

Statement delivered by the Endocrine Society during the third session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution.

November 15, 2023

Thank you co-facilitators for the opportunity to speak. My name is Joe Laakso and I am the Director of Science Policy at the Endocrine Society. My intervention will focus on the section on periodic assessment and effectiveness evaluation. As a medical and scientific professional society with expertise in hormone biology, we are encouraged that the zero draft recognizes the importance of considering scientific information, including published literature, in effectiveness evaluations. As a publisher of scientific literature, we assert that peer-reviewed scientific publications with strong policies to identify and manage Conflicts of Interest should be prioritized when considering what constitutes the best available scientific information. Such policies will ensure that evaluations are based on reliable information with low risk of bias.

We also take great interest in the expert body or review panel charged with reviewing chemicals and polymers of concern in plastic. We have consistently remarked throughout the INC process on the hazards to human and environmental health posed by endocrine disrupting chemicals in plastic, and the expert body should therefore include independent academic scientists with expertise in hormone biology, endocrine systems, and sensitive endpoints that reflect disruption to these systems.

Finally, we note with some concern that paragraph 3 indicates that the expert body may prioritize substances, products or sectors with high volumes or the greatest likelihood of giving rise to plastic pollution. Considering the importance of human and environmental health reflected in the options for the objective of the instrument in the zero draft, and that endocrine-disrupting chemicals have demonstrated adverse effects at extremely low levels that are consistent with hormone biology, we encourage the Committee to consider also ensuring that the expert group prioritize those chemicals with the greatest potential impact on human and environmental health.

Thank you again for considering our perspective and including us in this discussion.