



PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

CONCEPT NOTE

The Role of Zero Waste as a Transformative Solution in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

30 March 2023, General Assembly Hall | 10:00 am - 6:00 pm

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 77/161, the President of the General Assembly, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme and UN-Habitat, will convene a high-level meeting on Zero Waste on Thursday, 30 March 2023. A [letter](#) informing Member States was circulated on 6 February 2023.

Background

Climate change, pandemics, and conflicts are unfortunate examples of current interlocking crises. Being one of the aspects of these challenges, waste generation and associated pollution threaten the global environment and human health. According to UN-Habitat's global estimate of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicator 11.6.1, the world generated 2.4 billion tons of municipal solid waste in 2018, of which 18% was collected, and 45% was managed in uncontrolled facilities. Various actors worldwide are lagging in providing sustainable waste management services to rapidly increasing populations.

Making fundamental changes in how societies produce and consume goods and services is indispensable for achieving Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development on sustainable consumption and production patterns, particularly SDGs 11, 12, 13, and 14.

While investment in improving waste management infrastructure is essential, ending the waste crisis will also require addressing the underlying factor of unsustainable consumption and production patterns that contribute to increasing amounts of waste generation. Recent research conducted by UNEP has identified that, at the global level, most sustainable consumption and production policy efforts are limited to providing downstream regulation.

To address the waste crisis, growing numbers of local and national governments are focused on improving their waste management infrastructure and increasing public awareness about waste management. To that end, the General Assembly resolution 77/161 entitled "Promoting zero-waste initiatives to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" was adopted on 14 December 2022.

As per resolution 77/161, the proclamation of 30 March as the International Day of Zero Waste is aimed at raising awareness of national, subnational, regional and local zero-waste initiatives and their contribution to achieving sustainable development, with the engagement of Member States, organizations of the UN system, other international and regional organizations, and other relevant stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, and academia.

Objectives

As the SDG Summit will be convened in September 2023, highlighting the recommitment to the SDGs and a breakthrough in efforts towards the 2030 Agenda, it is crucial to utilize transformative solution opportunities to get back on track with regards to the achievement of the SDGs by 2030.

The high-level meeting aims to:

- Raise awareness and provide a platform to promote **sustainable and environmentally sound practices of preventing, minimizing and managing waste** through resource efficiency and responsible production and consumption of products in a closed, circular system.
- Share good practices from **local and national zero-waste initiatives** as catalytic tools for the promotion of **sustainable consumption and production patterns**, in addition to supporting the eco-design of products and enhancing the stakeholder participation in the process.
- Promote **multi-stakeholder partnerships** to scale up the implementation of sustainable consumption, production, and circularity policies and programs. utilizing tools such as education, traditions, norms, and social values in reducing and recycling waste following sustainable consumption and production.
- Advocate best practices for the recognition of the **International Day of Zero Waste** to the main stakeholders and raise awareness for consumer behavioral change, innovation and new technologies, sustainable urban planning, and investments in green infrastructure to prevent wasteful use of natural resources.

Format

The high-level meeting will take place from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. in the General Assembly Hall and will consist of **an opening segment, a plenary segment, a panel, and a closing segment.**

The time limit for Member States' statements during the plenary segment will be three minutes for individual delegations and five minutes for statements made on behalf of a group of States. Permanent Missions will be invited to inscribe on the list of speakers via the e-Delegate platform. **The list of speakers will open on Monday, 13 March 2023.**

Delegations wishing to circulate their statements are invited to submit PDF versions of their statements via email to estatemnts@un.org no later than two hours in advance of delivery. The name of the meeting should be indicated in the subject line of the email and in the heading of the statement. The statements will remain embargoed until their delivery and then posted.

A multi-stakeholder panel will be organized with the participation of civil society organizations, business sector representatives, scientists, local government representatives, and youth representatives for promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns, including local and national zero-waste initiatives. There will be no pre-established list of speakers.

Further information on the programme, including topics and discussion questions for the panel, will be circulated in due course.

In support of the high-level meeting, UN-Habitat, UNEP, and the Secretariat of the 10YFP/One Planet Network will set up a repository of good practice information on action towards zero waste, building on existing waste-related initiatives under the 10YFP/One Planet Network. Member States and stakeholders will be invited to contribute.

Participants

The meeting is open to Member States and Observers, United Nations entities, and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Outcome

A summary of the meeting will be shared with the Member States.