

Singapore's Updates on National Regulations for the Transboundary Movement Control of Plastic Waste and E-Waste Under the Basel Convention

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1

Overview of Singapore's Control Framework

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Hazardous Waste (Control of Export, Import and Transit) Act (HWA)

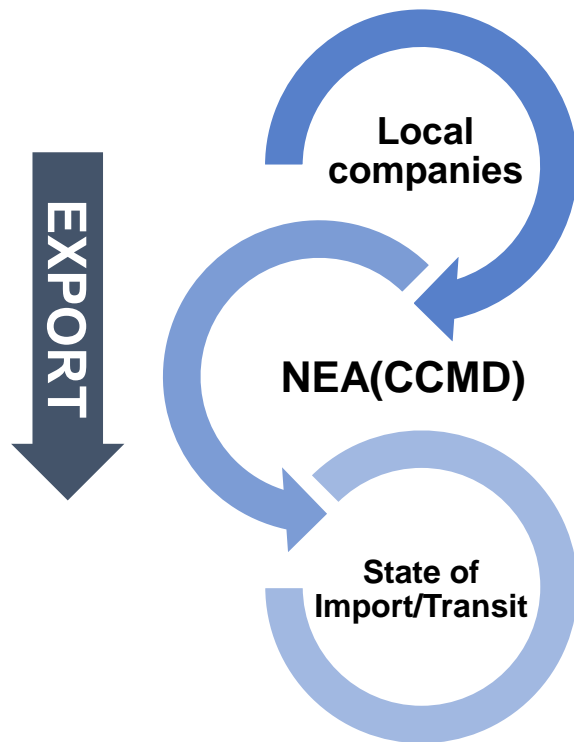
- i. On 16 March 1998, Singapore enacted the **Hazardous Waste (Control of Export, Import and Transit) Act (HWA) and its Regulations** to implement the obligations of the Basel Convention. This includes:
 - Provision of enforcement powers and penalties
 - Requirement for Basel Permits to import, export and transit hazardous waste
- ii. National Environment Agency (**Chemical Control and Management Department (CCMD)**) is the National Competent Authority for implementation of the Convention:
 - Administers the HWA and its Regulations
 - Initiates **Prior Informed Consent (PIC) procedure** with the Competent Authorities of States of Import and Transit for their consent of the intended shipments
 - Processes and issues Basel Permits
- iii. The HWA was amended in 2020 to support the domestic implementation of the plastic waste amendments which were adopted at COP-14 of the Basel Convention*

* Annexes II, VIII and IX in the Schedule to the HWA were amended to align with the plastic waste amendments under the Basel Convention. ⁴

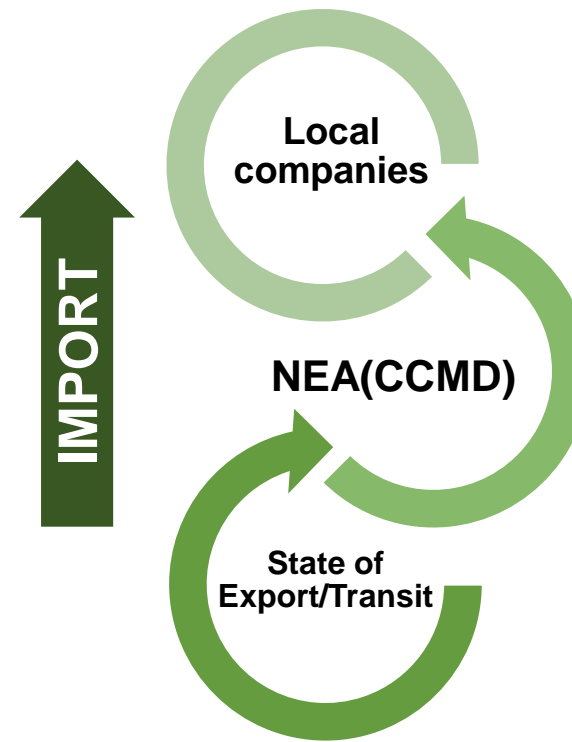
2 Domestic Control on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous and Other Waste under the Basel Convention

Domestic Control for Transboundary Movement of Hazardous and Other Waste Under the Basel Convention

Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure and Application of Basel Permits



1. Apply for Basel Permit from NEA(CCMD) with Banker's Guarantee from bank
2. NEA(CCMD)* initiates PIC procedure with the States of Import/Transit for their consent of the intended shipments and issue Basel Notification form
3. Obtain PIC from the competent authority of States of Import/Transit
4. NEA(CCMD) issues Basel permit once consent has been obtained



1. State of Export/Transit initiates PIC procedure with NEA(CCMD) for consent of the intended shipments
2. NEA(CCMD) provides PIC for shipment
3. Apply for Basel Permit from NEA(CCMD) with Banker's Guarantee from bank

* NEA(CCMD) has been using a dedicated email (NEA_Basel@nea.gov.sg) for matters relating to PIC notifications. We highly encourage documents to be sent electronically, instead of hardcopies, for expediency.

