

Global Textile Policy Dialogues:

Driving action for a sustainable and circular textile sector

Roadmap for Action

Updated: December 2025

This document presents the outline of the purpose, approach and priority activities of the UNEP-facilitated Global Textile Policy Dialogues. It is a living text that will be updated as the work evolves and as Member States involved in the Dialogues wish to change it. While the Dialogues are government-led, this document does not legally bind Member States to any actions.

BACKGROUND

Alongside the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6) in 2024, the Deputy Minister of Trade of the Republic of Türkiye, the Vice Minister for the Environment of the Netherlands, the Minister of Environment of Tunisia, the Minister for Climate and the Environment of Sweden, the Ambassador of France to Kenya, and a representative from the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation of Ghana recognized the urgent need for a mechanism to build coherence in the policy response to address the adverse effects of the textile value chain on nature, people and economies. They acknowledged the deeply international and interconnected nature of the textile value chain, underlining the need for deep integration among all actors and concerted global action to transition towards a sustainable and circular textile value chain.

To deliver on this, the abovementioned governments called for a global policy dialogue on textiles asking UNEP to facilitate it. The 'Global Textile Policy Dialogues: Driving action for a sustainable and circular textile sector' was created in response to this call to action.

The abovementioned countries concurred that the Policy Dialogues should be government-led, inclusive, aiming at representation of countries along the entire value chain, and address various aspects of circularity in textiles, initially including production pollution, consumption patterns, and the role of trade in promoting textile circularity and end-of-life management of textiles.

PURPOSE

The aim of the Global Textile Policy Dialogues is to serve as a mechanism to foster collaboration among countries and build policy coherence across the textile value chain, including through exchange and collaborative action on innovative policy interventions to accelerate the transition towards a sustainable and circular textile value chain. Ultimately, the objective is to trigger political leadership to transform current textile policy frameworks at the global level.

The Policy Dialogues will play an instrumental role in i) shedding light on the environmental, economic and social impacts of the textile value chain, and the potential benefits from sustainability and circularity initiatives, ii) exploring the role that policy efforts could play in addressing these impacts and enabling the benefits, iii) supporting global environmental leadership and delivery of results under multilateral environmental agreements and global policy frameworks, and iv) identify potential pathways to catalyse policy action to transform the textile sector.

TAKING A VALUE CHAIN APPROACH

The priorities of the Global Textile Policy Dialogues in 2026 and beyond were co-defined through a series of online consultation meetings hosted by UNEP in November 2025 and are captured in this roadmap. The meetings gathered government representatives to engage in technical-level discussions to co-shape and define this version of the roadmap for the Global Textile Policy Dialogues. The list of countries that participated in these meetings is included in the Annex.

As previously advised by the abovementioned Member States, the consultation meetings discussed issues and policy solutions across the entire value chain¹, aimed at addressing:

- **The reduction of pollution in production systems**, including through resource efficiency, cleaner technologies and renewable energy sources, and by addressing microfibres and eliminating air and water pollution, waste, on-site fossil fuel use and the use of chemicals of concern. This includes production systems both during raw material production and manufacturing processes, taking a lifecycle approach. This includes capacity-building, including for SMEs and women, requirements for sustainable product design (including design for durability, repairability, and

¹ This aligns also with UNEP's Sustainability and Circularity in the Textile Value Chain: A Global Roadmap <https://www.unep.org/resources/publication/sustainability-and-circularity-textile-value-chain-global-roadmap>

recyclability), mutual recognition of international standards to ease financial and administrative burdens and level the playing field, the role of special economic zones, and addressing the challenge of overproduction in order to supply key consumption markets, coupled with the need for a just transition.

- **The shift toward sustainable consumption patterns**, including addressing overconsumption, the positive impact of circular business models on changing consumer behavior, the role of education, awareness-raising initiatives and labels, the role of advertising and social media, the use of economic instruments such as pricing incentives to scale up circular business models, and eco-modulated fees in Extended Producer Responsibility schemes. All this recognizing the difficulty for governments to influence consumption patterns and thus the need to dialogue on approaches.
- **The role of trade in promoting textile circularity**, including through strengthening dialogue and collaboration between exporting and importing countries, to assist countries to meet compliance requirements for market access, e.g. standards; exploring possible additions and specifications that could be considered in Harmonization System (HS) codes to reflect the diversity of textile goods, knowledge exchange and technology transfer, including intellectual property, digital production information systems to enable traceability and transparency supportive of sustainable product design, and Extended Producer Responsibility including beyond national borders, and to discuss causes and potential solutions to reduce and eliminate textiles waste across the value chain (e.g., textile-to-textile recycling) and how trade systems could enable this change.

PRIORITY ACTIVITIES

As a result of the consultation meetings, countries advised and identified that the Global Textile Policy Dialogues will support work across the textile value chain through both **knowledge exchange** and facilitating **policy innovation** between Member States to build concerted action for a sustainable and circular textile value chain. Emphasis will be placed on mutually supportive collaboration between producing, consuming and used textile importing countries, and between developed and developing countries, working towards inclusive policy setting processes and a just transition. Other textile value chain stakeholders will also be invited to be involved, as outlined further in the next section on roles and responsibilities.

(1) Knowledge exchange

Member States will engage in regular knowledge exchange sessions designed to facilitate sharing of best practices and lessons learned to strengthen collective capacity and inform decision-making on textile policy.

