



# HRC48 SIDE EVENT PLASTICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

23 SEPTEMBER 2021 | 13:30 CEST

>>> <http://tiny.cc/HRC48Plastics>



HRC48 SIDE EVENT

# PLASTICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

22 SEPTEMBER 2021 | 15:30 CEST



# HRC48 SIDE EVENT PLASTICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

23 SEPTEMBER 2021 | 13:30 CEST



**H.E. Amb. Emilio IZQUIERDO**

Permanent Representative of Ecuador  
to the UN in Geneva



**H.E. Amb. Thomas WAGNER**

Deputy Permanent Representative of  
the EU to the UN in Geneva



**Marcos ORELLANA**

UN Special Rapporteur on Toxics and Human Rights



**Hemantha WITHANAGE**

Senior Advisor, Centre for Environmental Justice &  
Chairperson, Friends of the Earth International



**H.E. Amb. Silvia Elena ALFARO ESPINOSA**

Permanent Representative of Peru to  
the UN in Geneva



**Carlos MARTIN-NOVELLA**

Deputy Executive Secretary  
Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions



**Moustapha Kamal GUEYE**

Global Coordinator  
Green Jobs Programme, ILO



**Marce GUTIÉRREZ-GRAUDINŠ**

Executive Director, Azul





GENEVA  
BEAT PLASTIC POLLUTION  
DIALOGUES

# HRC48 SIDE EVENT

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- H.E. Amb. Emilio IZQUIERDO | Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva
- H.E. Amb. Thomas WAGNER | Deputy Permanent Representative, European Union

### Presentation of the Report to the UNGA

- Marcos ORELLANA | UN Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights

### Illegal Waste Trade and Related Disasters

- Hemantha WITHANAGE | Senior Advisor, Centre for Environmental Justice & Chairperson, Friends of the Earth International

### UNEA-5 Resolution : Internationally Legally Binding Instrument on Plastic Pollution

- H.E. Amb. Silvia Elena ALFARO ESPINOSA | Permanent Representative of Peru to the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva

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GenevaSchweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
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Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizraForum on Trade,  
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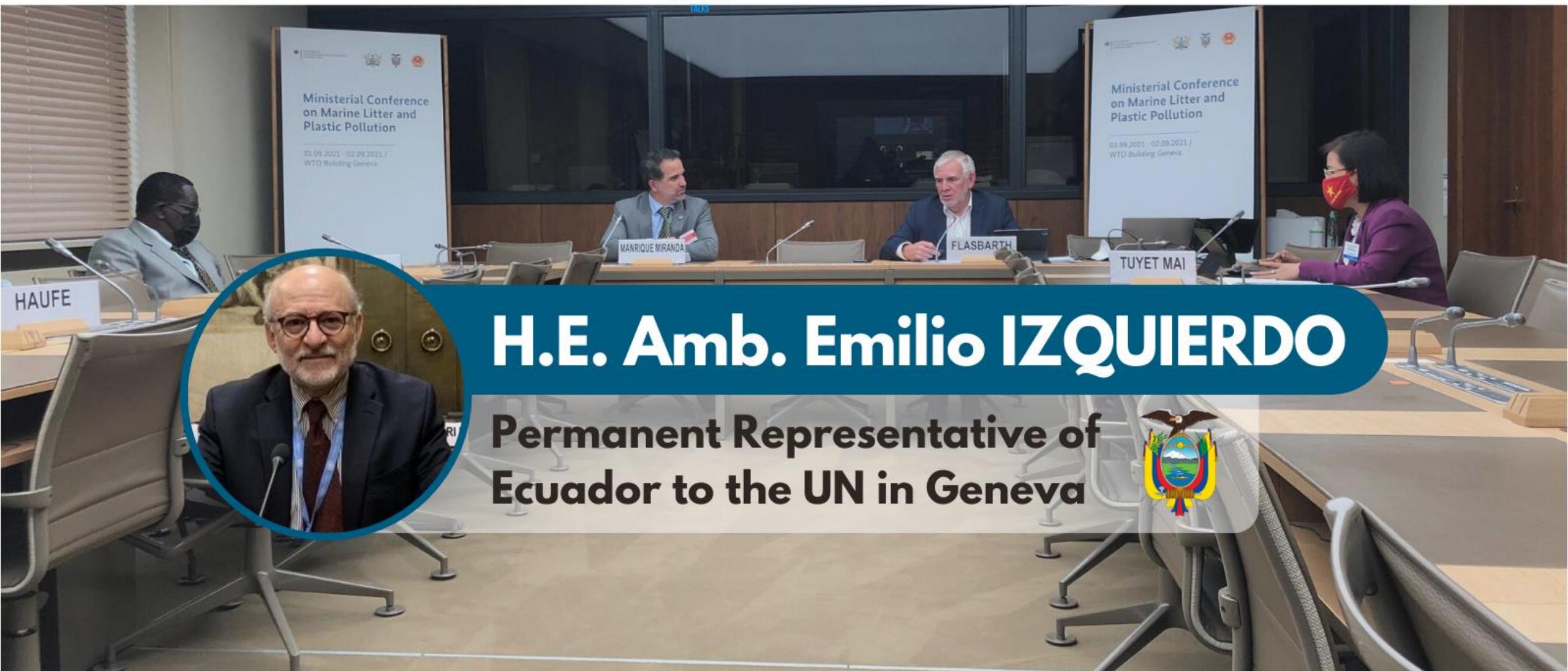
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## UN Special Rapporteur on Toxics and Human Rights





