Why the Zero Draft of the UN Plastics Treaty Should Deal with Tobacco’s Toxic Plastics

SUMMARY

The cigarette kills up to half its consumers, and the cigarette filter found on almost all commercial cigarettes does not provide a single health benefit. Governments around the world address tobacco products and tobacco producers with evidence-based regulations aiming to reduce tobacco use.

The cigarette filter actually poses a significant threat to both human and environmental health. The dominant type of filter is made of 12,000-15,000 cellulose acetate strands. These can produce minute plastic fibers that are then inhaled and have been found in deceased smokers’ lungs. While smokers believe that these plastic attachments can filter out tobacco toxins and nicotine, cigarette smoking continues to cause cancer, cardiovascular disease, and pulmonary disease, despite 60 years of filtered cigarette smoking. In fact, filtered cigarette smoking has been linked to a more aggressive form of lung cancer. The tobacco industry knows that the design of the cigarette filter is deceptive and defective, and yet continues to market this feature to attract young smokers as well as sustain smoking among already addicted smokers.

The World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) provides obligations and guidance for governments to counter tobacco industry tactics with evidence-based tobacco control measures. These include, among others, advertising and sponsorship bans (including so-called corporate social responsibility efforts by tobacco companies), product regulation, taxation policies, assigning liability for harms, and preventing conflicts of interest in policy development and implementation.

Because more than 180 parties to the WHO FCTC recognize that the tobacco product is unique in nature, i.e., it kills up to half of its users while providing no health benefit, they are subject to a set of distinct rules, and thus, tobacco would arguably deserve a specific consideration in the Zero Draft of the Plastics Treaty. The draft should consider these issues:
1. Cigarette filters are avoidable and problematic plastics that should be banned.

Cigarette butts comprise between 5-9% of aquatic trash. Cigarette butts continue to be the most littered item collected in urban and beach clean-ups for decades, despite industry-led clean-up campaigns. Discarded cigarette butts release thousands of microplastic fibers into aquatic environments. Most smokers do not realize that filters are made of non-biodegradable plastic and that these do not protect them from the devastating effects of tobacco use. Notably, unfiltered cigarettes continue to be marketed and used but smokers find filtered cigarettes more appealing.

2. Cigarette butts should be classified as hazardous plastic waste that requires special handling, taking into account the chemicals of concern that are attached to the filters.

Cigarette butts contain hazardous chemicals which, according to European Union (EU) Single-Use Plastics (SUPs) Directive, should lead to their classification as hazardous waste. Cigarette butts leach out chemicals such as nicotine, tobacco-specific carcinogens, and metals that pollute aquatic environments. Cigarette butt leachates have been shown in laboratory studies to be toxic to microorganisms, plants, invertebrates, and vertebrates. The leachates could kill marine life and affect reproduction in a short period of time. The rate of toxic contamination is high, in both landfills and in the aquatic environment.

3. Cigarette filters cannot be part of a circular economy.

Due to the toxic nature of cigarette butts and the trillions discarded into the environment each year, collecting cigarette butt waste to recycle is not likely to reduce the overall burden of this waste. Removal of toxins from smoked filters is a resource/energy-intensive process that has not been studied as to safety and efficacy. Recycling efforts are not likely to be scalable due to the intensity of efforts needed to collect, separate, transport, and detoxify them for use in other consumer products. Further, changes in the cigarette filter design (e.g., leading to easier recyclability) would contravene product regulations that prevent the tobacco industry from introducing attractive design features. The tobacco industry has fraudulently marketed filters for decades and has continuously undermined bans on marketing and sponsorship, including tobacco’s corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, contravening Article 5.3 and Article 13 of the WHO FCTC. A re-designed filter marketed as eco-friendly and will likely allow smokers to discard ‘biodegradable’ cigarettes with less guilt.

4. Cigarette filter alternatives or substitutes should not be encouraged because there is no evidence that such alternatives will be environmentally safer or less hazardous to health than cellulose acetate filters.

Substitutes for plastic cigarette filters, such as ‘biodegradable’ filters, will still leach out hazardous chemicals. The tobacco industry has started shifting market ‘biodegradable’ filters to project a positive image and potentially, to escape responsibility for the growing problem of tobacco product waste. However, any change in the cigarette filter design could be used to market the product as safe and to encourage uptake, including among the youth. Biodegradable filters would again confront regulatory agencies with a re-design that would not have any public health benefit; it would be used to sustain tobacco sales and contravene marketing bans (WHO FCTC Article 13).
5. The Tobacco Industry should not be treated as a “stakeholder” or “responsible producer” but should be made to pay for the pollution.

The tobacco industry does not contribute positive benefits to society or to the global economy. It violates human rights and undermines the achievement of over a dozen of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Based on obligations under Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC, Parties should not partner with the tobacco industry in considering public health or environmental policies. More than 70 countries already ban all forms of tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorships (TAPS) including so-called CSR. Recognizing the tobacco industry as stakeholders or responsible producers under Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes undermines tobacco CSR restrictions as well as WHO FCTC Article 5.3 policies.

BACKGROUND

At the second session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-2) to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, held in Paris in June 2023, delegates tackled several key elements of the future instrument. The WHO FCTC was mentioned for the first time since the negotiations started,[1] but it was referred to only as one of the many multilateral agreements that the UN plastics treaty needs to be integrated with, primarily to avoid duplication.[2] No further details were discussed.

The third session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-3) should consider “integrating” or even merely aligning the future UN plastics treaty with the WHO FCTC, which will require significant technical consideration. The tobacco industry’s toxic plastics are no ordinary plastics because the tobacco industry and its main product, the cigarette, kill up to half its consumers without providing a single health benefit.[3] Both the product and the producer are covered by strict, all-encompassing, evidence-based regulations across the world.[4] If the currently proposed elements of the UN plastics treaty, continue to omit to recognize special rules for tobacco, the implementation of tobacco control measures could potentially be undermined, thereby increasing public health risks[5] (see Annex I: Core Obligations of Proposed ‘Options’ and their Implications on Tobacco Control).

Cigarette filters are avoidable and problematic plastics that should be banned.

Deadly Plastic Accessory

The cigarette filter is an accessory designed to make smoking more appealing by creating the illusion that toxins are being filtered out. This gives an impression of increased safety thereby making the product more attractive to potential and current users.[6] Unknown to most people,[7] cigarette filters have no proven ability to make cigarettes safer[8] and have been linked to a more aggressive form of lung cancer.[9] In a small trial, smokers found unfiltered cigarettes less desirable and smoked less, and a larger trial is underway to prove the potential public health impact of a ban on filters altogether.[10]
Notably, a cigarette can function without a filter, and this is also true for cigars and roll-your-own tobacco products currently in the market. In some jurisdictions, “unfiltered” cigarettes continue to be marketed. Research shows that as smokers transitioned from unfiltered to filtered cigarettes, the risk for adenocarcinoma increased around 4 to 10-fold due to cigarette design (especially filter) and the corresponding smoking behavior.[12,13]

Cellulose acetate, one of the main components of cigarette butts, is considered a macro plastic that easily breaks down into smaller fibers during use and disposal.[14] A single cigarette filter has 12,000–15,000 cellulose acetate strands and releases approximately 100 cellulose acetate fibers a day when discarded as a cigarette butt. In addition, fibers may be inhaled by smokers during use.[15] Notably, plastic fibers have been observed in deceased smokers' lungs.[16]

