

Hon. Catherine McKenna, Minister
Environment and Climate Change Canada
Ottawa

July 3, 2019

Dear Minister McKenna,

Re: Incorporating Basel Convention plastics amendments into the OECD Decision

On 10 May 2019, Canada joined 186 Parties in a consensus decision to bring plastic wastes under the control regime of the Basel Convention. This decision is extremely important for addressing plastic waste pollution, an issue of global concern.

By rule, the Member States of the OECD¹ will automatically incorporate these amendments into the OECD Council Decision on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Wastes Destined for Recycling Operations² on 9 July (60 days following Basel adoption) unless objections are lodged before that date.

1 Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, and United States

2 [OECD Council Decision](#)

We are concerned that certain powerful industry bodies have called for their governments *not* to adopt these plastics amendments for use within the OECD but to object to them. We are writing to urge Canada to resist this effort at creating a global double standard. Much effort has been expended in the past to ensure that the OECD listings are in harmony with the Basel Convention listings. To not accept the most recent amendments would be an unfortunate regression in that progress at global harmonization and maintenance of a level playing field in terms of which wastes are problematic or hazardous.

We urge you to work towards acceptance of the Amendments without objections by any OECD Member States including Canada. Under no circumstance should the new listings for plastics on Basel Convention Annex II and VIII become part of OECD's [Green Control Procedure](#).³ Only non-hazardous waste listings of Basel Convention Annex IX are appropriate for the Green Control Procedure.

The arguments being made by some industry associations that were opposed to the Basel Convention amendments on plastics which were passed by consensus, invoke the circular economy as a justification to dispense with transboundary movement controls within the OECD. However, Canada and all other Basel Convention Parties rejected the plastic and waste industry's claims globally, and opted to bring plastics under the treaty's control regime precisely because a circular economy can only function if it provides enough transparency and control necessary to eliminate negative externalities and exploitation. Plastic waste recycling destinations in some parts of the world, even within OECD countries, are very often mismanaged and in fact can be highly polluting operations. It is important therefore that countries have the ability to control exports and ensure environmentally sound management (ESM) prior to export through a prior informed consent (PIC) procedure.

We therefore urge Canada to accept and to not object to the incorporation of the new Basel Convention amendments on plastics into the OECD Decision and work to ensure that all OECD Member States do the same.

We thank you for consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Ruff, Director
RightOnCanada.ca


³ Wastes subject to the green and amber control procedures are listed in Appendices 3 and 4 of the [OECD Decision](#) of the Council on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Wastes Destined for Recovery Operations.



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