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# Hemantha WITHANAGE

Senior Advisor, Centre for  
Environmental Justice & Chairperson,  
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# Plastic cycle in Asia

- Plastic is a by-product of the fossil industry.
- China produced the largest quantity of plastic, nearly 60 million tonnes. Followed by the United States- 38 million, Germany- 14.5 million and Brazil- 12 million tonnes
- Packaging is the dominant use of primary plastics, with 42% of plastics entering the use phase.
- Asia has become the dumping ground. Between 2016 and 2018 the ten countries within the ASEAN (The Association of Southeast Asian Nations) saw plastic waste imports grow a staggering 171% - from 836,529 tonnes to 2,265,962 tonnes.
- As it turns out, 81% of all ocean plastic in the world emanates from countries in Asia.
- Covid Pandemic has doubled the use of single use plastics in many countries and it has brought many other issues including managing face masks, personal protection equipment and single use packaging disposed of in quarantining.





# A case on Waste import from UK

- In 2019, CEJ filed for legal action on 263 containers filled with post consumer waste- carpets, plastics and other mixed waste imported to Sri Lanka in around 2017.
- Corporations Justified this Importation as for value addition. But actually they are good for scrap and incineration.
- In response to the CEJ lawsuit demanding the repatriation, the Court ordered them to repatriate them to the origin.
- There is similar experience in Malaysia, Philippine, Indonesia etc.

