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Via electronic mail: justina.grigaraviciene@am.lt; luay_al_mokhtar@yahoo.com

Re: Open-ended Working Group: Proposal for Inclusion of Certain Plastic Wastes in Annex II and Removal of Solid Plastic Wastes from Annex IX

Dear Chair Grigaraviciene and Chair Al-Mukhtar,

The undersigned organizations are writing to convey their concerns over Norway's proposed amendments to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal. The proposal would add a new entry to Annex II covering "Plastic Waste: waste and scrap from plastic and mixed plastic waste materials and mixtures of waste containing plastics, including micro plastic beads." The proposal would also remove B3010 Solid Plastic Waste from Annex IX. These amendments would subject transboundary movement of plastic wastes among Basel Parties to prior informed consent procedures and potentially cut off trade of recyclable plastic materials with non-Members except where an Article 11 agreement is in place. Norway's proposal will be considered at this September's Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG-11) meeting.

We are representatives of manufacturers, users, processors, transporters, converters, and recyclers of plastic materials which are located across the globe and are committed to healthy marine environments as well as the responsible handling of end-of-life plastic materials whether for recycling or disposal. Our members therefore have direct and compelling interest in the proposal. Further information about our organizational interests and international membership constituents is attached.

Our considered view is that the proposal will erect new barriers to the responsible shipment, collection, and recycling of used plastics. These impacts will increase risks of material mismanagement, especially in countries lacking adequate recycling infrastructure, which has contributed to the growth of marine debris.

The main cause of marine litter is the improper management and disposal of waste on land, either because of littering originating from irresponsible personal behavior or inadequate waste collection,

recycling, and disposal infrastructure. The extent of this problem is reinforced by a World Bank report finding that within one of the leading national sources of marine debris only 45-50% of the country's urban solid waste was being collected and enforcement of its waste disposal requirements was insufficient.¹

Norway's proposal will only exacerbate the many problems arising from inadequate municipal waste management infrastructure. The reason is that the primary effects of the proposal will be to increase regulatory burdens, create trading delays (and in some cases a ban on trade), and costs associated with the transboundary movement of post-use plastics impacting all Parties to the Basel Convention. Those challenges will flow from the legal obligation to coordinate approvals between already overburdened competent authorities in both the state of export and the state of import, as well as the need to generate new movement documentation, contractual terms and tracking, and recordkeeping requirements, for both governments and commercial traders. Increased barriers on global plastics trade will lead to increased demand on domestic plastic waste management, regardless of whether the sourcing country has adequate domestic recycling infrastructure. Disincentivizing these shipments through additional costs and regulatory requirements will not solve the source of the littering issue and will reduce opportunities for responsible recovery.

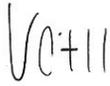
In addition, the proposal will distract from initiatives that could be allocated to improving domestic recycling and disposal infrastructure or other more effective activities targeted at reducing marine plastics. For example, under the Convention, Parties already have an obligation to ensure that household wastes are managed in an environmentally sound manner (ESM). Unmanaged household wastes are a major global source of plastics pollution. Basel Parties are considering a number of initiatives to promote ESM, such as under the Convention's recently launched Household Waste Partnership. Parties should consider the marine litter concerns that led to Norway submitting the proposal in the context of these other ongoing efforts to avoid unintentionally undermining efforts to improve the capacity of countries to properly manage household wastes.

In short, the time, energy, and resources required to negotiate and implement the amendments could instead be directed at more productive global initiatives to improve plastics waste management practices. The Norwegian proposal will do little, if anything, to support infrastructure improvements or mobilize international resources for those purposes. Instead, the plastics recycling industry would be weakened despite the important contributing role it stands to play in addressing marine litter.

Based on these concerns, we urge the Open-ended Working Group to focus on more effective measures to stem marine debris as an alternative to the proposal.

¹ <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/983771527663689822/Indonesia-Marine-debris-hotspot-rapid-assessment-synthesis-report>

Signed,



Daniel Mitchell, Acoplasticos

Acoplasticos

Plásticos · Química · Petroquímica · Cauchos · Pinturas · Tintas · Fibras



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Attachment Background on Signatory Organizations

Acoplasticos: Acoplasticos was founded in 1961. We represent the Plastics, Petrochemical, Chemical, Paint, Ink, Rubber and Man-made Fibre Industries in Colombia. The sectors represented account for approximately 15% of industry GDP, employ around 65,000 workers and add up a total of 650 companies. Our affiliated companies in the plastics and petrochemical industries account for more than 70% of total market share. ACOPLASTICOS created in 1993 the Colombian Plastics and Rubber Research and Training Institute, which has become a renowned applied R&D Center, not only in Colombia, but also internationally. The Institute recently partnered with the Fraunhofer FIT. Furthermore, Acoplasticos has led the environmental campaign "Dale vida al plasticos" ("Provide a new life to plastics"), which intends to generate a stronger awareness in consumers of their role in a circular economy.

