

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

November 16, 2023

Thank you co-facilitators for the opportunity to discuss priorities for the intersessional process. My name is Joe Laakso and I am the Director of Science Policy at the Endocrine Society. As an 18,000-member scientific and medical professional society with expertise in hormone biology, our members serve as trusted advisers to policymakers around the world. Our aim here is to assist the Committee by providing scientific knowledge to ensure the treaty achieves public health objectives by minimizing exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals (also known as EDCs), which are commonly used as additives in plastic products.

Given the well-documented adverse health effects of EDCs that contribute to endocrine diseases such as diabetes, cancer, and infertility; the intersessional process should initiate work towards identifying not only those chemicals with the greatest production volume, but also groups of chemicals, like EDCs, that pose the greatest hazards to human health. This is an urgent global public health priority, and we commend those governments that recognize the threat EDCs pose and have developed laws and regulations to reduce exposure. This treaty can and should build on this progress to ensure that hazardous EDCs are no longer used globally in plastic, and progress should be assessed in partnership with scientists engaged in successful biomonitoring programs like HBM4EU and NHANES.

Independent scientific expertise will be necessary to provide trusted guidance to the Committee on the identification of hazardous chemicals that require action. We align ourselves with the Scientists Coalition and call on the Committee to facilitate formal modalities for input from scientists and other knowledge holders, with strong policies to identify and manage conflicts of interest, into the INC process during intersessional work. We sincerely appreciate the Members who have expressed interest in working with knowledge-holders during the intersessional process, especially on identifying chemicals and polymers of concern.

Thank you again; we look forward to continued engagement and sharing our organization's scientific expertise.