

Leading global organisations unite on framework to fight plastic pollution

LONDON, GREATER LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, November 10, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Ahead of the UN's Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-3) meeting next week, leading global corporations and NGOs have announced a new unified methodology to address global plastic pollution.

The Plastic Footprint Network (PFN) has worked to establish the methodology for conducting plastic footprint assessments, akin to the framework global organisations currently employ to assess and reduce their carbon footprint.

The new methodology will support global organisations in accurately measuring the environmental impact of their plastic use.

PFN was convened in 2022 by Swiss research-consultancy EA - Earth Action to unite global efforts around the development of a single, science-based framework for measuring and mitigating plastic pollution.

The network is made up of 35 global organisations including EA Earth Action, South Pole, WBCSD, GPAP (Global Plastic Action Partnership) and WWF.

Plastic footprint measurement refers to the process of evaluating the effect that the plastic generated by an individual, organisation, community or country has on the environment.

The assessment methodology is similar to the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, which provides the world's most widely used greenhouse gas accounting standards for organisations, governments and NGOs.

The methodology accurately assesses plastic leakage, which is the amount of plastic released into the environment, and covers both macro- and micro-plastics. It can also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of any given solution, so that any investment in plastic mitigation can be outcome-based.

The Network, led by EA Earth Action, developed the updated and harmonised methodology by working with a scientific committee made of experts and academics, ensuring the latest science and data is integrated into the PFN framework.

The new methodology has been released before international negotiators meet in Nairobi, Kenya where they will continue developing a landmark international, legally-binding instrument to mitigate plastic pollution (INC-3).

The requirements set out in the UNEP zero draft of the plastics treaty incorporate the necessity of robust reporting to “ensure mandatory disclosures from businesses, including the financial sector, on their activities and financial flows from all sources related to plastic pollution and related sustainable finance practices”.

Mandatory disclosure from industry is one of two options in the zero draft¹, with Option 2 putting reporting in the hands of a “governing body” who will “evaluate the effectiveness of this instrument” and “decide upon the timing and format of the reporting to be followed by the parties, taking into account the desirability of coordinating reporting with relevant international instruments and organisations.”

The Plastic Footprint Network is urging for mandatory disclosure to be incorporated, centralised through the proposed UN Treaty, whilst standardising what will be disclosed via plastic footprinting.

The network has also published its Vision Statement which sets out how it envisages developing further plastic pollution target setting aligned to the UN Treaty and mitigation actions led by best-in-class science.

Sarah Perreard, Co-CEO, EA Earth Action & Plastic Footprint Network said: “If we are to turn the tide of plastic pollution, both industry and government must fully address their plastic footprint. This methodology provides direction to ensure companies are empowered to understand the plastic leakage in their supply chains and take action.”

“I now urge the delegates present at negotiations in Nairobi to take note of what has worked when standardising carbon footprint measurements, and ensure that true and lasting plastic pollution mitigation is delivered, while supporting a transition to circular models for global plastic use. This will help deliver a global framework that tackles plastic pollution at every stage of its lifecycle and steer the World away from the current crisis we experience.”

John Duncan, Global Initiative Lead, WWF said: “In the midst of a plastic pollution crisis, both industry and government action must be accelerated. For this change to occur at the rate which is required, robust corporate accountability measures and global targets founded in harmonised and transparent measurement are urgently needed. The Global Plastics Treaty presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to build agreement on these elements.”

Oliver Tanquary, Associate Director, Ocean Health, CDP: “It takes significant work to build a robust, consistent and credible framework for corporate reporting, as CDP has learned in its

decades of experience in this space.”

“CDP congratulates the Plastic Footprint Network for its collaborative efforts to establish a methodology for plastic footprint calculation and to identify key elements for a corporate accountability framework, both of which will be central to the implementation and monitoring of an effective Global Plastics Treaty. CDP will engage proactively with the network to bring its disclosure-specific expertise to the process, and will advocate for alignment, collaboration and simplification of initiatives working in this space.”

Full Methodology can be viewed here: <https://www.plasticfootprint.earth/assessment-methodology/>

For more information on EA Earth Action, please visit: <https://www.e-a.earth/>

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