## Sri Lanka finds hazardous waste in UK metal recycling cargo

UK Environment Agency to investigate discovery of 130 foul-smelling containers



**CEYLON  
TODAY**

www.ceylontoday.lk

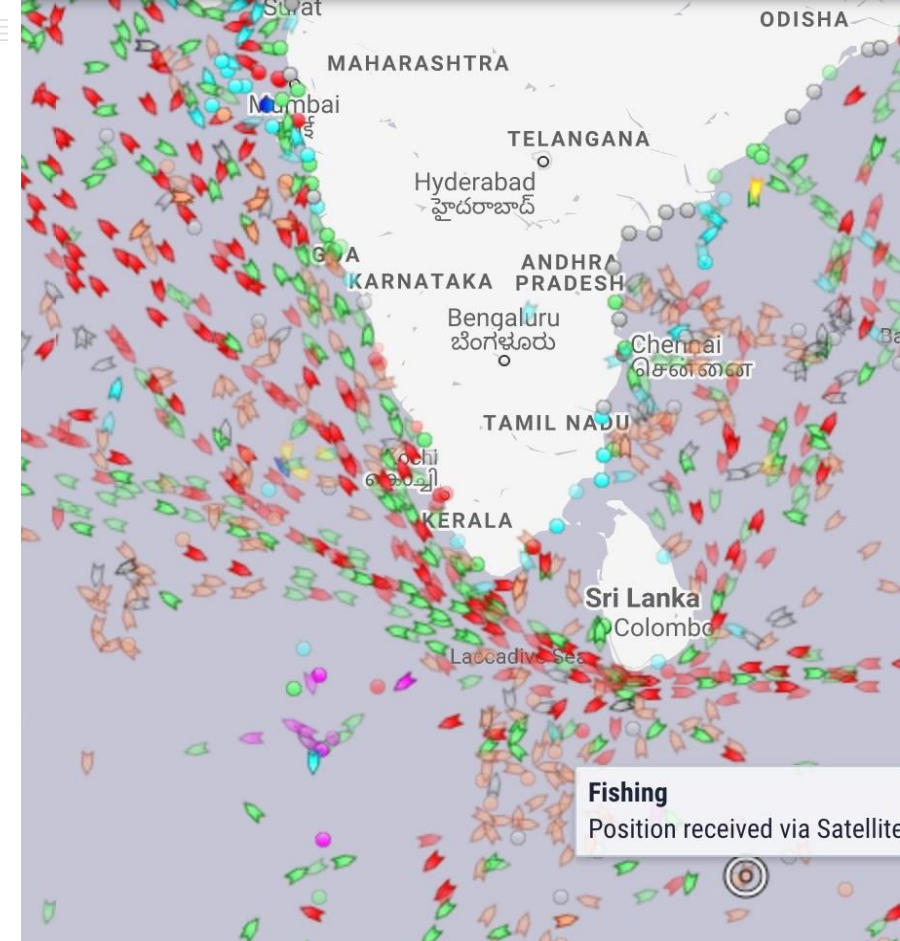
## 82 containers of waste packed off back to UK

Via three vessels

BY NABIYA  
VAFFOOR

during the early hours  
of today. The vessel

Media Spokesman,  
Sunil Jayaratne.





# Xpress Pearl Ship disaster and plastic nurdles

- In the most recent Xpress pearl ship disaster 1680 Mt of Plastic nurdles, 9700 Mt Epoxy resins and 81 hazardous chemical containers were on board this ship.
- At least 85 billion HDPE and LDPE nurdles spilled to the sea. About 700 km of coast was affected and over 16,000 fishermen and their families were affected.
- Only 40% may have been collected according to the Minister of Environment. Rest will remain in the ocean for the next 500 to 1000 years and travel from Sri Lanka to the Indian coast and Myanmar, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia etc.
- Microplastics resulting from burnt, contaminated plastic is a serious issue.
- There is local inventor CRS holdings who have invented a machine to separate nurdles and microplastics, sludge and put back cleaned sand.
- But ITOPF is trying to block this by asking to separate only plastic above 3mm and trying to hide the nurdle pollution and the microplastic pollution so that the damage claim can be reduced.







Photo: Local communities collecting contaminated plastic nurdles spilled from the X-Press Pearl toxic ship.

## What we want

- Both issues show how the big businesses are involving human rights violations related to plastics. "The adverse effects of plastics throughout its lifecycle on human health, the environment, food security and safety infringe on our fundamental rights.
- Plastic waste trade is a form of waste colonialism, an environmental injustice and perpetuates violation of human rights. Thus we demand
- to immediately implement Basel convention plastic amendment.
- We call to hold the shipping company express feeders and the insurer P&I club to be accountable for the Xpress Pearl chemical ship disaster.
- We acknowledge that role of the Ambassador Emillio as the chair of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group (OEIGWG) for an International Legally Binding Instrument on TNCs and other Business Enterprises with respect to human rights and we call for a strong binding instrument on multinational enterprises and need of laws at the national level to implement the same.



