

Report on Supply Chain Compliance Volume 2, Number 17. September 12, 2019 International recycling law comes closer to reality

By Sascha Matuszak

The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, or the Basel Convention, passed several amendments at the 2019 Conference of the Parties that could significantly alter the way waste, particularly plastic waste, is traded and managed around the world.

Under the amendments, plastic waste is now separated into three legal categories:

1. Hazardous waste – Plastics listed under the Basel Convention’s Annex VIII.
2. Other waste – Plastics listed under Annex II.
3. Non-hazardous waste – Plastics listed under Annex IX.

Representatives from more than 180 countries adopted several resolutions on waste and recycling during the conference, including requirements for “prior informed consent” and the establishment of a Partnership on Plastic Waste working group that will bring together stakeholders to discuss plastic waste challenges in the future.

The changes will have a large impact on the recycling industry, primarily in the United States. The U.S. is accustomed to shipping its waste overseas; first to China (prior to China’s National Sword program), then to Southeast Asian nations, such as Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia and the Philippines.

Shipments of plastic waste listed under Annexes II and VIII are subject to the Convention’s extensive control system, including:

This document is only available to subscribers. Please [log in](#) or [purchase access](#).

[Purchase Login](#)