Domestic Control for Transboundary Movement of Hazardous and Other Waste Under the Basel Convention

TradeNet Controls



3 Update on Domestic Implementation on the Transboundary Movement Control of Plastic Waste



Transboundary Movement Control of Plastic Waste

Plastic waste classified under **Annexes II and VIII** are currently subject to transboundary movement control under the **PIC framework** of the Basel Convention and will require a **valid Basel Permit** from NEA-CCMD prior to its import/export/transit

Current Operational Requirements for Import/Export of Plastic Waste

- i. The HWA was amended in 2020, ahead of the 1 Jan 2021 international obligation, to prepare the industries for their compliance.
- ii. Plastic waste under HS code 3915 is controlled and managed by NEA. Declarants are advised to declare using the most appropriate HS and Product code[^] in the TradeNet system
- iii. TradeNet permit declarations involving the import/export of plastic waste under HS code 3915 are processed by NEA

[^] Product code is used internally by NEA to identify the type/purpose of waste categorised under the particular HS Code

Challenges Faced on Transboundary Movement of Plastic Waste



Potential differences in how Parties interpret the scope of plastic waste covered in Annex II and IX of the Basel Convention

No harmonised level of acceptable contamination for the plastic waste which may result in varying domestic requirements for the import of plastic waste

Uncertainty from industry on the requirements for the transboundary movement of plastic waste, despite issuance of circulars

Domestic Technical Guidelines on Import/Export of Plastic Waste

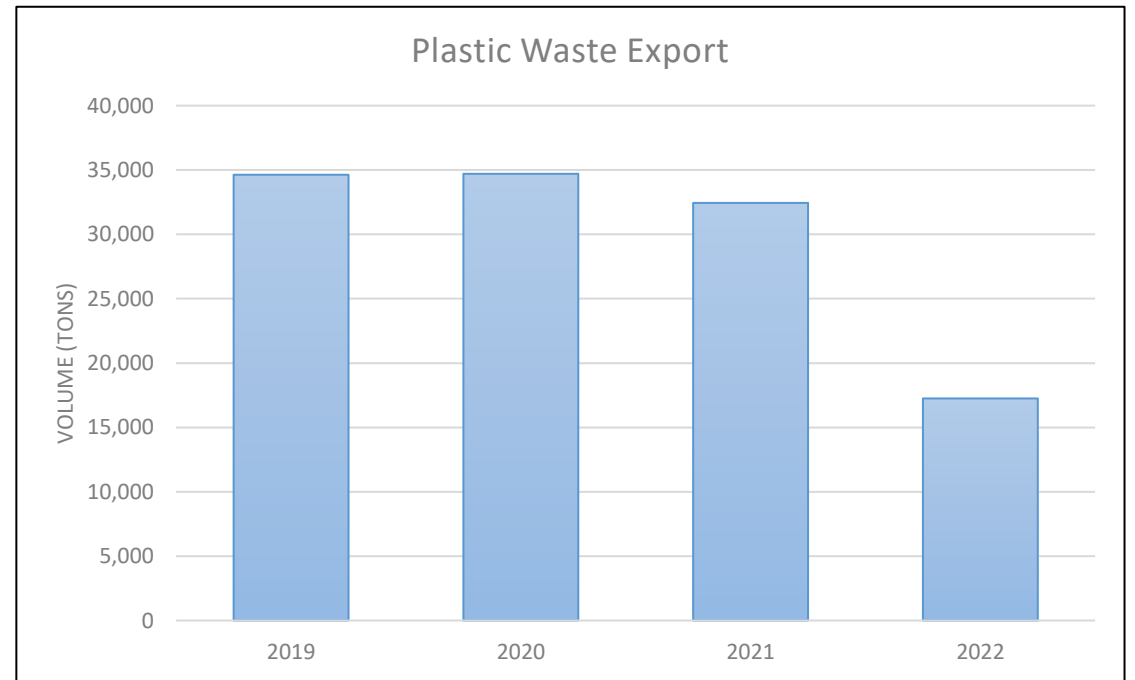
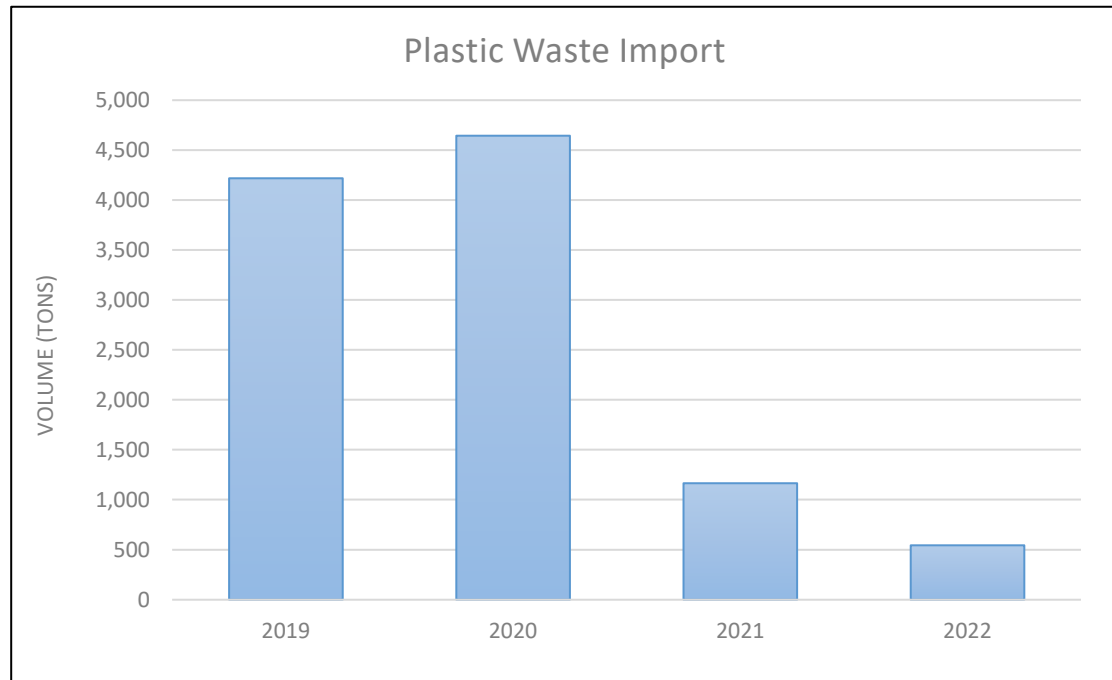
- i. A set of domestic technical guidelines was developed to serve as a reference document for the local waste/recycling industry on the import and export requirements for plastic waste/recyclables listed under Annex IX of the Basel Convention
- ii. Some of the key areas covered under the domestic technical guidelines include:
 - Types of plastic waste listed under Annex IX of the Basel Convention
 - [Homogeneity level of the plastic waste](#)
 - [Threshold limits for non-plastic contaminants](#)
 - Provision of supporting documents (e.g. history of waste, surveyor report/inspection certificate, etc.)
- iii. However, domestic technical guidelines do not exempt local companies from the need to comply with the importing countries' domestic regulations and requirements on plastic waste
- iv. The domestic technical guidelines have been published on NEA's website and can be accessed via: <https://www.nea.gov.sg/docs/default-source/our-services/pollution-control/hazardous-waste/technical-guidelines-for-transboundary-movement-control-of-plastic-waste.pdf>