**Deceptive and Defective**

The tobacco industry initially invested in efforts to use the filter to make cigarettes appear safer (i.e., reduce health harm) but abandoned this idea because filtering out important components, such as nicotine and flavors, would defeat its objective of making cigarettes more attractive and/or addictive.[17] The tobacco industry has continued to innovate filter designs to market the product to young people by adding flavors, capsules,[18] colors,[19] and chemicals that would allow the filter to stain when used to give the impression that toxins are filtered out.[20]

**Ubiquitous**

Based on reports analyzing litter composition in rivers and seas, cigarette butts comprise 5-9%,[21,22] of aquatic trash. Butts have also been identified as one of the most common plastic items (29%) that are floating in harbors[23] and that sink in the seabed (5.14%).[24] Notably, cigarette butts have consistently remained on top of the list of plastic items in total debris collected (33%) in beach clean-ups,[25,26] as well as in municipal litter collection.[27] The tobacco industry has supported such clean-ups as part of its ‘greenwashing’ efforts (see Table 1).[28] A typical filter releases approximately 100 microfibers a day (less than 0.2 mm in size), and an estimated 0.3 million tons of cellulose acetate filters are disposed of annually across the globe.

Although there is a major global health effort to reduce the health consequences of tobacco use,[29] cigarette production is on an upward trend,[30] and there is no evidence that the downstream efforts of cleanup, public information campaigns, or anti-littering laws have reduced the annual environmental burden of tobacco product waste.[31,32]

**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **Impose an immediate ban on cigarette filters.**

The WHO, civil society groups,[33,34] and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF)[35] have called for an immediate ban,[36] not a phase-out, on plastic cigarette filters, placing cigarette filters in the high-risk plastics category.[37] Despite the special provisions for tobacco products in the EU Single-Use Plastics (SUP) Directive, advocates from France,[38] Denmark[39] Canada as well as government support from the Superior Health Council Belgium[40] and a Netherlands minister[41] analyzed the shortcomings of current interventions and still call for an EU-wide ban on filters.[42]
A ban would end the decades-long fraud perpetuated by the tobacco industry to represent filters as a “harm reduction” tool;[43] this exposure and accountability could reduce the tobacco industry’s ability to innovate products at the expense of human[44] and environmental health.[45] This measure would immediately remove a major source of toxic plastics from our environment.[46] Notably, it could also have a significant impact on discouraging consumption,[47] since smokers smoked more filtered cigarettes than unfiltered cigarettes (due to the reduced harshness)[48] and to compensate for the nicotine requirement. Furthermore, as early as 1989, it was suggested that compensatory behavior (increasing the number of cigarettes smoked per day) to satisfy nicotine requirements after switching to filtered cigarettes is an important risk factor for lung cancer.[49] Because the tobacco industry has changed the cigarette composition as part of the shift toward filtered cigarettes,[50] it must also be held strictly liable for updating the constituents, ensuring that the cigarette will be reconstituted to offset the toxic constituents added[51] during the shift from unfiltered to filtered cigarettes.

Science has established the myriad harms caused by cigarettes. Cigarette filters are an accessory to a product that adds no value to the economy or society.[52] They represent a serious design flaw distorted to give a false sense of safety to consumers, a fraud perpetuated by the tobacco industry.[53] Delaying action, such as waiting to agree on an annexed list of plastic products to be banned (as proposed by some delegates at the INC-2), or even “phasing out” filters[54] would unnecessarily prolong the cigarette filters’ adverse impacts on the health and environmental rights of people.

2. **Cigarette butts should be classified as hazardous plastic waste that require special handling, taking into account the chemicals of concern that attach to the filters.**

Cigarette butts contain hazardous chemicals which, according to EU legislation, should lead to their classification as hazardous waste.[66] Cigarette butts are extremely toxic[67],[68] to plants, cells, nervous systems, larvae and genes, and has carcinogenic constituents (i.e., phytotoxic[69], cytotoxic[70], neurotoxic[71], genotoxic[72], mutagenic,[73] teratogenic[74] carcinogenic[75]). This is true for a wide range of organisms including the most resilient and tolerant forms[76] (e.g., Silver fish, clawed frog, Catfish, snails, amoeba[77], shrimp[78]), increasing mortality with extended exposure; with smoked filters containing tobacco remnants being more toxic than those without.[79],[80] Even a small amount of cigarette butts was sufficient to affect reproduction in the case of copepods, a key food source of fishes.[81]
Both the loose microfibers and chemicals in cigarette filters were found to be teratogenic\(^\text{[82]}\) such that cigarette butts are recommended to be used as toxic pesticides to kill mosquito larvae.\(^\text{[83]}\) Laboratory-based studies show that cigarette butts can kill marine life in a short period of time.\(^\text{[84]}\) In most cases, the experiments lasted no more than 2-10 days before the lifeforms died. In one study, as little as five cigarette butts in a liter of water killed snails in two hours.\(^\text{[85]}\)

**Contamination:**

Because of cigarette butt size and the littering behavior that comes with the product design, cigarette butts are one of the most littered items that find their way into the environment.\(^\text{[86]}\) The toxicity of cigarette butts suggests that the risk of contamination through leachates is high.\(^\text{[87]}\) For instance, a study showed that a 1% mass of cigarette butts added to landfill waste increases its heavy metal contamination by 5%.\(^\text{[88]}\) This is aggravated by the fact that nano plastics are easily absorbed by cigarette butts.\(^\text{[89]}\) The rate of contamination is also rapid; one cigarette butt can contaminate a liter of water with nicotine to levels that would be toxic to microorganisms.\(^\text{[90]}\)

There is also evidence for bioaccumulation in fish\(^\text{[91]}\) and shellfish\(^\text{[92]}\) that may allow entry of chemicals and metals into the human food chain.\(^\text{[93]}\) Accidental ingestion of cigarette butts by humans and animals has resulted in toxicity.\(^\text{[94]}\)

An estimate of USD 20 billion conservatively accounts for the loss of ecosystem services annually\(^\text{[95]}\) due to the plastic nature of cigarette butts and does not include costs of accelerated/ aggravated harm to the ecosystem due to the toxicity of cigarette butts.\(^\text{[96]}\)

**Litter Problem:**

Experts looking into tobacco industry documents revealed that decades of anti-littering programs have not worked because smokers are wired to litter and are not amenable to anti-littering efforts.\(^\text{[97]}\) Due to the high rate of littering, cigarette butts are not easily collected, requiring additional litter management costs,\(^\text{[98]}\) such as in New York and San Francisco.\(^\text{[99]}\),\(^\text{[100]}\) In the absence of litter management capacity, cigarette butts remain in the environment, in the storm drains, streets, and around litter sites,\(^\text{[101]}\) continuing to release toxins and microplastics to the environment, contaminating air, water, and soil.\(^\text{[102]}\) This is further aggravated by the need to manage rising e-cigarette litter.\(^\text{[103]}\)

An estimate of USD 1 billion accounts for the waste management of cigarette butts annually excluding litter management which is far more substantial than waste management costs.\(^\text{[104]}\),\(^\text{[105]}\)