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# Moustapha Kamal GUEYE

## Global Coordinator Green Jobs Programme, ILO





Geneva Environment Network

Side-event to the 48th Session of the Human Rights Council  
“Plastics and Human Rights”

**A just transition in the context of waste pickers and  
recyclers as hazardous jobs –**

***A Social Solidarity Economy approach***

**Simel Esim, Unit Head, Cooperatives, COOP, ILO**

**Moustapha Kamal Gueye, Global Coordinator, Green Jobs Programme, ILO**



## Workers in the waste & recycling sector

- **Around 15-20 million people work in the informal economy; 4 million work in the formal economy** (ILO 2013)
  - China: 3.3 to 5.6 million people in informal recycling (Linzner & Salhofer 2014)
  - Brazil: Over a quarter million in waste picking (Dias 2011)
- **Waste pickers collect 50-100% of waste in low-income countries** (UN-Habitat 2010)
- **Waste pickers are often a vulnerable demographic**
  - Women, children, the elderly, the unemployed, or migrants
  - Large number of female waste pickers: 50% in Vientian (Keohanam 2017); 80% in CUSCO (Arenas Lizana 2012)
- **Plastic waste is one of the main waste streams in collection and recycling**

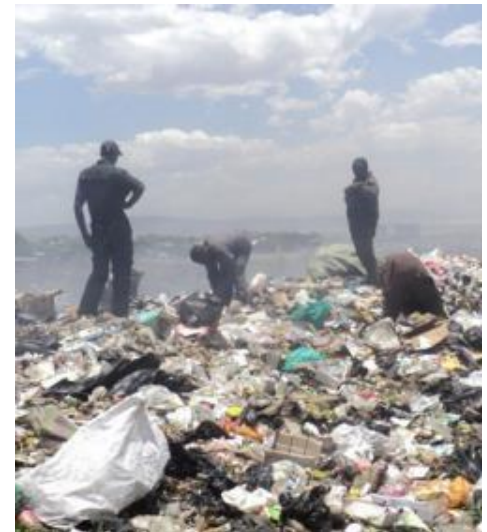




## Challenges for individual waste pickers

- **Unhealthy working conditions**
- **Lack of social security and health insurance**
- **Low earning and weak position vis-à-vis other actors**
- **Unstable prices of recyclables**
- **Poor access to affordable infrastructure (e.g. transport)**
- **Lack of educational & training opportunities**
- **Harassment by local authorities**
- **Social exclusion**

ILO & WIEGO. 2017. “Cooperation among workers in the informal economy: A focus on home-based workers and waste pickers”





## Formalizing & integrating waste pickers

By forming or joining SSE organizations, waste pickers can:

- 1) Pool resources and jointly provide waste management services in public schemes
- 2) Strengthen collective voice and representation of waste pickers in policy-making processes
- 3) Improve occupational safety and health
- 4) Have access to services and social protection
- 5) Have access to training and capacity building opportunities



