

International landscape and the importance of ending plastic pollution

Historic opportunity: The role of parliaments in ending plastic pollution

23 May 2023

Jordi Pon, United Nations Environment Programme

Plastic pollution

- Exponential growth plastic production; **430 million tons**
- About **19-23 million tons** per year of plastic waste enter aquatic ecosystems; **80%** from land-based sources.
- In Latin America and the Caribbean, about **145,000 tons/day** sent to **open dumpsites**, including **17,000 tons/day of plastic waste**.
- Plastics and microplastic pollution is **everywhere**, present in all environmental matrices, food chain, and human body.



Emissions of plastic waste into aquatic ecosystems are projected to nearly triple by 2040 without meaningful action.

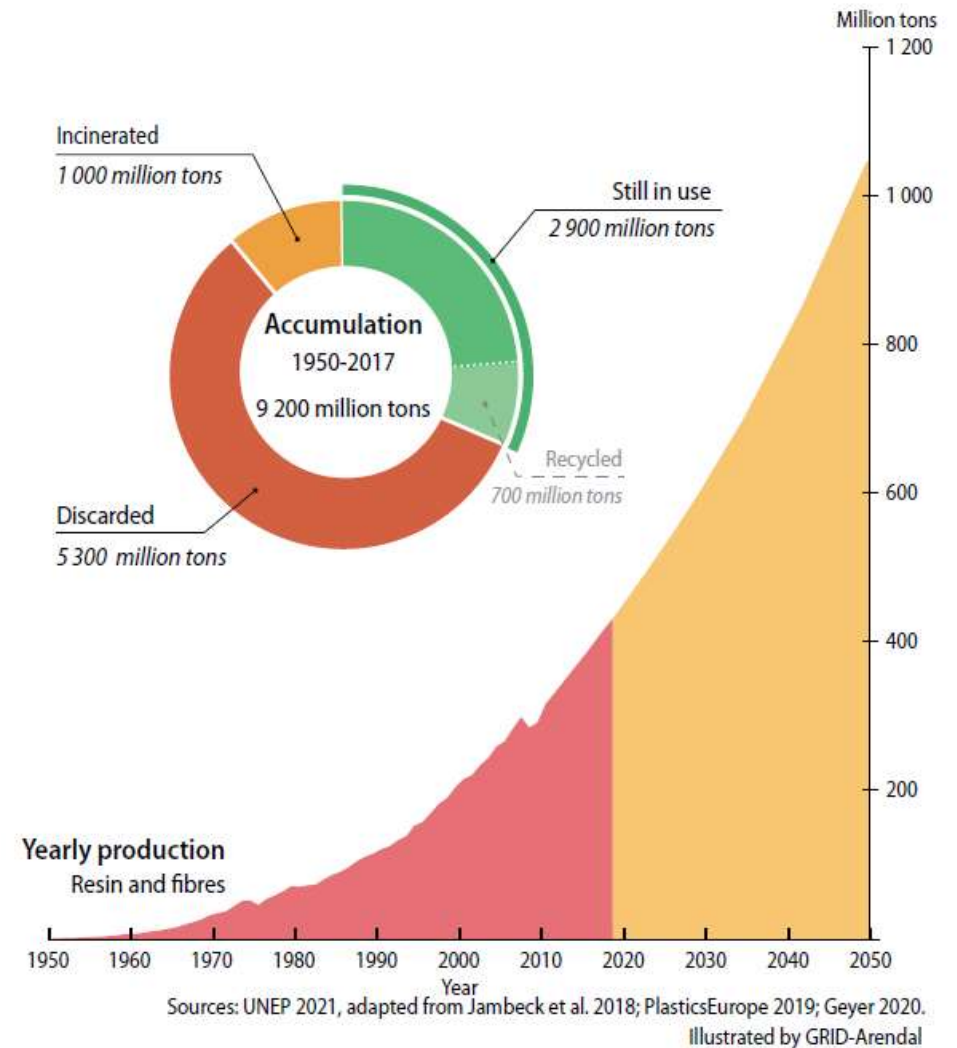


Figure 1: Global plastic production, accumulation and future trends

Source: UNEP



Turning off the Tap

How the world can
end plastic pollution and
create a circular economy

UN 
environment
programme

#BeatPlasticPollution

30%

of plastics from short-lived products are avoidable and can be **reduced.**

#BeatPlasticPollution

UN 
environment
programme

3 Market Shifts to a circular plastics economy

- Accelerate the market for reusable products
- Accelerate the market for plastics recycling
- Reorient and diversify the market for sustainable and safe plastic alternatives

#BeatPlasticPollution

UN 
environment
programme

Shifting to a **circular economy** for plastics can save **US\$4.5 trillion** by 2040 on total costs while improving livelihoods for millions of workers worldwide.