**Incineration of Seized (smuggled) cigarettes:**

Recent years have seen an increased focus on international cooperation to eliminate the illicit trade of cigarettes.\(^\text{[106]}\) As law enforcement efforts ramp up to clamp down on the illicit trade of cigarettes, the volume of seized cigarettes to be destroyed is expected to increase. Destruction of seized goods, whether by incineration or landfill, in an environmentally sound manner is an ongoing struggle, more so for hazardous materials.\(^\text{[107]}\)
RECOMMENDATION:

Any plastics policy must have provisions to deal with toxic plastic waste as these should deserve special handling and treatment.[108] This would entail the following actions for cigarette butts:

- Immediately ban cigarette filters and treat existing cigarette butts as a specific type of hazardous municipal waste requiring special waste management treatment.[109]

- Isolate legacy cigarette butts and immediately treat/ process them to prevent further contamination. [110]

- Increase tobacco taxes and other fees to pay for the special collection and treatment of current and legacy hazardous waste.[111]

- Develop policies that would enable early and easy recovery of the costs of harm from the tobacco industry.[112]

3. Cigarette filters cannot be part of a circular economy.

Recycling Challenges

For cigarette butts, there had been various recycling efforts to produce outputs for the construction, cosmetics, energy, agriculture, medical, paper, and other industries; but there are significant challenges in finding sustainable approaches due to the toxic nature of the material and the limitation of the goods produced.[113] Additionally, the way cigarette butts are littered has turned them into one of the most difficult items to collect for large-scale economically-viable recycling.[114]

Removal of Toxins Not Guaranteed

Removing toxins from hazardous material is a very tedious, resource-intensive process.[115] Because of the numerous chemicals and heavy metals found in cigarette butts, it is a challenge to ensure that each of the toxic constituents is safely removed during the waste treatment. Pyrolysis is capital and energy intensive.[116],[117] UV rays would not remove chemicals and metals.[118] Notably, many in the business of recycling cigarette butts do not disclose the treatment process.[119]

Recycling Successes are not likely Scalable

There appears to be some success in isolating and encapsulating the cigarette butt depending on what is used to encapsulate but it is not clear if a leakage is possible in the long run.[120] There also appears to be some progress in transforming cigarette butts into carbon powder but the process is highly resource-intensive (e.g. carbonization at 800 degrees for 2 hours in a furnace.[121] There is very little likelihood that these would be feasible or scalable in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) where most of the cigarette butts are littered.[122]
**Circular Economy is not designed for Tobacco**

The WHO FCTC obliges Parties to ban all forms of tobacco advertising including so-called CSR of the tobacco industry. WHO FCTC Article 5.3 specifically calls for the denormalization of tobacco CSR. Notably, the industry is using the “recycling approach” and clean-up programs as a CSR strategy to diminish the implementation of WHO FCTC (see Table 1: Examples of Tobacco Industry’s CSR Activities on Clean up and Butt Collection Programs, along with Government partnerships/ engagements, as reported by civil society via the Global Tobacco Industry Interference Index, 2023).[123]

Even assuming for the sake of argument, that recycling can become safe and scalable, the tobacco industry designed cigarette filters in a manner that defrauded consumers for decades, while continuously undermining bans on marketing and sponsorship, especially tobacco’s CSR activities[125] in contravention of articles 5.3 and 13 of the WHO FCTC. Hence, it cannot be trusted to redesign its product for circularity.

Further, there is no logical model of a circular economy for tobacco because the plastics involved are a flawed hazardous accessory to a fundamentally lethal product, designed to kill up to half its users while providing no benefit to society.[3] The policy direction is to practically ban the product itself as well as its accessories, not encourage its further use or circulation in the economy. Any changes in the cigarette filter design (e.g., leading to easier recyclability) would also contravene product regulations that prevent the industry from introducing attractive design features.

Notably, even the center that produced the most influential technical reports on circularity skipped any mention of cigarette butts in its reports;[124] despite the fact that butts are some of the top plastic items polluting the earth and marine life,[125] and that the center is affiliated with tobacco industry consultants. [126]

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The future instrument should recognize that a circular economy for cigarette butt/ tobacco industry is not feasible. In practice:

- Existing cigarette butts should be treated as hazardous waste and isolated or encapsulated
- Governments must prohibit the circulation of products made from recycled cigarette butts in order to prevent contamination[127]
- Governments should focus their efforts on banning cigarette butts altogether instead of recycling.[128]

**4. Cigarette butt alternatives or substitutes should not be encouraged because in no instance, can they be safe for the environment or public health.**

**No Safe Alternatives**

The biodegradability of a known non-plastic alternative, cellulose filter, may degrade faster than plastics (7.5-14 years in soil)[129] but could still take long (2.3-13 years), [130] during which toxic constituents continue.
to leach,[131] causing harm to the soil biosystem[132] as well as among marine invertebrates.[133] Some biodegradable filters are marketed as degrading quickly but the decomposition studies and the constituents are not disclosed,[134] making it impossible to verify the true extent of the environmental impact. Furthermore, smoked filters take longer to decompose[135] but some decomposition tests are done on filters prior to being smoked.[136],[137]

**Replacing with Alternatives Could Avoid Industry Liability**

The tobacco giant Philip Morris was seen to introduce legislation on biodegradable filters in Uruguay.[138] This is viewed as part of the tobacco industry’s greenwashing efforts.[139] Greenbutts, a biodegradable cigarette filter (biofilter) manufacturing company, has been approaching the industry to adopt its product.[140] The shift to an alternative that has not been proven safe could also benefit the industry not only by increasing marketing opportunities but also by allowing it to cover up its decades of deception,[141] consequently, enabling the industry to avoid liability for the health and environmental harms caused by a deliberately flawed product feature.[142]

**Biodegradable or Other Alternatives Risk Undermining Tobacco Regulation**

Changes to the filter design could further generate misinformation that cigarettes can be safe.[143] The new feature would inevitably serve as a marketing tool, including among the youth,[144] and would undermine tobacco control measures (advertising and sponsorship bans) that are in place.[145] A re-designed filter marketed as eco-friendly will likely allow smokers to discard ‘biodegradable’ cigarettes with less guilt.[146]

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Although the general proposal to address plastics pollution is to consider safe alternatives, it bears stressing that there is no such thing as a safe alternative for cigarette butts. Even, assuming arguendo, that an eco-friendly filter can be designed, there is a risk that the same will be used as a marketing tactic to increase consumption and to avoid liability—thus undermining life-saving public health measures.

The future instrument on plastic pollution should recognize that over 180 Parties to the WHO FCTC will have to enforce tobacco marketing and sponsorship bans, hence the upcoming instrument should:

- Respect advertising bans by preventing the introduction of attractive features as mandated by Article 13 of the WHO FCTC.[147]
- Recognize efforts to hold the tobacco industry liable for its harms, including to the environment (Article 19 of the WHO FCTC).[148]
- Create an exception in the pursuit of “safe alternatives” by excluding this option for cigarette filters. [149]
5. The Tobacco Industry should not be treated as a “stakeholder” or “responsible producer” but should be made to pay for the pollution.