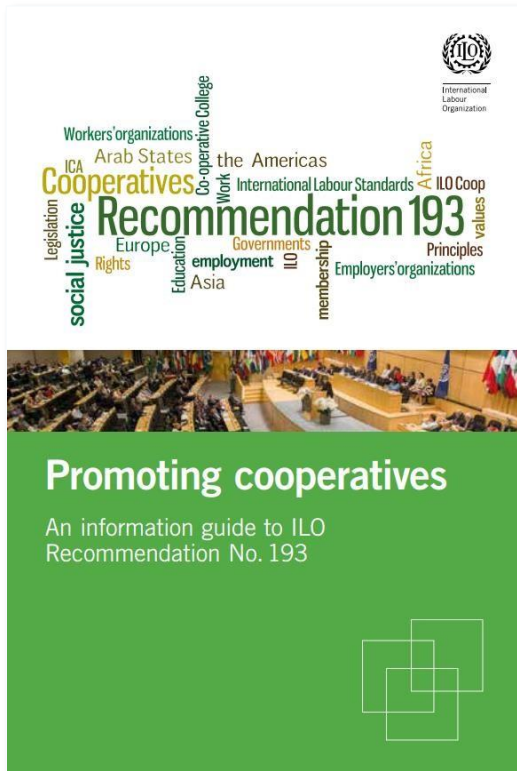




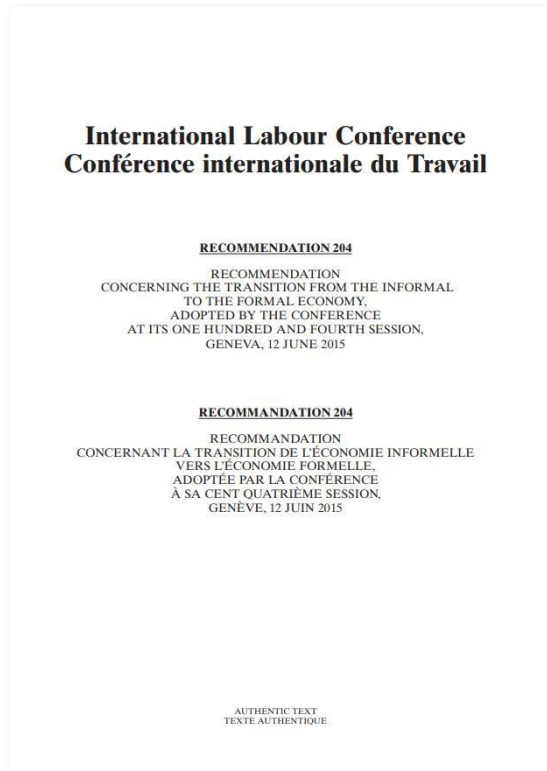
International  
Labour  
Organization

## The work of the ILO

# - Normative instruments



ILO Recommendation on  
Promotion of  
Cooperatives, 2002 (No.  
193)



ILO Transition from the Informal  
to the Formal Economy  
Recommendation, 2015 (No.  
204)

Guidelines for a just transition  
towards environmentally  
sustainable economies and  
societies for all

2015

SSE?



Thank you!



Visit our website:

[ILO.org/coop](https://ilo.org/coop)

[ILO.org/green-jobs](https://ilo.org/green-jobs)



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### Illegal Waste Trade and Related Disasters

- Hemantha WITHANAGE | Senior Advisor, Centre for Environmental Justice & Chairperson, Friends of the Earth International

### UNEA-5 Resolution : Internationally Legally Binding Instrument on Plastic Pollution

- H.E. Amb. Silvia Elena ALFARO ESPINOSA | Permanent Representative of Peru to the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva

### Discussants

- Carlos MARTIN-NOVELLA | Deputy Executive Secretary, Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions
- Moustapha Kamal GUEYE | Global Coordinator, Green Jobs Programme, ILO
- Marce GUTIÉRREZ-GRAUDINŠ | Executive Director, Azul

### Q&A

### Closing

Permanent Mission of Norway  
GenevaSchweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizraForum on Trade,  
Environment and the SDGs



# OPEN DISCUSSION



GENEVA  
BEAT PLASTIC POLLUTION  
DIALOGUESHRC48 SIDE EVENT  
**PLASTICS AND  
HUMAN RIGHTS**>>> <http://tiny.cc/HRC48Plastics>

23 SEPTEMBER 2021 | 13:30 CEST

## Agenda

### Opening Remarks

- H.E. Amb. Emilio IZQUIERDO | Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva
- H.E. Amb. Thomas WAGNER | Deputy Permanent Representative, European Union

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HRC48 SIDE EVENT

# PLASTICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

22 SEPTEMBER 2021 | 15:30 CEST





Microplastics have been recorded in 12 out of the 25 most important fish species and genera that contribute to global marine fisheries.

\*Microplastics in fisheries and aquaculture: status of knowledge on their occurrence and implications for aquatic organisms and food safety. Lusher, A.L.; Hollman, P.C.H.; Mendoza-Hill, J.J. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Technical Paper. No. 615. Rome, Italy.



