



Statement

For Immediate Release

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BASEL CONVENTION AMENDMENTS COULD FURTHER HAMSTRING WASTE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN DEVELOPING REGIONS

WASHINGTON (May 10, 2019) – *Parties to the Basel Convention (187 countries) today approved an amendment to the Annexes governing the transboundary movement of plastic waste. The amendment takes effect January 2021 and will require countries to seek and obtain approval prior to shipping plastic waste for recycling to other countries. The American Chemistry Council issued the following statement, which may be attributed to [Steve Russell, vice president of ACC's Plastics Division](#):*

“Recent amendments to the Basel Convention are described as intended to reduce the burden of mixed waste in less developed economies. However, this is a complex area that deserves more nuanced consideration than it has received. We agree that solutions are urgently needed. However emerging trends and technologies will continue to change the nature of traded materials, and the recent amendments may unintentionally make it *more* difficult for developing countries to properly manage their plastic waste. The added regulatory requirements will make it increasingly difficult for lower-income nations to export their recyclable plastics to regions with the new technologies and infrastructure to manage these materials responsibly. Small Island Developing States often lack the scale needed for recycling and usually export recyclable materials. These regulations will make that more difficult. In addition, investments and expansions in advanced recycling and recovery systems (including in the U.S. and Europe) are enabling society to repurpose more plastics into useful raw materials for new manufacturing. Policies that recognize these investments and enable innovation are critically important to achieving more sustainable, circular outcomes. We look forward to working with Basel stakeholders to address these and other nuanced issues.”

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