Unlike other industries, the tobacco industry does not positively contribute to society or the global economy. Tobacco consumption results in a negative net economic outcome, costing the world USD 1.4 trillion a year.[150] Because of the nature of its business, the tobacco industry violates human rights and undermines the achievement of over a dozen of the 17 SDGs.[151] The WHO FCTC classifies the tobacco industry as a “saboteur” and a “vector” of the tobacco epidemic. Hence, the tobacco industry is placed in a special category that is subjected to exclusions. Moreover, tobacco taxes are being imposed on tobacco to make up for its negative externalities but at levels that leave much to be desired.[152]

Prohibition on Partnerships with the Tobacco Industry (health)

Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC obliges Parties to protect public health policies from the commercial and vested interests of the tobacco industry.[153] Its guidelines provide that “the tobacco industry should not be a partner in any initiative linked to setting or implementing public health policies, given that its interests are in direct conflict with the goals of public health.”[154] Furthermore, so-called socially responsible activities of the tobacco industry should be denormalized.[155] As a result, the tobacco industry’s efforts to support or contribute to government initiatives invite suspicion, and result in rejection, especially in jurisdictions that fully comply with the WHO FCTC.[156]

Prohibition on the Tobacco industry’s so-called Socially Responsible Activities (Tobacco CSR)

So-called socially responsible activities of the tobacco industry fall under TAPS which are mandated to be prohibited under Article 13 of the WHO FCTC.[157] Over 70 countries already banned all forms of marketing by the tobacco industry, including so-called CSR.[158] Due to the fundamental conflict between tobacco industry interests and the interests of public health, there is an inherent contradiction between socially responsible activities and the tobacco industry.[159] In other words, the tobacco industry, which uses guile and deception to produce flawed products that kill, cannot be deemed capable of being a responsible producer.[160]

As stated previously, the tobacco industry’s CSR activities, such as clean-ups and anti-litter campaigns[161] are publicity efforts to shift public perception and engage the local officials, and these undermine tobacco regulations. For example, in Colombia and Costa Rica, Philip Morris is using two strategies called “Bogotá no es un cenicero”[162] and “Dale Rumbo a tus colillas”[163] respectively, in partnership with local authorities, to advertise its disposal and recycling programs; an example of how the industry can use CSR to attain a seat at the table with policymakers (See Table 1: Examples of Tobacco Industry’s CSR Activities on Clean up and Butt Collection Programs, along with Government partnerships/engagements, as reported by civil society via the Global Tobacco Industry Interference Index, 2023).[164] Tobacco CSR activities that are reported as part of ESG compliance for purposes of improving a corporation’s appeal to investors have attracted criticism.[165]

EPR schemes currently undertaken in line with plastics policies have been used by the tobacco industry to promote themselves in a positive light and to partner with governments, undermining tobacco CSR bans and conflict of interest rules in WHO FCTC Art 5.3 Guidelines.[166] EPR schemes appear to be misunderstood

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as part of a polluters pay principle when in reality, the amount charged to the tobacco producer does not sufficiently internalize the externalities and the labeling of “EPR” for the tobacco industry inadvertently acknowledges the tobacco producer as a stakeholder.

**General Prohibition on Engaging with the Tobacco Industry**

The tobacco industry, along with the arms industry, has long been recognized as actors whose functions are fundamentally inconsistent with human rights including the UN Human Rights Charter. The World Health Assembly (WHA) decided that the WHO shall not engage with the tobacco and arms industries. The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) adopted a resolution urging all UN Agencies to adopt a Model Policy for Agencies of the United Nations System on Preventing Tobacco Industry Interference. Many other UN Agencies such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), among others, have adopted special rules to prevent engagements and/or conflicts of interest with the tobacco industry.

**Exclusions in Economic Policies and Trade Laws**

The tobacco industry is also unique from an economic relations standpoint. Countries have also decided to exclude the tobacco industry from benefitting from trade and investment provisions in economic treaties. For instance, the tobacco sector is excluded in several bilateral and regional trade agreements. In the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), the tobacco industry was stripped of the default benefit of seeking recourse in an investor-state dispute settlement. In the U.S., government budget and personnel cannot be used to promote tobacco in foreign countries. In the UK, diplomatic officers must refrain from promoting the tobacco industry.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Policies purporting to advance human rights should not allow tobacco industry influence. According to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR), from a human rights policy, a conflict-of-interest policy would strengthen the plastics treaty and preserve the integrity of any policy in development. Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC is cited as a model that can be considered.

The future instrument would benefit from a clear governance policy to prevent conflict of interest in implementing the plastics policies. However, a far more specific approach should be applied to the tobacco industry in recognition of the rules that already exist.

This means the future instrument should adopt special rules to exclude the tobacco industry from being treated as a regular stakeholder.
Table 1: Examples of the Tobacco Industry’s CSR Activities on Clean up and Butt Collection Programs Reported by Civil Society

Source: Mary Assunta, Global Tobacco Industry Interference Index 2023, Global Center for Good Governance in Tobacco Control (GGTC), November 2023 (forthcoming publication)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Tobacco Company</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Government/ Local Community Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Japan Tobacco International (JTI)</td>
<td>Collection and recycling of cigarette butts as well as installation of collectors in 10 beaches and neighbourhoods of the city.</td>
<td>City of Florianópolis (Santa Catarina)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>Bulgarian Association of Tobacco Industry (BATI)</td>
<td>Cleaning of beaches and public spaces</td>
<td>Ministry of Environment and Water (MoEW)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Philip Morris International (PMI)</td>
<td>Collection of cigarette butts.</td>
<td>Special Administrative Unit of Public Services of Bogota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>PMI</td>
<td>Installing canisters in public places, and butts collected were supposedly for research on disposal</td>
<td>University of Costa Rica and local governments of Belén (Heredia) and Montes de Oca (San José)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Organization/Company</td>
<td>Activity Description</td>
<td>Responsible Party</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>PMI</td>
<td>Awareness campaign on correct disposal of cigarettes butts, with over 270,000 pocket butt holders distributed to smokers.</td>
<td>Ministry of Ecological Transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>KT&amp;G</td>
<td>Clean-up campaign, along with the installation of up to 33 cigarette butt bins in 23 public facilities.</td>
<td>Local government of Suwon City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Philip Morris Mexico</td>
<td>A nationwide campaign for: 1) collection of cigarette butts by volunteers 2) setting up cigarette bins in highly populated public spaces, 3) awareness campaign and piloting recycling.</td>
<td>Local communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Philip Morris Fortune Tobacco Corp</td>
<td>Collection of 57,000 cigarette butts for World Clean Up Day.</td>
<td>Local communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Tobacco Bureau (Mesa del Tabaco) sponsored by PMI, BAT, JTI, Altadis, others</td>
<td>Distribution of 4,500 portable ashtrays, 5,000 reusable ashtrays to clean up cigarette butts at the beach of Tarifa, as well as distribution of 5,000 paper bags for waste at the same beach.</td>
<td>Municipal government of Santiago de Compostela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Philip Morris Sweden</td>
<td>Greenwashing campaigns which include programs with children cleaning up cigarette butts.</td>
<td>Members of Parliament</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Switzerland | JTI, Swiss Cigarette | Environmental clean-up | Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN)
--- | --- | --- | ---
Switzerland | PMI Switzerland | Collection of 30,000 cigarette butts at the city of Lausanne | City of Lausanne

To learn more, please refer to the latest [Global Tobacco Industry Interference Index](https://www.ggtc.world).