#BeatPlasticPollution

UN 
environment
programme

**A just
transition
to leave no one
behind.**

#BeatPlasticPollution

UN 
environment
programme

We need
integrated regulatory
and industry actions across
the **plastics life cycle**

#BeatPlasticPollution

UN 
environment
programme

**Ending plastic
pollution is
within reach.**

#BeatPlasticPollution

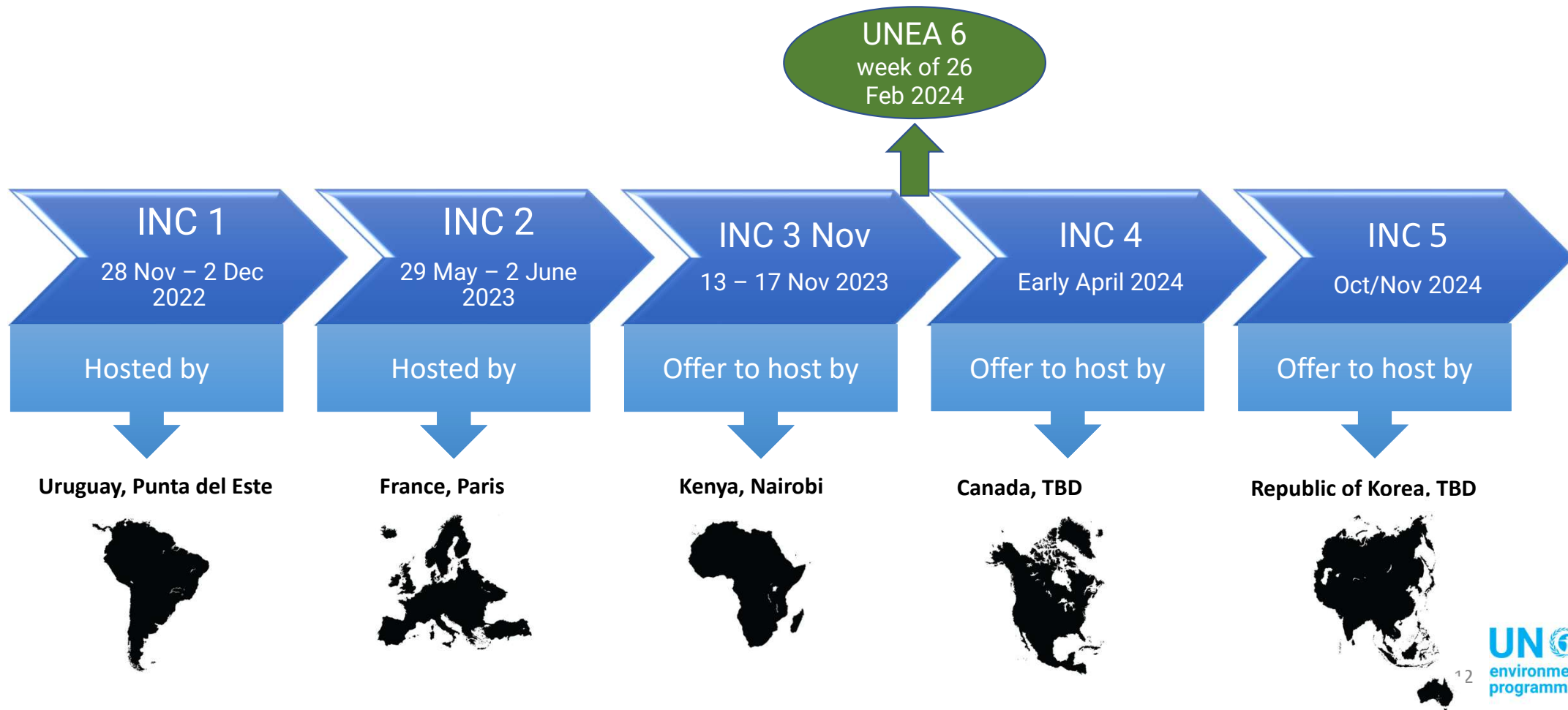
UN 
environment
programme

Landmark resolution

- In February 2022, the UNEA 5.2 session, the world's highest environmental decision-making authority, adopted a **landmark resolution to end plastic pollution**, addressing the entire life cycle of plastic, from source to sea.
- The goal is that by **2024**, UN member states will have committed to a legally binding global treaty to end plastic pollution.
- Convene an **Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC)**



Timeline for the INC process



INC-2: Making Paris count

- Critical opportunity for Members to deliberate and decide between possible options
- Discussions will be based on the “options paper”
- Less time spent on general statements allows moving swiftly to negotiating substance
- Determine mandate for INC-3

Considerations for legislators

- Get familiar with the topic at global and national level, including technical and socio-economic issues
- Engage throughout the INC process, e.g. within the national consultations in preparation of the negotiations of the treaty
- Advise national delegates/negotiators
- Anticipate implications and legal requirements of future national ratification
- Lead the development of legislative instruments to address market failures and drive different behaviors

Thank you



Jordi Pon
Coordinador Regional, Programa de Químicos y Contaminación
Oficina para América Latina y el Caribe
jordi.pon@un.org

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

www.unep.org