



United Nations Environment Programme

Distr.: General
19 June 2026

Original: English

Resolution 2026/0002

Resolution adopted by the United Nations Environment Programme on 19 June 2026

Developing Sustainable and Inclusive Global Waste Management Systems to Combat Environmental Degradation

The United Nations Environment Programme,

Recalling the Basel Convention, The Rotterdam Convention and the Stockholm Convention,

Reaffirming the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) Resolution to start negotiations on a global plastics agreement,

Noting with deep concern the increasing environmental degradation and biodiversity loss worldwide and its negative impact on the environmental, social and economic dimensions of the sustainable development goals,

Alarmed by the systemic inequality that waste generated through overconsumption in high-income countries is often exported to least developed countries, where lower living standards, insufficient waste infrastructure and unique biodiversity come together,

Shocked by, the fact that only 9% of all plastic ever produced has been recycled, while 79% has ended up in landfills or directly in the natural environment,

Deeply concerned, that approximately 400 million tonnes of plastic are produced every single year, a number that has doubled since the year 2000,

Noting with deep concern that according to United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), between 19 and 23 million tonnes of plastic waste leak into rivers, lakes and oceans globally each year, causing damage that in many cases cannot be undone,

Acknowledging, that over 2 billion people around the world still do not have access to basic waste collection, most of them living in low- and middle-income countries,

Aware of the dangerous conditions faced by an estimated 20 million informal waste workers globally, many of whom are children, who sort through toxic waste every day without any protective equipment,

Recalling UN Sustainable Development Goal 12, which calls on all nations to move toward responsible consumption and production by 2030,

Bearing in mind that a culture where everything is made to be thrown away is simply not compatible with a liveable future for our planet,

- 1) **Urges** all member states to ratify and fully implement the:
 - a) Basel,
 - b) Rotterdam and
 - c) Stockholm Conventions, thereby establishing a legal framework for sustainable waste management;
- 2) **Strongly encourages** the developed nations to take responsibility and support the implementation of these conventions in least developed countries;
- 3) **Calls upon** industrialized nations to stop exporting their plastic waste problem to poorer countries, by:
 - a) introducing strict and enforceable limits on plastic waste exports,
 - b) being fully transparent about where their exported waste ends up and how it is handled;
- 4) **Encourages** all Member States to finally include informal waste workers into the national waste management systems by:
 - a) Preventing illegal recognition,
 - b) Giving access to proper health and social security benefits,
 - c) Involving these workers in the planning of new waste management systems,
 - d) Providing education for them;
- 5) **Strongly urges** all member states to phase out unnecessary single-use plastics by:
 - a) Curating regulations,
 - b) Setting clear national timelines with government support for industries that need providing dedicated financial help to developing nations so that this transition does not put an unfair economic burden on them;
- 6) **Urges** all member states to pass laws that make corporations responsible for what happens to their packaging after it is used, meaning:
 - a) Companies must pay for the collection and recycling of their own products,
 - b) Businesses that use excessive or non-recyclable packaging are held financially accountable,
 - c) If developing countries can't stem the cost, the money will be provided to them by a UNEP fund, in which every Member State has to contribute 0,5% of their country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP),
 - d) Companies are responsible for their produced plastic to be recyclable and the plastic cannot be health harming;

- 7) **Calls for** a mandatory circular economy for industrially manufactured products;
- 8) **Encourages** developed countries and international organisations to provide financial and technological assistance to developing nations in order to modernise waste management systems by:
- a) Providing financial support to less developed countries,
 - b) Providing technological knowledge transfer;
 - c) Prioritising capacity-building programs and vocational training for local waste management workers;
 - d) Prioritising Small Island Developing States in financial and technological assistance programs;
- 9) **Provides** a platform that facilitates the exchange of knowledge and resources between Member States;
- 10) **Supports** a global push to educate the next generation about waste, through:
- a) making sustainability and waste reduction a standard part of school education worldwide,
 - b) funding youth-led recycling and clean-up initiatives at the community level;
- 11) **Encourages** non-governmental organisations to further research and develop affordable alternatives to fossil fuels, such as biogas in collaboration with member states and relevant United Nations bodies;
- 12) **Supports** all public awareness campaigns aimed at improving waste separation and recycling practices, as well as highlighting the dangers of insufficient waste management to human health and the environment.

Vote result	Adopted
	<i>In favour:</i> Unknown
	<i>Against:</i> Unknown
	<i>Abstentions:</i> Unknown
Date of vote	19 June 2026
Final editor	Laura Petra Blümel