**#UNFSS2021**  
**#PlasticIsForever**  
**#GlobalAgreements for a #HealthyPlanet**





There are 500 times more microplastics in our ocean than stars in our galaxy (on average 33 trillion particles).

\*Sebille, E. van, Wilcox, C., Lebreton, L., Maximenko, N., Hardesty, B.D., Franeker, J.A. van, Eriksen, M., Siegel, D., Galgani, F., Law, K.L., 2015. A global inventory of small floating plastic debris. Environ. Res. Lett. 10, 124006. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/10/12/124006>



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**#PlasticIsForever**  
**#GlobalAgreements for a #HealthyPlanet**





**#UNFSS2021**

**#PlasticIsForever**

**#GlobalAgreements for a #HealthyPlanet**

A disposable paper cup (100 ml) with a plastic liner can leach approximately 25,000 micron-sized microplastic particles during use for 15 minutes of pouring hot water.

\*Ranjan, V.P., Joseph, A., Goel, S., 2021. Microplastics and other harmful substances released from disposable paper cups into hot water. J. Hazard. Mater. 404, 124118. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhazmat.2020.124118>





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In food, microplastics can contaminate fruits and vegetables by penetrating the seeds, roots, leaves and plant cells.

\*Jin, Wang, Ren, Wang, Shan, 2021. Microplastics contamination in food and beverages: Direct exposure to humans -Jin -2021 -Journal of Food Science -Wiley Online Library  
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/action/doSearch?AllField=10.1111%2F1750-3841.15802+>



**BRS**  
CONVENTIONS



**UNITED NATIONS**  
**FOOD SYSTEMS**  
**SUMMIT 2021**





When drinking water from a plastic bottle, you're also ingesting a total of 90,000 microplastics each year.

\*Cox, K.D., Covernton, G.A., Davies, H.L., Dower, J.F., Juanes, F., Dudas, S.E., 2020. Correction to Human Consumption of Microplastics. Environ. Sci. Technol. 54, 10974.  
<https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.est.0c04032>



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The highest microplastic level in  
take-out food containers occurred  
in those containers made of  
polystyrene.

\*Du, F., Cai, H., Zhang, Q., Chen, Q., Shi, H., 2020. Microplastics in take-out food containers. J. Hazard. Mater. 399, 122969. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhazmat.2020.122969>



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CONVENTIONS



**UNITED NATIONS**  
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HRC48 SIDE EVENT

# PLASTICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

22 SEPTEMBER 2021 | 15:30 CEST



# WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING IN GENEVA?



**Nature-based Solutions & OCEANS**

27 SEPTEMBER 2021 | 15.00 CEST

Geneva Nature-based Solutions Dialogues

**EVENT | VIRTUAL**

**Nature-based Solutions and Oceans | Geneva Nature-based Solutions Dialogues**

27 SEP 2021 15:00

Online | Webex

🕒 Water | Nature

🕒 SDG14



**EVENT | CINEMA**

**Wednesdays for the Planet | The Song of the Sperm Whale**


06 OCT 2021 13:30

Online

GEN

🕒 Nature

🕒 SDG14



**EVENT | VIRTUAL**

**Nature-based Solutions for Building Resilience | Geneva Nature-based Solutions Dialogues**

11 OCT 2021 15:00

Online | Webex

🕒 Climate | Nature

🕒 SDG13 | SDG14 | SDG15



GENEVA  
BEAT PLASTIC POLLUTION  
DIALOGUES



# HRC48 SIDE EVENT PLASTICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

23 SEPTEMBER 2021 | 13:30 CEST

## Speakers

*By order of intervention.*



**H.E. Amb. Emilio IZQUIERDO**

Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva



**H.E. Amb. Thomas WAGNER**

Deputy Permanent Representative of the European Union to the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva



**Marcos ORELLANA**

UN Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights



**Hemantha WITHANAGE**

Senior Advisor, Centre for Environmental Justice & Chairperson, Friends of the Earth International



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**Marce GUTIÉRREZ-GRAUDINŠ**

Executive Director, Azul

# THANKYOU