American Chemistry Council: The American Chemistry Council represents the leading companies engaged in the business of chemistry in the United States. The business of chemistry supports over 25% of U.S. gross domestic product and creates the building blocks for 96% of all manufactured goods. As an \$800 billion enterprise, our industry provides 822,000 skilled high-paying American jobs. ACC helped establish The Declaration of the Global Plastics Associations for Solutions on Marine Litter which has led to over 355 projects to reduce marine litter and better control plastic waste. These projects have been undertaken by 74 associations that have signed the Global Declaration in 40 countries. ACC Plastics Division members committed circular economy goals whereby: 100% of plastics packaging is reused, recycled, or recovered by 2040; 100% of plastics packaging is recyclable or recoverable by 2030; and 100% of the U.S. manufacturing sites operated by Plastics Division members participate in Operation Clean Sweep-blue by 2020, with all of their manufacturing sites across North America involved by 2022.

Canadian Plastics Industry Association: Since 1943, the Canadian Plastics Industry Association (CPIA) has served as the national voice for, and leader in, plastics sustainability in Canada. The \$24.3 billion Canadian plastics industry, comprising over 2,600 establishments and employing 82,000 people, is a sophisticated, multi-faceted sector encompassing resin and other raw materials; processors & converters; equipment suppliers; brand owners; and recyclers. CPIA is a signatory to "The Declaration of the Global Plastics Associations for Solutions on Marine Litter", the plastics industry commitment to tackle a global problem: plastic litter in the marine environment. To-date, more than 355 marine litter solutions projects that have been planned, put into action, or completed. CPIA and its members are fully committed to a future without plastic waste that includes the following aggressive sustainability targets: (1) 100% of plastics packaging is reusable, recyclable or recoverable by 2030; (2) 100% of plastics packaging is reused, recycled, or recovered by 2040; and (3) 100% of Canadian resin manufacturing sites operated by CPIA members will participate in Operation Clean Sweep-Blue by 2022, with all CPIA members participating in Operation Clean Sweep by 2022.

Chemistry Australia: PACIA the pre-eminent national body representing Australia's \$40 billion chemistry industry, whose sectors directly employ more than 60,000 people and contribute approximately 11.5% of total Australian manufacturing. Our members comprise a broad range of companies positioned across the entire value chain and the tremendous breadth of the Association's coverage is recognised as a competitive advantage. Companies include chemicals manufacturers, importers and distributors, logistics and supply chain partners, raw material suppliers, plastics fabricators and compounders, chemicals and plastics recyclers and service providers to the industry. These businesses range from small family-owned companies and innovative medium-sized enterprises, to leading national and multinational enterprises.

Malaysian Plastics Manufacturers Association: The Malaysian Plastics Manufacturers Association (MPMA), established in 1967, is a progressive trade association and the official voice of the Malaysian plastics industry, representing its members and the industry in Government interaction, spearheading the plastics industry's growth and providing the platforms to assist members to be globally competitive. One of the main focus areas of MPMA is sustainability. MPMA organizes numerous school and public programmes to create awareness and education on plastics and to enhance awareness of the proper disposal of plastics waste through the 3Rs concept which is Reduce, Reuse and Recycle; as well as to enhance awareness on anti-littering to the government, industry, media as well as the public.

PlasticsEurope: PlasticsEurope is one of the leading European trade associations with centres in Brussels, Frankfurt, London, Madrid, Milan and Paris. We are networking with European and national plastics associations and have more than 100 member companies, producing over 90% of all polymers across the EU28 member states plus Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. The European plastics industry makes a significant contribution to the welfare in Europe by enabling innovation, creating quality of life to citizens and facilitating resource efficiency and climate protection. More than 1.45 million people are working in more than 60,000 companies (mainly small and medium sized companies in the converting sector) to create a turnover around 350 bn EUR per year. PlasticsEurope is a signatory of the Declaration of Global Plastics Associations for solutions on marine litter. In early 2018, PlasticsEurope made a voluntary commitment, Plastics 2030. Plastics 2030 focuses on preventing leakage of plastics into the environment while ensuring high rates of re-use and recycling with the ambition to reach 60% for plastics packaging by 2030. This will help achieve the goal of 100% re-use, recycling and/or recovery of all plastics packaging in the EU-28, Norway and Switzerland by 2040.

