



Distr.: General  
28 March 2019

Original: English



**United Nations  
Environment Assembly of the  
United Nations Environment  
Programme**

**United Nations Environment Assembly of the  
United Nations Environment Programme**  
**Fourth session**  
Nairobi, 11–15 March 2019

**Resolution adopted by the United Nations Environment  
Assembly on 15 March 2019**

**4/7. Environmentally sound management of waste**

*The United Nations Environment Assembly,*

*Appreciating* the focus of its fourth session on innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production,

*Recalling* the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”, endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/288 of 27 July 2012, in particular those paragraphs relevant to the sound management of chemicals and waste and those on sustainable consumption and production, and recognizing the significance of encouraging changes in societal patterns of consumption and production as an important means of achieving global sustainable development,

*Recalling also* General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”,

*Recognizing* the international community’s commitment to the sound management of waste and its significant contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals,

*Recalling* earlier resolutions of the Environment Assembly addressing the issue of solid waste management,

*Recognizing* that resource efficiency and waste management are pertinent to the achievement of sustainable consumption and production, including but not limited to a circular economy and other sustainable economic models,

*Recognizing also* the co-benefits of a sound waste management policy in areas such as greenhouse gas emissions reduction, improving human health, food management and the protection of the marine environment,

*Noting* that solid waste management has yet to be given sufficient attention in many Member States as a key issue of environmental concern,

*Recognizing* that plastics comprise 10 per cent of the waste generated worldwide and that some 500 billion plastic bags are used globally each year,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Global Waste Management Outlook* (United Nations Environment Programme, 2015).

*Realizing* that challenges associated with solid waste management include, but are not limited to, prioritizing waste prevention, selecting and adopting relevant technologies, establishing local institutional and regulatory frameworks, developing and managing information and tracking systems, and the particular needs of countries affected by conflict or in post-conflict situations,

*Acknowledging* the success stories of Member States in developing and implementing innovative solid waste management solutions and technologies and engaging local communities, including innovative projects and programmes such as local and national “zero waste” initiatives to foster the environmentally sound management of waste, in particular the minimization and, where feasible, prevention of waste,

*Appreciating* the United Nations Environment Programme's International Environment Technology Centre in Osaka, Japan, and its activities, which include the production of the global and regional waste management outlooks and the *Global Mercury Waste Assessment Report*, and anticipating its further work in the field of environmentally sound waste management,

1. *Invites* Member States, taking into consideration their differing national circumstances, and in cooperation with relevant national, regional and international organizations, to:

(a) Promote integrated approaches to solid waste management through sustainable consumption and production, including but not limited to a circular economy and other sustainable economic models, as well as other innovative means, including the removal of hazardous substances from waste before recycling, special attention to preparing waste for reuse and recycling, a reduction in landfill use, and the application of the “waste hierarchy” set of priorities for all waste;

(b) Prevent and reduce waste at the source of origin by, among other things, minimizing packaging materials, discouraging planned obsolescence of products, improving their safety, reusability, recyclability and resource efficiency through improved product design, using easy-to-recycle materials and using secondary raw materials, where feasible, rather than primary raw materials;

(c) Engage the private sector, civil society, waste producers, local authorities and the public in the sound management of solid waste, and promote public-private initiatives and alliances to that end, including through market mechanisms and capacity-building, to promote sustainable consumption and production, including, but not limited to, a circular economy and other sustainable economic models;

(d) Support the development or, where appropriate, the enhancement of institutional and regulatory frameworks to ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined;

(e) Work to establish indicators and conduct regular assessments of the impact of selecting and implementing technological options for addressing waste management along the value chain, with the objective of protecting health and the environment;

(f) Promote the use of modern technologies, innovations and innovative policy alternatives to support the environmentally sound management of solid waste and the development of economic instruments and other measures to support waste management, “green entrepreneurship” and the generation of “green jobs”;

(g) Support innovative waste management initiatives, such as national and local “zero waste” initiatives, in some countries to minimize waste and develop adequate infrastructure and other facilities for waste management;

(h) Promote public- and private-sector solutions for innovative waste management financing, such as:

(i) Innovative financial models and the creation of an enabling environment for investment and market-based schemes;

(ii) Support for job and income generation schemes;

(iii) Cost recovery schemes;

(i) Implement and support innovative economic incentive schemes to promote the sound management of waste, such as extended producer/trader responsibility, recycling incentives and deposit refund schemes and other alternatives;

(j) Promote evidence-based research on the environmental and health benefits of environmentally sound waste management;

- (k) Develop and encourage innovative programmes and tools for raising awareness regarding waste-related issues;
- (l) Set standards for food-grade plastics to minimize the risk of toxins getting into food;
- (m) Strengthen monitoring activities to avoid the disposal of waste into the marine environment from all sectors;
- (n) Reduce microplastics, including in wastewater treatment plants, and encourage producers to use alternatives to microbeads;
- (o) Strengthen legislation to prohibit the open burning of plastics in order to avoid air pollution and its associated negative impacts on health;
- (p) Support the recycling of plastics, including the improvement of waste collection, transportation and recycling infrastructure;

2. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, subject to the availability of resources, and in cooperation with international partners, to take the following action:

- (a) Strengthen the United Nations Environment Programme's International Environment Technology Centre and its role in the provision of technological advice and capacity-building concerning environmentally sound waste management and enhance cooperation with the regional centres of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants;
- (b) Maintain inventories of environmentally sound waste management technologies and practices, including those introduced in the global and regional waste management outlooks, and share those inventories and practices with Member States;
- (c) Assist Member States in the use of best available techniques and best environmental practices in solid waste management;
- (d) Continue to foster the sharing of experience, lessons learned and success stories among Member States and key stakeholders through existing regional and global platforms;
- (e) Coordinate with United Nations bodies, Member States and humanitarian agencies, as appropriate and feasible, to incorporate waste management into humanitarian recovery and response plans, with the aim of "building back better";
- (f) Assist countries, in particular developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in their efforts to strengthen and enhance national and local implementation of the environmentally sound management of waste through the regional waste management outlooks, improving information on environmentally sound technologies to integrate waste management;

3. *Calls upon* Member States, especially developed countries, that are in a position to do so, international organizations and international financial institutions to provide developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in particular those experiencing conflict, with financial assistance, capacity-building support, and technology transfer for the purpose of implementing the present resolution.