
A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE CIVIL SOCIETY ROUND-TABLE CONSULTATION ON PLASTIC WASTE POLICY HELD ON THE 29th JANUARY, 2021 AT SRADeV NIGERIA’S CONFERENCE ROOM, LAGOS, NIGERIA

Preamble,

Despite the pandemic and the collapse of global recycling markets, plastic waste continues to be shipped around the world, ostensibly for recycling, but often for final disposal or dumping. All countries that are parties to the Basel Convention are required to transpose the new amendment into national law by 1 January 2021. The transposition process, while focused on international dumping of plastic waste, offers an opportunity to introduce or tighten up other national laws focused on domestic consumption and production of plastic, as well as to go beyond Basel Convention requirements by introducing blanket bans on plastic waste imports or exports. Nigeria a party to the Basel Convention ratified it in May 2004.

The roundtable workshop was organized by Sustainable Research and Action for Environmental Development (SRADeV Nigeria) with financial support of Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA) to get input of civil societies (IPEN and GAIA Nigeria members) on the experts gap analysis of the national policy on plastic waste management in conjunction with Basel Convention Amendment as part of the deliverables of the mini-project titled “*Targeted Advocacy on the National Policy on Plastics Waste Management and the Transposition of the Basel Convention Amendment in Nigeria*”. The meeting was held at SRADeV’s conference room on the 29th of January 2021.

2. The objectives of the roundtable meeting:

- *To advocate the urgent adoption of the ‘national policy on plastics waste management’ upon which the Basel Convention amendment on plastics is based in Nigeria.*
- *To raise stakeholder’s awareness on the transposition of the Basel Convention plastic waste amendments in national law.*
- *To facilitate a national campaign and roadmap towards the bans on single-use plastic in Nigeria.*

3. The forum brought together about twenty (20) participants drawn mainly from Civil society, Academia and the Media, to make input into the national policy on plastic as well as to develop a national action plan towards tackling the menace of plastics in Nigeria (both virtually and physically). Goodwill message were delivered by Sirine Rached (GAIA).

4. After extensive deliberations, the workshop noted the following observations:
- The core principles and recommendations of the Basel Convention plastic waste amendments are missing in the National Policy.
 - The Nigeria National Policy has not addressed the issues of trade in plastic waste even though the new Basel Convention plastic waste trade rules will become effective on 1 January 2021.
 - The Policy does not recognise that significant amount of imports and exports of plastic waste do occur in Nigeria.
 - The national policy on plastic waste management does not indicate the role of key government parastatals in the management of plastic waste, especially the control of trans-boundary movement of plastics and its waste, for example the Nigerian Customs.
 - Standardisation is a critical requirement for effective implementation of the plastic waste amendments and this would require the involvement of Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON).
 - An appropriate categorization of plastics into being hazardous or not in the national policy document would require the establishment of contamination limits by SON in cooperation with NESREA and other stakeholders.

6. Recommendations

Following the detailed review and discussions on the two experts report (Prof P.C. Onianwa, Basel Convention Coordinating Centre for African Region (BCCC-Africa) and Prof B.I. Alo, Chemistry Department, University of Lagos).

- Urgent need for the domestication in Nigeria of the Basel Convention Amendment which came into effect in January 1st, 2021.
- The National Environmental Regulation of NESREA for the plastic sector should be reviewed in line with Basel Convention Amendment gaps analysis identified.
- Urgent need for very specialized technical trainings for key enforcement officers to be conducted for officials of Customs, NESREA, NPA and FMENV and few other stakeholders on aspects of the enforcement and permitting procedure relating to plastic waste trade as well as Basel Convention Amendment domestication.
- Government to immediately establish the concentrations of contaminants in the plastic wastes and accredit specialize institutions and laboratory training for analysis of plastics for contaminants.
- The permitting system of the Federal Ministry of Environment should be overhauled to establish preparedness for the Prior Informed Control (PIC) system for plastic waste as required by the Basel Convention Amendment.
- There is need for a national inventory on plastic waste-based fuel in the country and its compliance with best practice.
- The Federal Government through the Federal Ministry of Environment should immediately declare its stand to the international community on the question of the inclusion of cured resins and fluorinated polymers in Annex IX of the Basel Convention.

- There is need for studies to assess institutional capacity of the entire plastic waste management sector and make available information on plastic additives.
- There is an urgent need for the immediate phase-out of single-use plastic such as Styrofoam, disposable plastics cups, and straws etc as against the proposed 2028 deadline proposed in the National Policy.
- There is need for a national inventory on the availability of replaceable alternatives to single-use plastic.
- Federal Government should put in place be the right-to-know mechanism on the chemical constituents (in consultation with SON, FCCPC, MAN, NCS) of plastic waste nationally and internationally traded in the country.
- Awareness creation, capacity building particularly for the government agencies, civil societies, media as well as the international traders (importers and exporters) and other relevant key stakeholders in the plastic waste value chain to understand the issues of plastic waste.

7. Resolutions

The group reached some internal resolutions to advance the process for government engagement towards the transposition of the Basel Convention Amendment in Nigeria as follows:

- Media sensitization through media conference and social media engagements on the core principles and recommendations of the Basel Convention in the policy.
- A written justification to the Federal Ministry of Environment as well as other relevant government parastatals to advocate the inclusion of the plastic waste policy amendment.
- The formation of a GAIA-IPEN coalition on corporate accountability of plastic waste to engage with major industry stakeholders through the Food and Beverage Recycling Alliance (FBRA) and others in the plastic recycling sector.

8. Conclusion

This communique is duly signed and endorsed by all civil societies listed below:

S/N	NAMES	ORGANISATION
1.	ANTHONY AKPAN	PAN AFRICAN VISION ON ENVIRONMENT (PAVE)
2.	AHANEKU C. PETER	NIGERIAN ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY AND ACTION TEAM (NEST)
3.	TOM ANENI	SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTAL SEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (SEDI)
4.	WASIU TIJANI	NIGERIAN ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIETY (NES), LAGOS
5.	EUGENE ITUA	NIGERIAN ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIETY (NES), LAGOS
6.	TOYIN OSHINAWA	NATURE CARES RESOURCE CENTRE (NCRC)
7.	SIRINI RACHED	GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR INCINERATORS ALTERNATIVES (GAIA)
8.	DOTUN FASANYA	CENTRE FOR EARTH WORKS (CFEW)
9.	PATRICK CHIEKWEI	FOUNDATION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF THE EARTH (FOCONE)
10.	WEYINMI OKOTIE	GREEN KNOWLEDGE FOUNDATION (GKF)
11.	LESLIE ADOGAME	SUSTAINABLE RESEARCH AND ACTION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT (SRADev Nigeria)
12.	VICTOR FABUNMI	SRADev Nigeria
13.	AZEEZ YUSUF	SRADev Nigeria
14.	ONUOHA SARAH	SRADev Nigeria
15.	BELLO OLUWASEUN	SRADev Nigeria
16.	UBREI JOE	ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS ACTION/ FRIENDS OF THE EARTH NIGERIA (ERA/FoEN)
17.	KAYODE ABOYEJI	ECOGREEN
18.	MICHEAL SIMIRE	ENVIRONEWS