Plastics Industry Association: The Plastics Industry Association (PLASTICS), formerly SPI, is the only organization that supports the entire plastics supply chain—materials suppliers, equipment manufacturers, processors, recyclers and brand owners. Representing nearly one million workers in the U.S. and \$404 billion in shipments annually, PLASTICS works to make its members and the industry more globally competitive while advancing plastics recycling, sustainability and the proper stewardship of resources and materials. As the health of our oceans and waterways is critically important to the well-being of the global community, PLASTICS believes uncollected plastics do not belong in the marine environment. Plastics offer many sustainability advantages that can significantly reduce greenhouse gasses, water consumption and air emissions through a product's lifecycle, promote resource efficiency and prevent food waste. To realize their full sustainability potential, plastics should be recovered, for their highest and best use, and prevented from entering the environment, benefitting both ecosystems and economies. The plastics industry is committed to preventing and mitigating marine debris. PLASTICS recognizes that marine debris is a global issue, and partners with other associations, non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental authorities to coordinate efforts to strengthen recovery systems around the globe and prevent the loss of any plastics, all of which are valuable, into the environment. PLASTICS supports data driven research efforts that identify opportunities to meaningfully address marine debris. These opportunities include, but are not limited to: educating manufacturers and the public to prevent litter; expanding collection opportunities; developing new end markets that increase demand for recycled plastics; promoting the design of plastic products in a way that facilitates recovery; promoting clean-ups; and, ensuring plastics are managed properly at manufacturing sites through programs like Operation Clean Sweep and Zero Net Waste. PLASTICS believes that together, we can address this important challenge by supporting work in all of these areas,

and engaging the entire plastics supply chain to increase awareness, leverage knowledge and maximize the impact of our efforts to combat marine debris.

The Association of Plastic Recyclers: The Association of Plastic Recyclers (APR) is “The Voice of Plastics Recycling.” As the international trade association representing the plastics recycling industry, membership includes independent recycling companies of all sizes, processing numerous resins, as well as consumer product companies, equipment manufacturers, testing laboratories, organizations, and others committed to the success of plastics recycling. APR works to enhance quality, increase supply, and expand demand of recycled plastics through technical resources, testing programs, design solutions, corporate training, regulatory leadership and education programs.

The Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc. The Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc. (ISRI) is the “Voice of the Recycling Industry™.” ISRI represents more than 1,300 companies in the United States and more than 40 countries that process, broker, and consume scrap commodities, including metals, paper, plastics, glass, rubber, electronics, and textiles. With headquarters in Washington, DC, the Institute provides education, advocacy, safety and compliance training, and promotes public awareness of the vital role recycling plays in the U.S. economy, global trade, the environment and sustainable development. Generating nearly \$117 billion annually in U.S. economic activity, the scrap recycling industry provides more than half a million Americans with good jobs.

The National Waste & Recycling Association The National Waste & Recycling Association (NWRA) is a not-for-profit trade association representing private solid waste and recycling companies. Headquartered in Crystal City, NWRA advocates for the industry through promoting education, improving safety, implementing standards and providing technical assistance.

The Solid Waste Association of North America The Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) is an organization of more than 10,000 public and private sector professionals committed to advancing from solid waste management to resource management through their shared emphasis on education, advocacy and research. For more than 50 years, SWANA has been the leading association in the solid waste management field, and is now the largest member based solid waste association in the world with 45 Chapters, in the U.S, Canada and the Caribbean. SWANA is the U.S. and Canadian National Member of the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA), and participates and supports ISWA events and programs.

World Plastics Council: The World Plastics Council (WPC) is the platform for cooperation that engages the key leaders in the industry to address common issues and opportunities that are increasingly global. Effective and efficient solutions require global approaches and the WPC provides global leaders with the opportunity to deal with current issues in a fully anti-trust compliant forum, and to proactively address emerging issues before they grow and become more complex and expensive for the industry and society to manage.