**Acknowledgements and Authorship**

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## ANNEX 1:

### Core Obligations of Proposed ‘Options’ and their Implications on Tobacco Control

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Obligations</th>
<th>Implications on Tobacco Control</th>
<th>WHO FCTC Provisions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phasing out and/or reducing the supply of, demand for and use of primary plastic polymers. (e.g., global targets, trade restrictions, production moratorium, tracking, licensing)</td>
<td><strong>May be effective if substitutes are not allowed:</strong> The tobacco transnationals are promoting their shift to “recyclable plastic packaging” by 2025,[13] but have not tackled “recycled plastic/cellulose acetate”[14] used for its filters. Hence, reducing the use of primary plastic polymers or “virgin plastics” would be a positive step if the tobacco industry is not allowed to sidestep the ban by redesigning its filters with “recycled plastic.” Cigarettes with new features such as “recyclable filters” could be viewed as an attractive design feature that would sustain tobacco product consumption.; these are not acceptable in the context of protecting human health.</td>
<td>Article 9/10 prohibits attractive design features. Article 5.3 Guidelines prohibit incentives for the tobacco industry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banning, phasing out and/or reducing the use of problematic and avoidable plastic products[15] (e.g., ban/control, sale/use restriction, trade restriction, criteria, production monitoring)</td>
<td><strong>Is ideal if plastic cigarette filters are recognized as problematic and avoidable and therefore banned,</strong>[16] But it is unclear what criteria[17] will be established to define problematic and avoidable (“single-use”, “short-lived” and “unnecessary”) plastics. [18] Notably, in many countries that banned single-use plastics (SUPs), shopping bags and straws were included but cigarette filters were not.[19] Recently, the Dutch government’s policy study concluded that a ban on filters is the most effective solution,[20]</td>
<td>Article 14 mandates promotion cessation of tobacco use, and Article 18[25] seeks to give due regard to the environment.</td>
</tr>
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To learn more, visit [Stop Tobacco Pollution Alliance](https://ggtc.world).
and the Superior Health Council of Belgium supported a ban on filters at both the national and EU level.[21] As a SUP, cigarettes have a stronger rationale for inclusion due to the deceptive effect of filters in enticing smokers,[22] the toxic nature of the by-product,[23] and the propensity for the product to be littered in the environment.[24]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Banning phasing out and/or reducing the production, consumption and use of chemicals and polymers of concern. [26]</th>
<th>Does not directly affect plastics in cigarette filters. Cellulose acetate is not a ranking polymer of concern;[27] nevertheless, cigarette butts contain about 7000 chemicals of which at least 250 are harmful and 69 cause cancer. [28] Many of these have been found to leach out into the environment and cause harm to ecosystems and living creatures. The cellulose acetate filter is essentially a defective product, as it does not protect the health of smokers, may be associated with increased risks for certain lung cancers, and is the most common waste item picked up on the beach and urban cleanups globally.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(e.g., ban/control, list/criteria, trade restrictions, transparency by producers, tracking and marking, substitutes, research)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reducing microplastics[29]</th>
<th>Is ideal if cigarette filters are included as a product that releases microplastics. There is no evidence that microplastics in cigarettes are “intentionally added”. However, cigarette filters should be classified as a source of microplastics because a single filter releases approximately 100 cellulose acetate fibers a day (mostly 0.2mm in size), and 0.3 million tons of cellulose acetate filters are disposed of annually. [30] Cigarette butts are found in storm drains and other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(e.g., ban/control use of intentionally added microplastics, ban/control the trade and use of microplastics and products with intentionally added microplastics,</td>
<td>Article 19 seeks to deal with the liability of the tobacco industry.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
minimize leakage of plastic pellets in certain products, address unintentional release including in wastewater, guidelines on reducing the release of plastics in some products)

waterways where they can release microplastics. While governments should invest in innovative wastewater treatment systems[31], the tobacco industry should be made to pay for the burden caused by their product wastes in these systems. Guidelines on technology and practices to reduce the release of plastics in cigarette butts should be considered in addition to “washing, textile, road markings and tires.”[32]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Strengthening waste management[33]</strong></th>
<th>Will be beneficial for tobacco control if the tobacco industry is not endorsed through EPR schemes: Strengthening waste management to contain toxic tobacco plastics is crucial, and the tobacco industry can and must be made to pay for their product waste burdens. This should be mandatory and not subject to voluntary agreements.[34] However, EPR schemes[35],[36] could provide an avenue for the tobacco industry to promote itself as good corporate citizens. Strengthening demand for secondary plastics should not mean procuring or enticing the use of cigarettes with recyclable filters, plastic or otherwise.[37] Tobacco companies must never be incentivized to recycle or be given financial support or tax exemptions to develop recycling programs.[38] No incentives should be given to tobacco companies to support their business; recyclable additives to cigarettes will not alter the toxic nature of cigarettes or cigarette filters.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

