

THE PLASTIC POLICY FUND

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OBJECTIVES

- Set up a plastic fund in all countries.
- Cut Global Emission by drastically reducing the production of new plastics.
- Eliminate already existing plastic waste through the five R's of waste management (refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose, recycle).
- Promote responsible production and consumption by plastic production and manufacturing industries.
- Reduce loss and damage linked to plastic pollution.

OVERVIEW

Plastics, created to make life easier for man is now a menace to all since its production in large quantities that commenced shortly after the second world war. Since, the 1950's only 10% of plastics have reentered the value chain through recycling and reuse. With countries like Kenya, Bangladesh, United Kingdom, St Kitts and Nevis banning single use plastics [1] in their countries, and an inversely proportional relationship between plastic pollution awareness and the exponential growth in the value of the global plastic market as shown by Statista. The 2022 epileptic weather occurrences [2] have promoted discussions around loss and damage finance which was highlighted at COP27, marine protection as can be seen through initiatives such as the #YouthLeadSDG14 challenge by the [Commonwealth Youth Climate Network](#) Commonwealth Youth Climate Network. [The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development \(OECD\)](#) has noted that “there are currently no policies or regulations that directly target the primary production of plastics, companies involved in producing raw materials for plastic may be affected indirectly through policies which aim to boost plastic recycling and reduce fossil fuel dependence and greenhouse gas emissions.” [The Centre for International Environmental law](#) describes solutions to plastic pollution are complex, transboundary, and multilateral. **For every profit that a plastic manufacturing and production companies makes in the country of production, 35% should be used to fund the plastic fund while 15% of the profit made to the countries of importation should be used to fund the plastic policy fund which will be used to eliminate plastic waste.**

THE PROBLEM

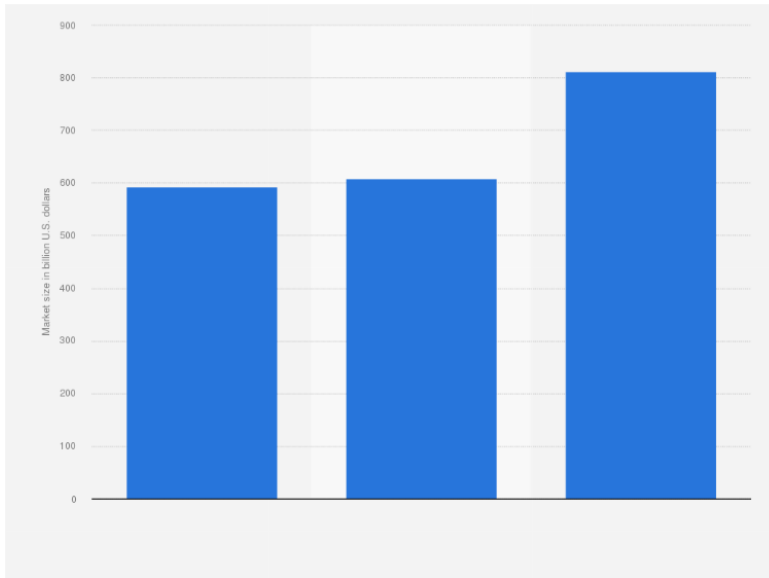


Figure 1: A Bar chat showing the increasing value of the Plastic Industry from 2021, 2022 & 2028

Source: [Statista](#)

Plastics, created to make life easier for man is now a menace to all since its production in large quantities that commenced shortly after the second world war. [3] Since the 1950's only 10% of plastics have re-entered the value chain through recycling and reuse. In 2019, plastics generated 1.8 billion tonnes of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions – 3.4% of global emissions – with 90% of these emissions coming from their production and conversion from fossil fuels. [4] By 2060, emissions from the plastics lifecycle are set to more than double, reaching 4.3 billion tonnes of GHG emissions. [5] In 2015, a video went viral where a team of scientist spend over 10 minutes trying to remove a single use plastic straw from the nose of a turtle. [6] Do you know that a truck load equivalent of plastic is dumped into the ocean every minute? [7] Plastic pollution in marine bodies increases ocean acidification. This means a reduction in the population of marine organisms due to increased carbon dioxide emissions over time. This in turn causes instability to the aquatic food chain finally leading to the destruction of coral reef. [8] Averagely, a person ingests about 100 bits of microplastic from a single meal. [7] Plastic waste especially in the form of nylon bags clog drains serving as a breeding ground for pests like rodents thus promoting the spread of vector borne diseases like Malaria. [9] While the effects of plastic pollution on the marine environment appear to gain more spotlight in the media, the effects on land are also severe. One-third of all plastic waste either ends up in the soil or in fresh water. [10] Chlorinated plastic releases harmful chemicals into the ground that affect soil quality and groundwater. [10] Additives like phthalates and Bisphenol A (widely known as BPA) leach out plastic during decomposition, thus causing hormonal imbalance for vertebrates and invertebrates. [10] Research carried out at the University of California on a clothing company Patagonia, showed that an average of 1.7 grams of microfiber was released from washing a synthetic jacket once. [10] A 2020 publication by the

proceedings of the royal society show that microplastics on land lead to a reduction in soil microorganisms that maintained the fertility of the soil. [11]

THE POLICY

With countries like Kenya, Bangladesh, United Kingdom, St Kitts and Nevis banning single use plastics in their countries, a solution focused on the consumers and not on the producers. [1] [The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development \(OECD\)](#) has noted that “there are currently no policies or regulations that directly target the primary production of plastics, companies involved in producing raw materials for plastic may be affected indirectly through policies which aim to boost plastic recycling and reduce fossil fuel dependence and greenhouse gas emissions.” Since majority of the solutions existing focus on the consumer, the producers need to be held accountable as described by the [Centre for International Environmental law](#) “solutions to plastic pollution are complex, transboundary, and multilateral.” **For every profit that a plastic manufacturing and production companies makes in the country of production, 35% should be used to fund the plastic fund while 15% of the profit made to the countries of importation should be used to fund the plastic policy fund which will be used to eliminate plastic waste.**

POTENTIAL RESULTS AND IMPACTS FROM THE POLICY

As previously noted, plastics generated 1.8 billion tonnes of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions – 3.4% of global emissions in 2019. [4] A reduction in the production of plastics will lead to a direct reduction in GHG emissions. The rationale behind the percentages (35% in the country of production and 15% where imported) is that in countries of production the cost of production is lesser when compared to countries of importation (take transportation for example as a major factor). Hence, depending on the availability of raw materials in the country of production the quantity of plastics produced is more when compared to those imported. Plastics products could be more expensive in countries where imported, however more plastic products are made in the local country of production. Thus, the higher tax rate. The Plastic policy fund can be described as a polluters pay principle with a twist. [polluters pay principle with a twist](#). Using fixed percentages allows for fairness based on the profits made by the plastic producers in the various countries.

REFERENCES

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