Priority topics

In 2026/27, the following key topics will be prioritized:

- **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR):** how to design and implement (global) EPR schemes, including eco-modulation strategies and how to maximize their effectiveness, and ways to incorporate the perspective of countries from all parts of the value chain in upcoming regulations.
- **Frameworks for sustainable product design:** design and information requirements including avoiding the use of hazardous chemicals, energy and water usage and efficiency, climate and environmental impacts, microplastic pollution, product durability, longevity, repairability, recyclability (including use of mono-materials), recycled content quotas and reusability, and how companies can be supported to comply with those.
- **Effective behavioral instruments,** including policy instruments to effectively influence circular behavior and address overconsumption (such as fast fashion), including through consumer-facing government campaigns for circular textiles and pricing instruments.
- **The role of advertising:** potential policy instruments and opportunities to encourage sustainable consumption and address overconsumption (such as fast fashion), including online via social media and online retailers.
- Effective policy instruments to support **circular business models.**

Delivery mechanisms

The knowledge exchange sessions will take place every two months, unless otherwise requested by Member States.

Knowledge products may be commissioned to provide input for these exchanges and may also evolve from these exchanges. These may include the collection of case studies of textile policies from Member States, to be featured under the Global Textile Policy Dialogues knowledge hub platform².

² <https://buildingcircularity.org/global-policy-dialogues-for-textiles/>

(2) Policy innovation

Policy innovation will focus on exploring innovative policy options, including policy instruments and approaches that may benefit from alignment across countries to accelerate the transition toward sustainable and circular textile value chains on the global level. The aim is to reduce fragmentation; leverage trade to strengthen partnerships and deliver shared benefits to all countries; and enable collective action and foster inclusive policy settings.

Priority topics

Responding to the needs identified by Member States, in 2026/27, this will include initiating collaborative efforts to explore the role of:

- **Extended Producer Responsibility** schemes in textile value chains, including mutually supportive EPR systems between trading partners and how this could be operationalized.
- **Enabling trade systems** to support the sound management of textile waste and opportunities for value addition in the sector, e.g. fiber recyclability and reusability into new garments, revision of Harmonization System codes to facilitate trade of revalorized textiles.
- **Standards and their interoperability**, including on chemicals of concern, product design, microfibres, and production processes.
- **Digital product information systems, their interoperability and data requirements.**

Delivery mechanisms

Policy innovation would be operationalized through focus group meetings, organized per topic at the request of Member States, bringing together interested countries.

To inform the meetings and discussions, UNEP may be asked by participating countries to consolidate existing knowledge or map existing instruments and approaches on a given topic.

Countries may decide to commission pilots to test coordinated approaches.

The topics for policy innovation might evolve out of the knowledge exchange sessions and/or may also feed into knowledge exchange sessions.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Global Textile Policy Dialogues are facilitated by UNEP.

They are made for and driven by Member States and provide a space for governments to exchange and explore innovative policy approaches. Involvement of all relevant line ministries in countries and inter-ministerial coordination shall be aimed at. Member States may participate in all or just some of the knowledge exchange and policy innovation sessions, as relevant to their national context. Member States will be invited to chair sessions and topics.

High-level representatives of Member States at minister or deputy minister level will be invited to meet once a year to decide on priorities and monitor progress. Expert / technical level representatives of Member States will engage in more regular online meetings, as outlined above.

The Dialogues will follow an inclusive, phased governance approach. Phase I will facilitate technical knowledge exchanges exclusively between Member States to establish shared priorities and baselines. Phase II will then broaden participation, inviting perspectives and experiential knowledge from relevant stakeholders (timing to be determined by participants).

Accordingly, alongside Member States, the Global Textile Policy Dialogues will involve knowledge input where relevant and appropriate to its working areas, including from:

- Private sector, including SMEs and the informal sector, as represented through industry associations and multistakeholder initiatives. Member States may consider involvement of individual companies of all sizes for specific discussions or events, as required.
- Environmental NGOs and civil society organisations.
- Other UN agencies.
- Financial institutions.
- Subnational governments.
- Indigenous Peoples.

UNEP will work with those actors to gather structured input to the Global Textile Policy Dialogues. Membership initiatives will be invited to collect feedback from their members and submit consolidated perspectives on specific priority topic areas, to the extent possible based on data, evidence and/or examples.

The Global Textile Policy Dialogues will further explore ways to engage with relevant private sector initiatives, including strengthening alignment of business - policy efforts.

MILESTONES AND MONITORING PROGRESS

UNEP will monitor progress and report to the participants of the Policy Dialogues.

In addition to regular online meetings, the Global Textile Policy Dialogues will seek to leverage relevant events for in-person or hybrid gatherings, including:

- The Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention (OEWG-15) in June 2026
- The first international conference of the Global Framework on Chemicals in November 2026
- The Basel Convention COP 18 in May 2027
- The eighth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-8)

New priority activities may be added in future, and the current areas reviewed and updated where and when necessary, as deemed by Member States participating in the Global Textile Policy Dialogues.

FUNDING

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Current funding will enable delivery of dialogue meetings (held online) every two months throughout 2026, as outlined above. Additional activities, such as research feeding into the meetings or more regular convenings, will be subject to the mobilization of additional resources.

ANNEX

Countries That Participated in the Online Consultation Meetings:

1. Australia
2. Belgium
3. Bhutan
4. Canada
5. Chile
6. China
7. Denmark
8. Germany
9. Ghana
10. Guyana
11. Hungary
12. Indonesia
13. Italy
14. Kenya
15. Namibia
16. Netherlands
17. Norway
18. Perú
19. Portugal
20. South Africa
21. Sweden
22. Türkiye
23. United Kingdom