To learn more, visit [Stop Tobacco Pollution Alliance](www.ggtc.world)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fostering design for circularity[39]</th>
<th>Is detrimental to tobacco control; may be beneficial if the tobacco industry is excluded. Circularity requires producers to redesign products to conform to certain criteria[40] as well as to facilitate ease of use, collection, sorting, or reuse and recyclability of plastics and ensure that “plastic products and their additives do not hinder or disrupt the recyclability of other plastic products in the same waste streams.”[41] In the context of tobacco, this would entail making cigarette filters recyclable or reusable, indicating the percent of recycled content, and placing labels to entice consumers.[42] From an environmental standpoint, a recyclable cigarette butt would remain toxic. From a health perspective, any novel substitute to the current filter design would be deemed an attractive design feature that would entice consumption. The tobacco industry would appear to be contributing to plastic reduction while encouraging tobacco use and downplaying the release of toxic chemicals and heavy metals from cigarette butts into the environment.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging reduction, reuse and repair of plastic products and packaging[43]</td>
<td>Can be beneficial for tobacco control, if consistent with WHO FCTC and implemented in the form of taxes or fees to discourage use. “Encouraging reduction and reuse of plastics” includes requiring producers to adopt design features[44] or imposing regulatory approaches, programs, or incentives.[45] Given the tobacco industry’s long-running history of promoting a poorly designed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
product, it cannot be trusted to undertake any redesign. Any form of attractive design feature added to the cigarette could entice users. Fees and tariffs to pay for environmental harm and discourage use will help reduce tobacco consumption. But any form of incentive would be contrary to WHO FCTC guidelines which proscribe incentives for the tobacco industry. Product take-back programs on cigarette butts (e.g., Terracycle) have not been proven safe, impactful, and/or scalable,[46] but are already widely used as part of the tobacco company’s publicity narratives. [47] Like EPR schemes, these could provide an avenue for the tobacco industry to promote itself as good corporate citizens, which is a means to entice tobacco use, especially among the youth.[48]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promoting the use of safe, sustainable alternatives and substitutes[49]</th>
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<tr>
<td>(e.g., certification schemes, incentives and other economic instruments, a technical committee with a list of criteria)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is detrimental to tobacco control.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Because of the nature of cigarette filters, there is no “safe” or sustainable alternative or substitutes. The filter is designed to allow contact with toxic chemicals which are then retained, making cigarette butts a hazardous waste. Toxins retained in biodegradable butts would still leach into the environment.[50] Substitutes can also be viewed as a novel design feature that makes the cigarette more attractive. Such substitutes would retain toxic chemicals and remain harmful to the environment. Certification schemes[51] to standardize substitutes can be viewed as an</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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endorsement of the quality of cigarettes, which would undermine public health efforts. Economic instruments such as incentivizing substitutes for cigarette filters are proscribed by the WHO FCTC Guidelines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eliminating the release and emission of plastics to water, soil and air[52]</th>
<th>Is ideal if cigarette butts are identified and have corresponding sectoral measures[53] and if the tobacco industry is not included in the development of such measures. In one day, a single cigarette filter releases approximately 100 microfibers of less than 0.2mm.[54] These plastic emissions include chemicals and heavy toxins.[55] Because cigarette filters are intrinsically flawed[56] (the tobacco industry knows they release plastic fibers during inhalation), the industry cannot be trusted to develop any measure or system to address the plastic emissions of discarded cigarette filters. Although recycling efforts exist,[57] little is known about the release of plastics and toxins during the recycling process or the product waste management process.[58] In the absence of evidence, the precautionary principle may be applied to consider cigarette butt waste management a dangerous practice that requires special treatment.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Is important in the context of tobacco control.[60] Cigarette butts are toxic</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Addressing existing plastic pollution[59]
| Facilitating a just transition, including an inclusive transition of the informal waste sector.\[62\]  
(e.g., formalization, benefits, infrastructure, and skill building) | Can be feasible if protected by governments from private sector interests and corporate practices. In the efforts to “address decent work deficits in the tobacco sector”.\[63\] tobacco workers have called out corporate practices as a major hindrance to the improvement of their livelihoods. The activities of the tobacco companies to “support” workers and growers are also viewed as efforts to drown out workers’ voices.\[64\] |
| Protecting human health from the adverse effects of plastic pollution\[65\]  
(e.g., Risk assessment, further research on health impact, exchange information, improve One Health approach) | Can be beneficial if strengthened further to, among others, recognise the need to highlight the participation of the health sector and recognise the impact on health and safety of any intervention. These include substitution, waste management, etc. and must take into account the need to coordinate and exchange information with the WHO FCTC Secretariat and expert groups at the global level.\[66\] |
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7. Hastrup, J.; Cummings, K.M.; Swedrock, T.; Nyland, A.; Pauly, J.; Consumers’ knowledge and beliefs about the safety of cigarette filters, Tobacco Control 2001;10:84., Available at: https://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/10/1/84.1.


10. “People who smoke perceived unfiltered cigarettes as having greater nicotine effects and less desirable sensory effects than filtered cigarettes, and they smoked fewer of these during the trial.” Source: Pulvers K, Tracy L, Novotny TE, et al, Switching people who smoke to unfiltered cigarettes: perceptions, addiction and behavioural effects in a cross-over randomised controlled trial, Tobacco Control 2023;32:520-523, Available at: https://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/32/4/520


17. “By the mid-1960s cigarette designers ealizat that the intractability of the ‘filter problem’ derived from a simple fact: that which is harmful in mainstream smoke and that which provides the smoker with ‘satisfaction’ are essentially one and the same. Only in the wake of this ealization did the agenda of cigarette designers appear to transition away from mitigating the health hazards of smoking and towards the perpetuation of the notion that cigarette filters are effective in reducing these hazards. Filters became a marketing tool, designed to keep and recruit smokers as consumers of these hazardous products.” Source: Harris, Bradford. “The intractable cigarette ‘filter problem’.” Tobacco control vol. 20 Suppl 1,Suppl_1 (2011): i10-6. Doi:10.1136/tc.2010.040113, Available at: https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21504917/.


23. “CBs also rank first for the most common litter (~29 %) floating in marinas and harbors.” Source: Conradi, M., Sánchez-Moyano, J.E., Toward a sustainable circular economy for cigarette butts, the most common waste worldwide on the coast, Science of The Total Environment, Volume 847, 2022, 157634, ISSN 0048-9697, Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2022.157634.

24. “CB was also the second most common plastic item (5.14 %) found on the Mediterranean seabed (<30 m below depth, confirming once again the high abundance of CB in this sea” Source: Araujo, M. C, Costa, M. A critical review of the issue of cigarette butt pollution in coastal environments,2019. Available at: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0013935119300787.


See also: “The tobacco industry has tried and failed to mitigate the impact of cigarette litter. Tobacco control advocates should explore alliances with environmental groups and propose policy options that hold the industry accountable for cigarette waste”.


See also: 2021 global progress report on implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, February 9, 2022, https://fctc.who.int/publications/m/item/9789240041769


See also: Philip Morris International (PMI) — the makers of Marlboro — claims it wants to reduce plastic litter from its products by 50% from 2021 to 2025 as part of its “Our World Is Not an Ashtray” initiative. Notwithstanding that filters — which are made of plastic — make it easier to smoke, to inhale more deeply, and convince smokers that they are using a “safer” cigarette when in fact smoking filtered cigarettes provides no health protection and may lead to an increased risk of adenocarcinoma of the lung. PMI also touts clean-up efforts but these efforts barely make a dent in the vast amounts of tobacco litter, given that with up to two-thirds of every smoked cigarette discarded onto the ground, 340 and 680 million kilograms of waste tobacco product litter the world each year. The sheer volume of e-cigarette waste that is created in a year can be estimated by looking at national sales data.


37. Ibid

38. Tobacco industry tactics around Single Use Plastics (SUP) policies and civil society efforts to counter these, Comité National Contre le Tabagisme, June 2022, available at: https://fctc.who.int/publications/m/item/tobacco-industry-tactics-around-single-use-plastics(sup)-policies-and-civil-society-efforts-to-countering-these


48. “Since the largest particles are retained, filters reduced irritation resulting in lower estimated risks”
intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, on the work of its second session, United Nations Environment Programme, July 6, 2023,


68. “the order of the toxicity of leachates can be predicted. It was determined that organic compounds caused the majority of toxicity in the cigarette butt leachates. Of the 14 organic compounds identified, nicotine and ethylphenol were suspected to be the main causative toxicants”


81. In Brazil coastal town, study showed “The toxicity results indicated that CBs the leachates extracted from a small amount of CBs was sufficient to affect copepod reproduction (0.1 and 0.01 CBs L–1).” Source: Lima, C. F., Pinto, M., Choueri, R. B., et. al., Occurrence, characterization, partition, and toxicity of cigarette butts in a highly urbanized coastal area, Waste Management, Volume 131, 2021, Pages 10-19, ISSN 0956-053X, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wasman.2021.05.029


86. Vanapalli, K.R.; Sharma,H.B.; Anand,S.; Ranjan, V.P; Singh,H.; Dubey, B.; Mohanty,B.; Cigarettes butt littering: The story of the world’s most littered item from the perspective of pollution, remedial actions, and policy measures, Volume 453, 5 July 2023, 131387, Available at: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0304389423006702

87. Ibid

88. Torkashvand,J.;Godini K.;Norouzi,S.;Gholami,M.;Yeganeh, M.;Farzadkia Torkashvand,J.;Godini

89. El Hadri, H.; Maza Lisa, J.; Gigault J.; Reynaud S.; Grassl, B., Fate of nanoparticles in the environment: Implication of the cigarette butts, 2021. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2020.115170


Cigarettes and Electronic Cigarettes: Contaminants, Environmental Pollution from the Use and Disposal of

Beutel, M.; Harmon, T.; Novotny, T., et al., A Review of

butts and not amenable to anti-litter efforts.”

encourage littering and would not be marketable, and that concluded that biodegradable filters would probably distributing portable and permanent ashtrays. They biodegradable filters, creating anti-litter campaigns, and distributing portable and permanent ashtrays.

avoid this responsibility included developing cigarette litter for more than 20 years. Their efforts to tobacco industry has feared being held responsible for
cigarette litter as hazardous waste, likely incurring significant costs associated with their collection, storage, and disposal [126⁹⁸].


