

## Summary of the Criteria for distinguishing plastic wastes subject to control under the Japanese Basel Act from other wastes

### 1. Purpose

The amendments to the Annexes of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal (hereafter Basel Convention), introducing new controls on the transboundary movement of plastic wastes was adopted at the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP14) to the Basel Convention held on 29 April to 10 May 2019. The amended Annexes will become effective on 1 January 2021, and Prior Informed Consent (PIC) will be required when exporting plastic wastes that are subject to control by the Basel Convention.

Plastic wastes that are subject to control include hazardous plastic wastes in Annex VIII and non-hazardous plastic wastes requiring special consideration in Annex II. The purpose of these criteria is to enable the appropriate determination of whether or not the export of these plastic wastes is to be regulated under the Basel Convention and the Japanese Basel Act.

### 2. Scope of the criteria

In the amended Annexes, plastic wastes are classified into three categories as Y48 in Annex II, A3210 in Annex VIII, and B3011 in Annex IX. Annex II (Y48) is specified as plastic waste, including mixtures of such waste, with the exception of plastic wastes that apply to Annex VIII (A3210) and Annex IX (B3011). B3011 in Annex IX stipulates, “plastic waste listed below, provided it is destined for recycling in an environmentally sound manner and almost free from contamination and other types of wastes”. The criteria aims to define the scope of plastic wastes covered by B3011 which are not controlled, in order to clarify the scope of plastic wastes covered by Y48 which are controlled.

### 3. Effective date

The criteria will apply to plastic wastes that are exported after 1 January 2021. The criteria will be amended as needed based on the situation of controls on import of plastic wastes by other countries.

### 4. Criteria for distinguishing plastic wastes subject to control from other wastes not subject to control

The criteria define the scope of plastic waste subject to control under the Japanese Basel Act in the following manner. Since B3011 in Annex IX has separate provisions for plastic waste exclusively consisting of a single resin and for mixtures of plastic waste consisting of different resins (PE, PP, PET), two different criteria are developed as the following:

- (1) Criteria applicable to plastic wastes without a mixture of different plastic resins (exclusively consisting of a single type of resin)

Plastic wastes that fulfill all criteria A to D below are out of the scope of control and are therefore categorized as B3011 as a general principle.

- A: Free of contamination from food and drink, dirt, oils and other substances
- B: Not mixed with substances other than plastic
- C: Consisting of a single type of plastic resin
- D: Processed or arranged for recycling

<Examples of the types of plastic that will be out of the scope of control>

- Pelletized plastics



- Transparent or single colored plastic flakes or fluff



\*The plastic waste must be transparent or of a single color in order to be out of the scope of control. The reason for this is that mixed color plastic flakes or fluff are indistinguishable from a mixture of other materials or contamination. The exceptions are only when mixed color plastics are discharged as a byproduct from the manufacturing process or when they have a minimal amount of color mixing after undergoing a sorting process.

- Plastic wastes in the form of sheets, rolls, or bales\* that were discharged as a byproduct from the manufacturing process



\* Plastic wastes in the form of bales are limited to those consisting of a homogenous plastic and packaged by a transparent film to prevent stains.

- Polystyrene foam (PS) in the form of ingots



If the plastics listed above have contamination or are mixed with other materials for any reason, they are not considered to be out of the scope of control.

<Examples of plastic wastes as industrial waste>

**Not controlled**

**Controlled**



<Examples of plastic wastes derived from used electrical and electronic equipment or E-waste>

**Not controlled**

**Controlled**



(2) Criteria applicable to plastic wastes with a mixture of different plastic resins (PE, PP, PET)

Plastic wastes with a mixture of polyethylene (PE), polypropylene (PP) and/or polyethylene terephthalate (PET) are assumed as PET bottles with labels and caps. Plastic bottle waste that fulfills all criteria A to C below are out of the scope of control and are therefore categorized as category B3011 as a general principle..

A: Sorted, and excludes other materials or plastic resins other than bottles, caps, and labels

B: Washed, and free from contamination such as drinks, dirt, and other substances

C: Shredded and in the form of flakes

PET bottle labels produced in Japan often consist of polystyrene (PS) but look the same as other materials such as PE or PP. However, under the Convention, if PS is mixed in the plastic waste, the waste is subject to control. Therefore, for the plastic waste to be exempt from control in Japan, it is necessary to remove all bottle labels. Only plastic waste with a small amount of labels or caps after undergoing a sorting process becomes exempt from regulation.

<Examples of PET bottle wastes that are subject to control under the Basel Act>

Not controlled



Controlled

