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LIMITE

ENV

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CONTRIBUTION

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Working Party on International Environment Issues (Basel)
N° prev. doc.:	WK 7253/2025, WK 7466/2025
Subject:	Basel Convention: Next steps on used textiles and textile wastes - comments from a delegation

Following the call for comments on the above set out with WK 7466/2025, delegations will find attached comments from FR.

FRANCE

Next steps on used textiles and textile wastes

COP17 decision

Through decision BC-17/21 on the Work Programme of the Open-ended Working Group for the period 2026–2027, the COP decided to:

- Invite Parties and observers to submit, by 15 November 2025, comments, including relevant data where applicable, regarding experiences, challenges and costs related to trade in used textiles and textile wastes, as well as views on how transboundary movements of textile wastes and their management could be addressed under the Basel Convention, and requests the Secretariat to make the comments available on the Convention website.
- Request the Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to compile the comments submitted pursuant to paragraph 2 above and prepare a report on possible options available under the Basel Convention to address used textiles and textile wastes, taking into consideration the comments received, for consideration by the Open-ended Working Group at its fifteenth meeting.
- Include work on used textiles and textile waste in the OEWG Work Programme and to consider relevant options available under the Convention to address challenges linked to the transboundary movement of textile wastes (including the distinction between used textiles and textile wastes), taking into account, inter alia, the report prepared by the Secretariat and relevant existing guidance documents and activities under the Basel Convention, and develop a proposal for possible options, within the scope of the Convention, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its eighteenth meeting.

Summary of discussions at COP17

During the discussions in plenary, contact group and at the side-event on textiles, many Parties supported the proposal by EU+MS and Chile. Multiple countries, including Bangladesh, Brazil, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Norway, Panama and UK stressed that the environmental impacts of the trade in used textiles and textile waste is a major concern. Others, including Japan and Argentina, **supported the step-by-step approach** proposed by the EU+MS and Chile and expressed that this should not prejudice the outcome. A few countries, notably India, Saudi Arabia and South Africa, considered however that this work is not a high priority. Some Parties, particularly **India**, **were hesitant** to include used textiles in the scope of the exercise.

PUBLIC

A number of countries, including Brazil, China, Chile, UK stressed that **distinguishing used textiles from textile waste** is a key challenge. Others highlighted the lack of waste management capacity and appropriate legal framework. The changing nature of the fiber to mainly synthetic was also considered as increasing the impacts of textile waste, and the need to shift the burden for controlling the trade, notably through ensure adequate sorting, from the importing countries to the exporters was stressed. Some highlighted (global) EPR as a useful tool to improve textile waste management. BAN repeated its view that textiles made of synthetic fibres should already be considered as falling under the plastic waste entries under the BC.

The final decision includes this work in the OEWG Work Programme with a 'medium' priority and still includes used textiles in the scope of the exercise, albeit in different wording. The Secretariat confirmed that the level of priority should not have an impact on the work carried out by the OEWG. This level of priority is only used in exceptional circumstances that would affect the organization of work as foreseen by the COP.

Possible structure for EU+MS comments

The deadline to send comments to the BRS Secretariat is 15 November 2025. These comments and the report prepared by the BRS Secretariat will be the basis for discussions at OEWG15 (23-26 June 2026).

To start preparing for this deadline and defining a common basis to draft the EU+MS contribution, the Commission gathered below some preliminary views and elements for the consideration of MS. These elements are neither definitive nor comprehensive and are solely meant to offer grounds for discussion at the WPIEI to facilitate developing the upcoming contribution.

1 Nature of the problem and challenges

Discussions at COP17 showed that not all Parties are aware of the environmental impacts of the trade in used textiles and textile waste. As such it is important to explain again the extent of the problem.

Challenges linked to the transboundary movement of used textiles and textile wastes that should be highlighted include the difficulty to distinguish between used textiles and textile wastes, including addressing the inconsistency between the Basel and the Custom codes for textile wastes and used textile products with the objective to make border controls clear and simple to implement, increasing amounts traded combined to the degradation of the textile waste quality, the insufficient waste management infrastructure, including sorting capacities (technical challenges and cost issues in the EU), and changing composition of textile products, including addressing the increasing plastic content of textile/clothing.

2 Possible solutions under the Basel Convention

It seems important to express why the Basel Convention is relevant to deal with such challenges linked to the trade in used textiles and textile wastes.

In this regard, the EU+MS may share in their comments the efforts made at regional level to strengthen our regulation through the updated waste framework directive that will makes sorting

Commented [BE1]: 2 issues to be addressed:
-the initial textile being less qualitative and being disposed of faster than before
-the qualitative textile waste that has positive € value which used to pay for the lesser qualitative textile waste (ie. brand names textile or textile of good quality and in very good shape for direct reuse) is not collected anymore by textile waste collectors (it goes through platforms like Vinted which is a different economic operator & business model)

an obligation before any shipment to properly distinguish between used and waste textile. However, underling that more efforts are necessary at global level under the Basel convention is also essential.

In this regard, the EU+MS comments could highlight elements such as:

- Revision of annex(es) to the Convention: explore the possibility to review whether and how textile wastes are classified under the Convention (notably Annex II, VIII and IX). (At the moment, non-hazardous textile waste is listed in Annex IX under B3030 or B3035 and as such no prior written notification and consent is required for transboundary movements of such waste.)
- Partnerships: explore the need to create a dedicated partnership or address this under an existing partnership (Household Waste Partnership or Plastic Waste Partnership);
- Technical guidelines: explore the need to update existing guidelines or develop new ones to cover topics such as the sound management of textile waste, the characterisation of hazardous/non hazardous textile waste, the distinction between used and textile wastes;
- ~~Revision of annex(es) to the Convention: explore the possibility to review whether and how textile wastes are classified under the Convention (notably Annex II, VIII and IX). (At the moment, non-hazardous textile waste is listed in Annex IX under B3030 or B3035 and as such no prior written notification and consent is required for transboundary movements of such waste.)~~

Questions for discussion at WPIEI 4 June:

- Are there other challenges that should be highlighted in the EU+MS comments?
 - Are you aware of relevant sources highlighting the impacts of the trade in used textiles and textile wastes that could be included in the EU+MS contribution?
 - Should the EU+MS, in its contribution, express a preference for specific measures as the most appropriate way of addressing these challenges under the Basel Convention (partnership, technical guidelines, revision of annexes)? If so, which measures should be proposed?
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