Available at: https://researchers.mq.edu.au/en/publications/the-environmental-impact-of-tobacco-use


See also: Lenard Jason Yabes, Bioaccumulation of Organic Compounds from Smoked Cigarette Litter in the Freshwater Rainbow Trout, Oncorhynchus mykiss, San Diego State University, 2018. Available at: https://digitallibrary.sdstate.edu/islandora/object/sdsu%3A24517


96. How Should Tobacco Companies Pay for their Pollution? The Global Center for Good Governance in Tobacco Control (GGTC), 2022, https://tobaccoplastics.ggtc.world/

97. Smith, E.A.; Novotny, T.E. Whose butt is it? tobacco industry research about smokers and cigarette butt waste. Tob. Control 2011, 20, i2–i9. Available at: https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21504919/ “The tobacco industry has feared being held responsible for cigarette litter for more than 20 years. Their efforts to avoid this responsibility included developing biodegradable filters, creating anti-litter campaigns, and distributing portable and permanent ashtrays. They concluded that biodegradable filters would probably encourage littering and would not be marketable, and that smokers were defensive about discarding their tobacco butts and not amenable to anti-litter efforts.”

98. Beutel, M.; Harmon, T.; Novotny, T., et. al., A Review of Environmental Pollution from the Use and Disposal of Cigarettes and Electronic Cigarettes: Contaminants, Sources, and Impacts, Sustainability 2021, 13(23), 12994; Available at:https://doi.org/10.3390/su132312994 , citing In the United States, schools must now manage confiscated e-cigarettes and e-cigarette litter as hazardous waste, likely incurring significant costs associated with their collection, storage, and disposal [126⁹⁸].

105. C. Mercedes et al., Toward a sustainable circular economy for cigarette butts, the most common waste worldwide on the coast, Science of The Total Environment, Volume 847,2022, 157634, ISSN 0048-9697, Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2022.157634


See also: Letter to parliament on policy options for reducing cigarette filters in litter, The National Government for the Netherlands, 19th April 2023, Available at: https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/regering/bewindspersonen/vivianneheijnen/documenten/kamerstukken/2023/04/19/beleidsopties-ter-reductie-vansigarettenfilters-in-zwerfafval


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113. C. Mercedes et al., Toward a sustainable circular economy for cigarette butts, the most common waste worldwide on the coast, Science of The Total Environment, Volume 847, 2022, 157634, ISSN 0048-9697, Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2022.157634

114. Ibid


117. “Pyrolysis occurs when solid organic matter is heated, resulting in the release of gases, oils, and char, hence the word’s etymological root of “loosening or change by fire”. It is an old technology, formerly applied by heating up wood to produce substances such as methanol, acetone, and creosote, prior to petrochemical refining routes. When wood is slowly pyrolysed the char is called ‘charcoal’; when coal is pyrolysed the char is called ‘coke’; and with plastics there is little or no char produced at all.” Source: Rollinson,A.N., Low Impact Org, Why pyrolysis and ‘plastic to fuels’ is not a solution to the plastics problem,2018. Available at: https://www.lowimpact.org/posts/pyrolysis-not-solution-plastics-problem


119. Keenat, Ecomegot,Recycling and recovery of cigarette butts, Available at: https://ecomegot.com/recyclage-megots/; Italian PRO: https://erioncare.it/it/serza-filtri/ India: Banega Swasth India,This Enterprise Is Recycling India’s Most littered Item, Cigarette Butts, Available at:


See also: [Forthcoming publication] Global Tobacco Industry Interference Index 2023, 2023, available at: https://globaltobaccoindex.org/


The McKinsey Center for Business and Environment (Center) is affiliated with McKinsey & Company, a known consultant of the tobacco industry.

Source: McKinsey, Tobacco Tactics, updated 27 August 2020, Available at: https://tobaccotactics.org/article/mckinsey/

“Adopt measures to strengthen the demand for secondary plastics and facilitate environmentally sound plastic scrap recycling, including by using public procurement to drive demand for plastic products containing higher recycled content, where feasible.”

Source: Potential options for elements towards an international legally binding instrument, based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastics as called for by United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 5/14, United Nations Environment Programme, April 13, 2023, Available at: https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/42190/UNEP-PP-INC.2-4%20English.pdf?sequence=13&isAllowed=y

C. Mercedes et al., Toward a sustainable circular economy for cigarette butts, the most common waste worldwide on the coast, Science of The Total Environment, Volume 847, 2022, 157634, ISSN 0048-9697, Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2022.157634

“Strikingly, on the soil surface, we observed no difference in mass loss between cellulose and plastic filters throughout the incubation. Using a first order kinetic model for mass loss of used filters over the short period of our experiment, we estimated that conventional plastic filters take 7.5-14 years to disappear, in the compost and on the soil surface, respectively. In contrast, we estimated that cellulose filters take 2.3-13 years to disappear, in the compost and on the soil surface, respectively” Source: Joly, François-Xavier, and Mathieu Coulis. “Comparison of cellulose vs. plastic cigarette filter decomposition under distinct disposal environments.” Waste management (New York, N.Y.) vol. 72 (2018): 349-353. doi:10.1016/j.wasman.2017.11.023

Ibid


“The OCB brand for instance, that sells filters for hand-rolling cigarettes, advertises an almost complete decomposition of cellulose filters in 28 days. However, these results, coming from a test made by an independent laboratory following the 301B biodegradability protocol of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), have not been published, and do not compare with the decomposition of conventional
plastic filters, making it impossible to evaluate the advantage of cellulose filters over the plastic ones.”

Source: Joly F.X., Coulis, M., Comparison of cellulose vs. plastic cigarette filter decomposition under distinct disposal environments, Waste Management, Volume 72, 2018, Pages 349-353, ISSN 0956-053X, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wasman.2017.11.023

135.

136. Ibib

137. “Moreover, the goal of the OECD protocol is to evaluate the biodegradability of the substance out of which the product is made without necessarily taking into account its previous use. Such potential decoupling of the test from realistic conditions could importantly limit the validity of the results. Indeed, once the cigarette is smoked, the filter gets charged with a large variety of compounds including tars, carcinogenic compounds and numerous metals which leads to an increased toxicity of filters for wildlife as well as microorganisms.”

