

Chair's Summary of Asian Network workshop 2019 2019

12-14 November 2019,
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Session 1: Update of national regulation -with a focus on plastic waste- (1)

- Statistics show that the import of plastic waste has significantly increased in many Asian countries since the import ban of China. In response to this situation, some countries have already developed or are planning to introduce import regulations on plastic waste.
- Questionnaire survey found that different approaches to restrict/limit the import of plastic waste have been taken by countries in the region (e.g., total ban, licensing, pre-shipment inspection, restriction of certain type of plastic waste corresponding to HS code, quota).
- Many countries are now in the process of reviewing and revising national regulations in accordance with the amendment of Annex II (Y48), Annex VIII (A3210) and Annex IX (B3011) adopted by the COP14 to the Basel Convention.
- There is a need to further clarify some of the terminology used in the new entries on plastic wastes to avoid challenges with their incorporation in national regulations as well as subsequent implementation difficulties, including with respect to:
 - The distinction between plastic waste & scrap
 - The required level of homogeneity of the plastic waste
 - Mixtures of plastic waste
 - The absence of contamination of the plastic waste

Session 1: Update of national regulation -with a focus on plastic waste- (2)

- The summary of import regulation (attached to the Chair's summary) would be useful for the better understanding of import control measures in each country, and it needs to be updated on a regular basis. It could also be a good reference for SIWG on the technical guidelines on plastic waste under the Basel Convention (jointly led by China, Japan & UK) in updating the guidelines.
- Ensuring the ESM of plastic waste in the final destination country is a challenge for many countries considering different technologies/infrastructures available in the country. More information sharing and discussion would be needed for ensuring the ESM in the region.
- Communication between competent authorities among concerned Parties is a key to prevent the illegal traffic and to ensure, as needed, the take back of the wastes smoothly and timely as appropriate.
- Sharing of information/evidence on the illegal traffic among concerned parties is crucial to take appropriate legal actions and to avoid misunderstanding of false media reports. In this sense, Asian Network would serve as a good platform to share such information among competent authorities.

Session 2: Implementation of E-waste Guidelines

- Significant increase of the TBM of E-waste has been observed.
- To address this circumstance, some countries have made efforts to regulate the import of E-waste and to promote the collection and recycling of E-waste through introducing EPR-based mechanism. Good practices of region-wide repair/refurbishment business conducted by industry were also shared with participants.
- Some countries started to implement and test the E-waste guidelines and to establish different types of criteria to distinguish E-waste from UEEE for the purpose of reuse, repair and refurbishment (as attached to the Chair's summary).
- Challenges (and gaps) are also identified to implement the Guidelines at the national level. Since the Decision on the E-waste guidelines adopted by COP14 invites Parties to share challenges of testing guidelines, experience of Asian countries would be useful inputs for refining the Guidelines in the future.
- Due to non-binding nature of the Guidelines, the future workshop may need to consider a harmonized or standardized approach in the region.

Session 3: Promoting the ESM of plastic waste and E-waste

- Countries shared experiences in promoting the ESM of plastic waste and E-waste. Clear and robust policies and participation of all stakeholders are essential to facilitate responsible recycling activities.
- There was an intensive discussion regarding the TBM control of plastic waste, and the following points were emphasized by participants
 - Minimizing the TBM and proximity principle should be respected while supply of certain volume of waste would be essential for recyclers to secure their sustainable business operation.
 - Bilateral information sharing is key to trace the flow of problematic waste stream, especially if it goes to areas where difficult to control by competent authority such as free trade zone.
 - Different Parties have different legal interpretation regarding the take back of plastic waste not currently covered by the Basel Convention.