

Policy Priorities to Address Plastic Pollution

Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastics (INC)

Faith Groups at INC 5.2

As people of faith and Indigenous spiritual traditions, we urge delegates to adopt a legally binding global plastics treaty that addresses the full life cycle of plastics, from production to remediation. Our traditions teach us to honour creation, protect the vulnerable, and ensure justice for present and future generations.

Plastic pollution is not only an ecological crisis—it is a spiritual and moral one. It poisons lands and waters, harms health, and disproportionately burdens low-income communities, waste pickers, Small Island Developing States, and Indigenous Peoples.

We must act decisively.

The treaty must include:

Cap and Reduce Plastic Production

Reducing plastic pollution begins with stopping it at its source. Limit plastic at its source to reduce production by at least 75% (from 2019 levels). Unchecked growth locks in climate damage and environmental injustice.

“All that exists in this creation belongs to the Creator.

Take only what you need, and do not waste”

Qur'an 6:141 (Islam)

Eliminate Single-Use and Harmful Plastics

Phasing out single-use plastics and the most harmful plastic products is equally vital. Promote systems of refill, reuse and community-led innovation, honoring values of simplicity and responsibility.

“You shall not pollute the land in which you live”

Numbers 35:33, Hebrew Bible (Judaism)

Fund Waste Management and Legacy Clean Up

Repairing past damage and preventing further harm is a moral obligation. A dedicated global fund must restore ecosystems and clean up legacy plastic waste, prioritizing vulnerable nations and communities.

“The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it”

Psalms 24:1, Christian Bible (Christian)

Invest in Circular and Reuse Systems

The treaty must enable systems that allow all life to flourish within ecological limits. National targets for reuse, Extended Producer Responsibility schemes, and Deposit Return Systems should shift responsibility from consumers to producers.

“Do not waste water, even if you perform your ablution on the banks of an abundantly-flowing river.”

Sunan Ibn Majah 425, Hadith (Islam)

End Subsidies that Fuel Plastic Production

True change requires ending financial incentives that support virgin plastic and fossil fuels. Redirected subsidies must fund innovation, justice, and sustainable development.

“Wealth, if used selfishly, brings ruin.”

Chandogya Upanishad 7.23 (Hinduism)

Guarantee a Just Transition for Workers and Communities

A just transition must ensure workers, waste pickers, Indigenous Peoples, and frontline communities are recognized and supported as leaders in a low-carbon, zero-waste future.

“When you look after the welfare of others, you are fulfilling your dharma”

Bhagavad Gita 3.20 (Hinduism)

Create Fair and Predictable Financing

A global financing mechanism must provide accessible, equitable resources for treaty implementation, especially in the most impacted countries.

“Give what is due to the poor as if repaying a debt.”

Talmud, Ketubot 50a (Judaism)

Ensure Inclusive and Transparent Governance

Integrity requires that civil society, Indigenous Peoples, and impacted communities be meaningfully included in treaty governance. Strict safeguards must limit industry interference.

“May all beings be happy; may all be free from illness; may all see what is auspicious.”

Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra, Rig Veda (Hinduism)

A Moral and Spiritual Imperative

This is more than a technical exercise; it is a spiritual test. The decisions made today will shape the Earth for generations. We call on negotiators to choose courage over convenience, justice over profit, and life over pollution.

We close with a prayer for wisdom, justice, and the collective protection of our common home.

We urge negotiators to act with courage, compassion, and a commitment to justice, choosing creation over convenience, justice over profit, and the well-being of all life over short-term interests.