Source: Joly F.X., Coulis, M., Comparison of cellulose vs. plastic cigarette filter decomposition under distinct disposal environments, Waste Management, Volume 72, 2018, Pages 349-353, ISSN 0956-053X, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wasman.2017.11.023

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146. Those who feel guilty are more likely to dispose butts properly.

Source: Smith EA, Novotny T.E., Whose butt is it? tobacco industry research about smokers and cigarette butt waste, Tobacco Control 2011;20:i2-i9, https://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/20/Suppl_1/i2


See also: Guidelines for Implementation of Article 13 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. (2013). World Health Organization. Available at: https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/80510/9789241505185_eng.pdf?sequence=1

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with criminal and civil liability, including compensation where appropriate.”

149. “Establish a certification scheme for plastic products. Task a technical review committee (comparable to the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer) with assessing criteria for the sustainable production and use of plastics and the availability of safe alternatives and substitutes, set out the criteria in annexes to the instrument, and recommend possible adjustments to such annexes or amendments to the instrument (including new annexes).”

Develop clear mechanisms for funding, technical support and transfer of technology for the development of natural alternatives to plastics, in particular in small island developing State Use economic instruments, such as fees, tariffs, taxes, subsidies, and tradable permit systems, to incentivize a reduction of plastic use and the adoption of sustainable alternatives.”
Source: Potential options for elements towards an international legally binding instrument, based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastics as called for by United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 5/14, United Nations Environment Programme, April 13, 2023. Available at: https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/42190/UNEP-PP-INC.2-4%20English.pdf?sequence=13&isAllowed=y


153. Article 5.3 Guidelines for Implementation: "Recommendation 5 Require that information provided by the tobacco industry be transparent and accurate. To take effective measures preventing interference of the tobacco industry with public health policies, Parties need information about its activities and practices, thus ensuring that the industry operates in a transparent manner.”
Source: Guidelines for Implementation of Article 5.3 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. (2013). World Health Organization. Available at: https://fctc.who.int/publications/m/item/guidelines-for-implementation-of-article-5.3

154. Article 5.3 Guidelines for Implementation Recommendation 5: “Article 12 of the Convention requires Parties to promote public access to such information in accordance with national law.”
Source: Guidelines for Implementation of Article 5.3 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. (2013). World Health Organization. Available at: https://fctc.who.int/publications/m/item/guidelines-for-implementation-of-article-5.3

155. “Article 5.3 Guidelines for Implementation Recommendations: “5.1 Parties should introduce and apply measures to ensure that all operations and activities of the tobacco industry are transparent. 5.2 Parties should require the tobacco industry and those working to further its interests to periodically submit information on tobacco production, manufacture, market share, marketing expenditures, revenues and any other activity, including lobbying, philanthropy, political contributions and all other activities not prohibited or not yet prohibited under Article 13 of the Convention. 5.3 Parties should require rules for the disclosure or registration of the tobacco industry entities, affiliated organizations and individuals acting on their behalf, including lobbyists. 5.4 Parties should impose mandatory penalties on the tobacco industry in case of the provision of false or misleading information in accordance with national law. 5.5 Parties should adopt and implement effective legislative, executive, administrative and other measures to ensure public access, in accordance with Article 12(c) of the Convention, to a wide range of information on tobacco industry activities as relevant to the objectives of the Convention, such as in a public repository.”
Source: Guidelines for Implementation of Article 5.3 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. (2013). World Health Organization. Available at: https://fctc.who.int/publications/m/item/guidelines-for-implementation-of-article-5.3

156. “For those Parties that are not in a position to undertake a comprehensive ban owing to their constitutions or constitutional principles.”
Source: Guidelines for implementation of Article 13 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. (2013). World Health Organization. Available at: https://www.who.int/europe/health-topics/tobacco/banning-tobacco-advertising-sponsorship-and-promotion#tab=tab_1

157. Article 13 Guidelines for Implementation: “Publicity given to ‘socially responsible’ business practices of the tobacco industry should be banned, as these constitute

158. Afghanistan, Albania, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Benin, Brazil, Chad, Colombia, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Libya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Niue, Panama, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Slovenia, Spain, Suriname, Togo, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Vanuatu, and Yemen, and more.


159. Guidelines for implementation of Article 5.3 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. (2013). World Health Organization. Available at: https://fctc.who.int/publications/m/item/guidelines-for-implementation-of-article-5-3


162. Bogotá no es un cenicero (Columbia), Available at: https://www.bogotanoesuncenicero.com


165. Holly Mead, It’s the tobacco funds that should come with a health warning, The Times, August 5, 2023, available at: https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/is-esg-investing-good-idea-kf7lvcz6p
171. “The United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) was tasked to develop a common approach to partnerships with the private sector, to facilitate contributions in support of the SDGs. An inter-UN agency group developed a Common Approach to Due Diligence for Private Sector Partnerships (Common Approach) which reflects current practices for private sector engagement, and affirms common principles, citing Repositioning the UN development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda – Ensuring a Better Future for All (A/72/124–E/2018/3) 5 Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: our promise for dignity, prosperity and peace on a healthy planet [A/72/684]." Source: Partnerships Driving Inclusive Implementation of the SDGs Concept Note, United Nations Sustainable Development Group, ECOSOC Partnership Forum, 2019, Available at: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/docs/21335Final_Concept_Note_2019_ECOSOC_Partnership_Forum.pdf See also: “Furthermore, the Secretary-General has recently initiated an ambitious reform to reposition the United Nations Development System (UNDS) with the aim of re-aligning its leadership, capacities and accountability mechanisms including in the area of partnerships to meet the demands in delivering on the 2030 Agenda. As per the two Reports of the Secretary-General in June 2017 and December 2017 on the UNDS reform, the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) is currently leading a system-wide effort on this regard. In his December 2017 report, the Secretary-General further committed to six partnership related work streams: i. UNSDG to agree on a system-wide approach to partnership ii. Strengthen system-wide integrity, due diligence and risk management, including the 10 Global Compact principles on for private sector engagement iii. Improved global level governance from the Global Compact iv. Reinvigoration of UNOP as the global gateway for partnership v. A system-wide compact with IFIs vi. Efforts to invigorate UN support for South-South cooperation.” Source: Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: ensuring a better future for all, United Nations General Assembly Economic and Social Council, 2017. Available at: https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N17/210/35/PDF/N1721035.pdf?OpenElement.

172. “For the purposes of this statement: - tobacco industry means any entity involved in the manufacture, sale or distribution of tobacco and related products, and any affiliate of such entity; and - arms industry means any entity involved in the manufacture, sale or distribution of arms, and any affiliate of such entity. This disclosure statement needs to be provided by any nongovernmental organization, private sector entity, philanthropic foundation and academic institution prior to engaging with Unitaid.” Source: Unitaid. (n.d.). Declaration regarding tobacco and arms industry. Available at: https://unitaid.org/assets/Annex-8.-Tobacco-and-Arms-Industries.docx


175. Executive Order 13193 – Federal Leadership on Global Tobacco Control and Prevention, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, January, 18,2001, Available at: https://www.tobaccocontrollaws.org/laws/13193-united-states


177. Key human rights considerations for the negotiations to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, OHCHR-UNEP Environmental Rights Bulletin, Available at: https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/climatechange/2022-12-01/OHCHR-inputs-INCI.pdf