Random TradeNet Audit Checks on Import/Export of Plastic Waste

- i. Since the international obligations on the plastic waste amendments took effect on 1 Jan 2021, NEA has issued 1 export permit listed under Annex II of the Basel Convention. For this export notification, it took approximately 4 months for the country of import to provide its consent.
- ii. Nonetheless, NEA has been conducting random audit checks on TradeNet declarations involving the import and export of plastic waste and reminding stakeholders to ensure compliance with the obligations under the Basel Convention

Import and Export Trends of Plastic Waste (2019 to 2022)

- i. As compared to 2019 and 2020, there was a significant decrease in import volumes of plastic waste (mainly polyethylene scraps) in 2021, while the export volumes remains comparable
- ii. Based on the available data for 2022 (up to June), the import and export volumes appear to be comparable to that of 2021



4 Update on Domestic Implementation on the Transboundary Movement Control of E-Waste

Transboundary Movement Control of E-Waste

- i. Currently, electrical and electronic waste (e-waste) or scraps containing hazardous constituents are controlled for transboundary movement under the Basel Convention

Import and Export of Used Electrical and Electronic Equipment

Re-use

- 1) Surveyor Report indicating UEEE are in good condition
- 2) Importer/Exporter shall prove UEEE are meant for re-use (i.e. ready market)

Repair and Refurbishment

- 1) Contractual agreement between repair facilities and EEE manufacturers
- 2) Importer shall have recycling facility
- 3) Importer shall prove that equipment repaired and refurbished have a ready market

Recycling and Recovery

- 1) Approval from overseas CA allowing the export/import
- 2) Importer shall have recycling facility
- 3) Basel permit required should the e-waste fall under category of hazardous waste

E-Waste Amendments under the Basel Convention

- i. The e-waste amendments will provide transparency and traceability on the type and quantity of e-waste entering and leaving Singapore, which could help to prevent cases of illegal traffic of hazardous waste under the Basel Convention
- ii. Singapore has been in consultation with stakeholders to understand the potential implications and companies were generally concerned with:
 - a) The time taken for the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) procedure and additional time has to be factored in prior to transboundary movement
 - b) Other countries may implement additional restrictions beyond those covered under the e-waste amendments which could affect their businesses
- iii. The technical guidelines on e-waste developed under the Basel Convention could be further reviewed to provide better clarity on the scope of e-waste amendments to facilitate its smooth implementation by 1 Jan 2025.

Conclusion

- i. Singapore, as a Party to the Basel Convention, will continue to work with the Parties and uphold the obligations on the transboundary movement of hazardous waste and other waste, as defined under the Convention

- ii. National Environment Agency, as Singapore's Competent Authority, will continue to
 - a) Monitor developments relating to Basel Convention
 - b) Work closely with other countries in overcoming challenges relating to e-waste amendments
 - c) Study and learn from other countries' best practices in streamlining PIC procedure

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