

Support the development of a plastic inventory of Plastic Waste Flows in Latin America and the Caribbean (Bolivia, Ecuador, and Suriname)

BOLIVIA

Period	April 2025 – April 2026
Project partners	Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (BRS) Basel Convention Regional Center for Training and Technology Transfer for the South American Region (BCRC Argentina) United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

Project at a Glance

Plastic waste is one of today's biggest environmental challenges. Effective management requires reliable information on plastic flows across the entire lifecycle, including plastic placed on the market (POM), waste generation, waste management practices, transboundary movements of plastic waste and unmanaged or unknown waste flows.

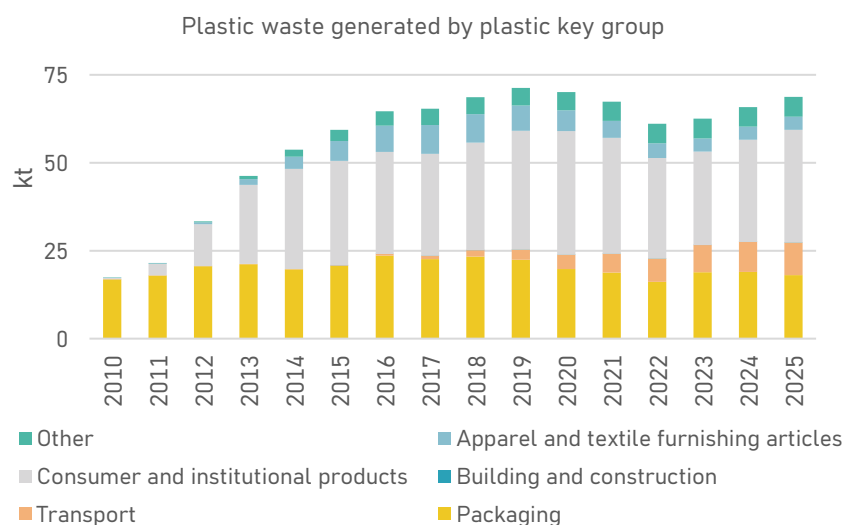
Through the development of a national plastic waste inventory, estimates of plastic POM and plastic waste generation were produced, while data on plastic waste management, imports and exports of plastic waste were compiled and analysed. The project also strengthened national capacities for data collection, analysis, and long-term monitoring of plastic flows.

Key areas covered by the inventory

- Plastic placed on the market (POM)
- Plastic waste generated
- Plastic waste formally collected and recycled
- Imports and exports of plastic waste

Key achievements

- Plastic placed on the market (POM) was estimated using international trade statistics, with annual plastic POM ranging between approximately 60 and 90 thousand tonnes during 2010–2025, providing the first overview of plastic consumption patterns in Bolivia.
- Plastic waste generation was estimated using the Product Lifetime Methodology, resulting in an estimated 68.7 thousand tonnes of plastic waste generated in 2025. The consumer and



institutional products group was identified as the largest contributor to plastic waste generation, accounting for 46.7% (32.1 kt) of the total plastic waste generated, followed by the packaging group, which accounted for 26.3% (18.1 kt).

- An alternative approach based on per capita plastic waste generation was developed and applied to benchmark the Product Lifetime Methodology results. The comparison highlighted the importance of incorporating domestic production data to improve future estimates.
- Polyethylene (PE) and polypropylene (PP) were identified as the dominant polymers in the waste stream, providing useful information for future recycling and waste management strategies.
- Available information on waste collection, recycling, and plastic waste trade was compiled and analysed, highlighting the important role of the informal sector in material recovery and the limited availability of official data on plastic waste management. Available data indicate that municipal waste collection services covered approximately 74% of the population in 2022, while overall recycling rates remained low, with around 4% of municipal solid waste recycled nationwide.
- Plastic waste trade was analysed, highlighting higher export than import volumes and a gradual decline in plastic waste exports, which ranged between approximately 673 and 1,776 tonnes in recent years.
- The project strengthened collaboration among national institutions and stakeholders and provided a foundation for improving plastic waste statistics, data collection, and long-term monitoring of plastic flows.
- An initial national plastic waste inventory and a roadmap for strengthening plastic waste statistics and monitoring systems were developed, supporting future refinement of plastic flow estimates and evidence-based policymaking.

Plastic waste generated by polymer type in 2025

