

*“Support for the development of a plastic waste flows inventory in Latin America and the Caribbean (Bolivia, Ecuador, and Suriname)”*

Thursday, 1 May 2025

**Summary:**

The discussion centered on the development of a plastic waste flows inventory for Suriname, with a focus on enhancing the existing toolkit and addressing gaps in data collection. Halina Shyla outlined the project's objectives, emphasizing the importance of stakeholder engagement and the need for updated information on plastic waste management. Alberto Santos Capra highlighted the significance of sharing past activities and identifying missing data, while Vanessa Forti confirmed the development of an updated tool that includes additional products and addresses previous shortcomings.

The team proposed several updates to the inventory, including extending the dataset to cover years prior to 2013 and estimating plastic embedded in e-waste. Lalieta Somwaru stressed the importance of understanding the complete flows of plastic waste, including both formal and informal sector management. Challenges in obtaining data from local producers were discussed, with suggestions to involve the Ministry of Economic Affairs to facilitate data sharing. The group agreed on an initial approach of reaching out to stakeholders for approximations, which could aid in making informed estimates despite the complexities introduced by privacy concerns and the informal sector's dominance.

Strategies for engaging stakeholders and collecting relevant data were also a key focus. Lalieta pointed out the limited resources of the ministry and the necessity for their endorsement of the stakeholder list to ensure comprehensive data collection. The team agreed on the importance of targeted interviews to minimize stakeholder fatigue and enhance data collection effectiveness. They also discussed the operational capacity of recycling companies and the challenges faced in collecting plastic waste, with Vanessa proposing the incorporation of indicators on waste generation, collection, and recycling to provide a clearer picture for stakeholders.

**Topics:**

Discussion on Plastic Waste Inventory Development for Suriname

Halina Shyla outlined the objectives of the meeting, which included discussing the project goals and introducing updates to the plastic toolkit. Alberto Santos Capra noted the necessity of addressing gaps in information to enhance the plastic waste inventory. The meeting aimed to facilitate stakeholder engagement and plan future activities.

Updates on Plastic Waste Flows Inventory Project in Suriname

Halina Shyla led a discussion on past projects in Suriname, during which Alberto Santos Capra expressed concerns about the Secretary of State's lack of awareness regarding recent updates. Vanessa Forti clarified that an updated tool has been created to address previous gaps and better meet the needs of the participating countries. They agreed to communicate these updates internally and consider sharing the presentation with relevant stakeholders.

Proposals for Updating Plastic Waste Inventory in Suriname

Halina Shyla presented proposals to enhance the plastic waste inventory, suggesting updates to data and the inclusion of e-waste estimates. Vanessa Forti stressed the importance of assessing plastic waste flows, while Lalieta Somwaru noted the need for accurate data on recycling and the challenges faced in gathering information from local plastic producers. Lalieta also mentioned the potential use of primary polymer data to address data gaps.

- \* Strategies for improving data collection on plastic waste management.
- \* Recommendations for enhancing the plastic waste inventory based on stakeholder feedback.
- \* Challenges faced in obtaining data from local plastic producers.

#### Data Sharing Challenges in Plastic Waste Inventory Development

Alberto Santos Capra and Lalieta Somwaru addressed the challenge of acquiring data from stakeholders, noting that producers are often reluctant to share information due to privacy concerns. They suggested involving the Ministry of Economic Affairs to encourage data sharing and acknowledged the significant role of the informal sector in plastic production. Lalieta emphasized the sensitivity of the situation and the need for a strategic approach to engage stakeholders.

#### Discussion on Plastic Waste Inventory Recommendations

Lalieta Somwaru emphasized the importance of distinguishing between hazardous and non-hazardous plastics for compliance with the Basel Convention and mentioned the unique consumption patterns in the Caribbean. Vanessa Forti supported the idea of a survey to assess product lifetimes, although she cautioned that changes in lifetime data may not significantly affect overall plastic waste quantification. Halina Shyla discussed the feasibility of including additional polymer types in the inventory, specifically polycarbonate, if reliable data can be obtained.

#### Discussion on Hazardous and Non-Hazardous Polymer Classification

Halina inquired about the classification of polymers into hazardous and non-hazardous categories. Vanessa explained that the current coding system is not designed to reflect hazardousness accurately and highlighted that countries often have differing definitions of what constitutes hazardous waste. She suggested that the presence of brominated flame retardants in plastics could be a potential indicator of hazardousness.

#### Stakeholder Engagement and Data Collection Strategies

The team, including Halina, Lalieta, and Alberto, focused on the necessity of engaging with the ministry to classify plastic waste and gather relevant data. Lalieta noted that the ministry relies on existing research and that they have a stakeholder mapping in place. They agreed on the importance of creating a stakeholder list to streamline data collection and avoid redundancy in interviews.

- \* Stakeholder engagement and mapping for the project.

#### Discussion on Plastic Waste Management in Suriname

Halina Shyla asked for updates on the plastic waste management system in Suriname, and Lalieta Somwaru confirmed that the initial research has been completed. They noted that while recycling companies have the capacity to process more plastic waste, challenges in waste

collection persist due to the country's geography. Vanessa Forti suggested adding indicators on waste collection and recycling to better inform stakeholders.

**Action Items:**

- \* Alberto Santos Capra will send the meeting outcomes.
- \* UNITAR will notify the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (BRS) of the release of its updated Toolkit for 2025. This Toolkit aims to support Parties in enhancing their implementation and compliance with the conventions.
- \* Halina SHYLA will consider adding more polymer types to the toolkit if reliable information is obtained.
- \* Lalieta Somwaru will share the stakeholder list with the ministries for endorsement.
- \* Lalieta Somwaru will provide additional information regarding plastic waste management and waste handling.
- \* Lalieta Somwaru will contact the Ministry of Economic Affairs to discuss the data sharing regarding local plastic producers.

**Key Questions:**

- \* What are the specific gaps in the current plastic waste inventory that need to be addressed?
- \* What specific improvements can be made to the plastic toolkit based on stakeholder feedback?
- \* How can the project address the challenges of collecting plastic waste data in Suriname?