURRENT UN CONTEXT

UNEA Resolution 5/14 launched negotiations in March 2022 for a legally binding agreement across the full life cycle of plastic. No final treaty had been agreed by 11 September 2026. INC-5.3 elected a new Chair in February but held no substantive negotiations. Informal work is continuing toward INC-5.4.

KEY DEBATE QUESTIONS

- 1 Global rules or national targets?** Should limits on plastic production and single-use products be binding?
- 2 What should phase out first?** Which products or harmful chemicals should be controlled, and which uses need exemptions?
- 3 Who pays?** Should producers, governments, consumers or an international fund cover the transition?
- 4 Which solutions matter most?** Consider reuse, refill, safer design, waste collection, recycling and cleanup.
- 5 How should progress be measured and enforced?** How can countries support developing states and protect affected workers?

RESEARCH YOUR COUNTRY

Represent the country's real interests, not your personal opinion. Start with official statements in the UN plastics negotiations.

PLASTIC PROFILE How much it produces, imports, exports and discards.

ECONOMY Important petrochemical, packaging, fishing or recycling industries.

CURRENT POLICY Rules on bags, packaging, waste, recycling and producer responsibility.

IMPACTS Communities, ecosystems and economic sectors most affected.

POSITION Views on binding targets, production limits, product controls, finance and technology.

PARTNERS Allies, regional group and likely opposition.

NEEDS AND RED LINES Funding, technology, transition time and non-negotiable interests.

ARRIVE WITH

- 1 clear national priority
- 2 possible compromises
- 1 reliable fact for debate

Be ready to defend your sources and explain where your country could compromise.

WHAT EVALUATORS LOOK FOR

Country accuracy, clear speaking, practical solutions, respectful diplomacy, active listening and useful compromise. Strong delegates respond to others, explain trade-offs and help the room move toward agreement.