

RIFS-Blogpost

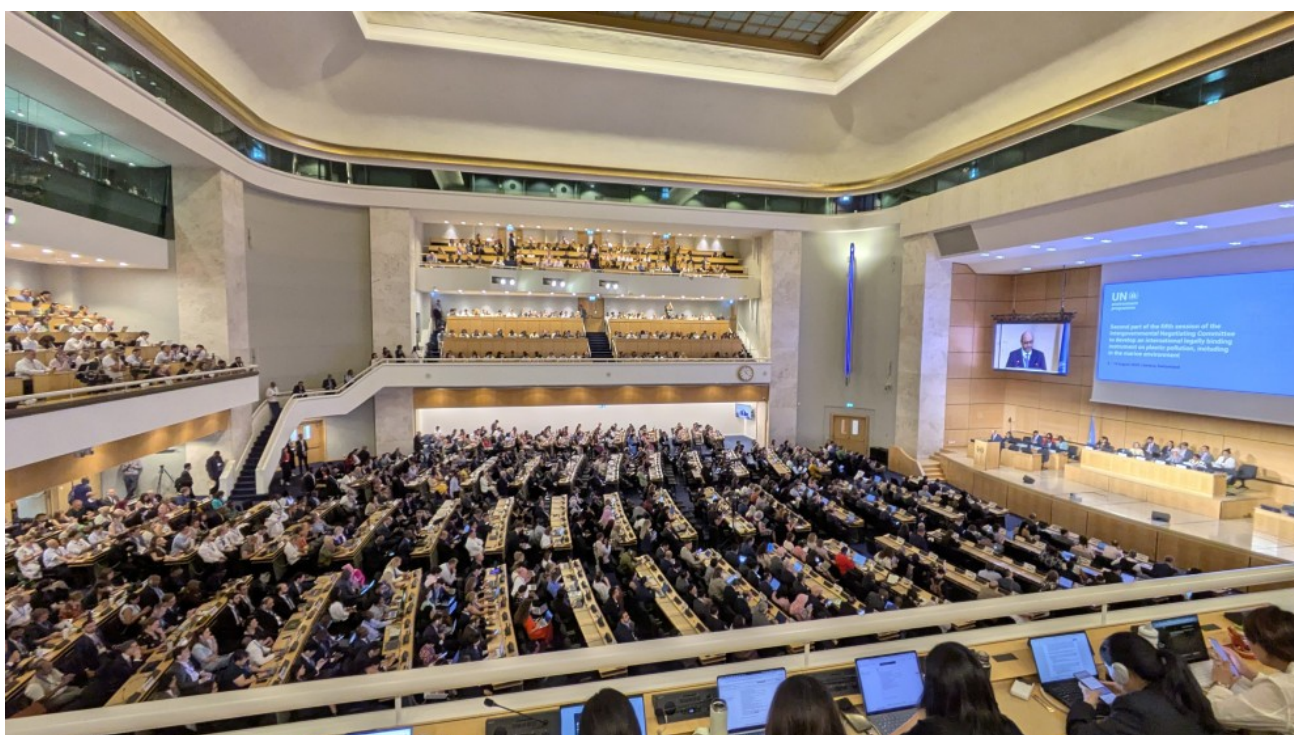
Datum:

Autor*innen: Einhäupl, Paul; Del Savio, Linda]

Projekt:



Is a Consensus Within Reach? The Negotiations for a Global Plastics Treaty Enter Their Next Stretch]



© RIFS/Paul Einhäupl

Delegates and observers in the plenary hall of the United Nations in Geneva.

Negotiations are underway: diplomatic, courteous, and on equal footing. Yet beneath the formalities lie geopolitical interests. The talks are about regional differences, national industries, and global trade; about economic development opportunities, but

! Zum Aktualisieren der Textelemente, Zitation markieren und dann F9 drücken !

Zitation: [Einhäupl, Paul; Del Savio, Linda] (2025): [Is a Consensus Within Reach? The Negotiations for a Global Plastics Treaty Enter Their Next Stretch] – RIFS-Blogpost, 12.08.2025.

URL:





also about ecosystems, traditions, and justice: Who will pay the bill? And more importantly, what will be on that bill?

The second week of the second part of the fifth session of the United Nations negotiations for an international, legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, has begun (INC 5.2). Here in Geneva, Switzerland, from August 5 to August 14, delegations from more than 180 countries are meeting to stake out their positions. At the center of the talks is the draft text, prepared by the INC-Chair Ambassador, the Ecuadorian diplomat Luis Vayas Valdivieso. The draft includes proposals on production limits, regulation of chemicals, product design, financing, and measures to address plastic waste and plastic pollution in the (marine) environment. The draft is being discussed with the aim of consolidating a final treaty text that all delegations can endorse.

The first week of the Negotiations has passed. On Saturday, August 9, following the opening of the session on August 5, the second plenary meeting was held. Here, an assembled text reflecting the progress was presented. This text now serves as the basis for further negotiations in the second week.

So far, progress has been limited: while the assembled text is now on the table, key articles - especially those concerning the scope of the agreement, if to address the full life cycle of plastics or only the end-of-life stage - have not yet been addressed. In addition, delegations have submitted more than 1,400 proposed amendments to the assembled text.

The well-known divides between negotiating blocs persist and appear difficult to bridge. The High Ambition Coalition, now numbering over 100 countries, including the member states of the European Union, is calling for a legally binding and ambitious treaty. This should address the impacts of plastic pollution across the full life cycle, including the production of problematic plastic products and chemicals. On the other side stand the Like-Minded Countries, a group comprised largely of oil-producing states. They are pushing for an agreement limited to plastic waste management, viewing a broader treaty as a threat to their national industries. There are also negotiating blocs that represent the specific interests of small island developing states and certain regional groupings, such as the Asia-Pacific Group and the Group of Latin America and Caribbean Countries.

Representatives from Indigenous Peoples and waste pickers at the "Affected Groups Aligned for Justice" event.





While the delegations are still concerned with the fundamental issues mentioned above, others are concerned with the concrete protection of their habitats and livelihoods. Fittingly, the stocktaking day fell on August 9 - the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, as the INC Chair recalled during the plenary session and which was commemorated on the sidelines of the negotiations. A number of states, particularly (but not exclusively) from Latin America, have been advocating within the negotiations for the rights of Indigenous Peoples. Various Indigenous representatives have been engaged in the INC process since it began in Uruguay in 2022. Indigenous Peoples are often disproportionately affected by plastic pollution. Many live in ecologically sensitive regions such as coasts, islands, Arctic areas, or tropical rainforests, environments that are frequently transit or end points for plastic pollution. This vulnerability is compounded by the limited political influence many Indigenous Peoples have in national and international decision-making, leaving their interests often insufficiently addressed in plastic pollution governance. At least in Geneva, they are present—and in some cases heard. Time will tell how strongly their voices resonate.

It remains possible that the negotiations will again be extended. A wide range of interests and, in some cases, diametrically opposed positions must be reconciled - and in very little time. When delegates, after long and exhausting days, manage to huddle together. to find a way out of an impasse, applause from the observers fills the room. And that brings hope.

