



31 March 2023

(23-2267)

Page: 1/3

Original: English/anglais/inglés

UNOFFICIAL ROOM DOCUMENT¹

**DIALOGUE ON PLASTICS POLLUTION AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE
PLASTICS TRADE**

STATEMENT BY THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (IISD)

Plenary Meeting – 13 March 2023

DOCUMENT DE SÉANCE NON OFFICIEL¹

**DIALOGUE ON PLASTICS POLLUTION AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE
PLASTICS TRADE**

STATEMENT BY THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (IISD)

Plenary Meeting – 13 March 2023

DOCUMENTO DE SALA NO OFICIAL¹

**DIALOGUE ON PLASTICS POLLUTION AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE
PLASTICS TRADE**

STATEMENT BY THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (IISD)

Plenary Meeting – 13 March 2023

* In Original language only/En langue originale seulement/En el idioma original solamente.

¹ Documents issued in the RD series are not official WTO documents. They usually appear in their language of submission and will not be translated systematically into the working languages of the WTO. They are intended for use in WTO meeting rooms and are attributed an unofficial symbol for archiving purposes only.

Les documents de la série RD ne sont pas des documents officiels de l'OMC. Ils ne paraissent généralement que dans la langue dans laquelle ils ont été communiqués et ne seront pas systématiquement traduits dans les langues de travail de l'OMC. Ils sont destinés aux salles de réunion de l'OMC et une cote non officielle leur est attribuée à des fins d'archivage.

Los documentos de la serie RD no son documentos oficiales de la OMC. Por lo general se distribuyen en el idioma en que han sido presentados y no se traducen sistemáticamente a los idiomas de trabajo de la Organización. Se distribuyen para su uso en las salas de reunión de la OMC y se les asigna una signatura no oficial a efectos de archivo únicamente.



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (IISD)

Intervention at the DPP meeting of 13 March 2023

1. We've benefited from observing the DPP grow from an idea into a forum of very substantive exchanges about the role of trade in the fight against plastic pollution. Hearing today a shift of gear to more action-oriented phase in the lead up to MC13.
2. IISD is committed to support WTO members in their efforts to define what meaningful deliverables could be achievable by MC13.
3. We agree with sense we get of the room that a useful approach would be to focus on areas where concrete, pragmatic, effective outcomes towards collective action can be achieved, even if such outcomes address only a part of the problem.
4. DPP already provided as a forum of discussions about Members' policies. understanding each others efforts is essential not only to ensure better harmonization of global plastic policies but also to assist societies and business to adjust and change behaviours in time. We hope to see the continuation of such discussions before and after MC13.
5. We hope that better understanding of such actions can help Members learn from each others' experience and think of the next steps that would make sense for their economies. A recent TBT Committee's technical session has allowed us to learn a lot about how Members perceive the problem of plastic pollution and what tools they've chosen to use to address it.
6. Through our own work, we also hope to help Members look into the trade-related tools available to tackle plastic pollution and design the approaches that make the most sense in the domestic circumstances. We expect to soon publish a policy brief reviewing measures already taken by the Members that could be useful for the DPP discussions.
7. Policy brief will help us to see WHICH plastics your governments consider "most harmful" or "unnecessary". This will already provide us with some very useful information – and, hopefully, inspiration for those looking to take an extra step. We hop this provide Members with a good amount of food for thought as they are considering deliverables for MC12, whether as contribution to lists, or descriptions, or voluntary pledges for action. It could probably also provide some useful factual information for their environmental colleagues involved in the INC negotiations.
8. The policy brief will also illustrate HOW members are tackling plastics – what policy tools they are using, for what kinds of plastic. The instruments involved can range from an outright prohibition or restriction to licensing or labelling requirements, criteria for government procurement or even the use of subsidies. The "How" question is particularly important for any trade policy discussion and the answer might vary depending on the specific circumstances that economy is in, in particular for developing countries.
9. We are discussing those policies here at the WTO because we know what impact they might have on international trade and international relations if basic WTO principles are not respected. At the same time, we also understand quite well that an environmental requirement can easily become a protectionist measure if local producers or consumers are left off the hook.
10. We live in a world where market quickly fills any empty space and there's a good need to discuss about the ways and situations where we actually need to replace the most harmful types of plastics with alternatives or substitutes – and what type of alternatives or substitutes would actually make most sense in each situation. We are very much looking forward to more discussions about this, as well as more explorations about alternative delivery models or increased circularity and the role international trade can play there.

11. The time might be running short to fully explore the whole range of instruments available, and every aspect of the plastic pollution problem. By MC13, however, we think that it would be important for ministers to make sure that a further work programme allows their delegates to dig deeper into that.
