



The global treaty

Background reading for teachers

This reading gives you the background for each slide, with sources you can check.

Timeline

Negotiations began after a March 2022 UN Environment Assembly resolution. Sessions were held in Punta del Este (2022), Paris and Nairobi (2023), Ottawa and Busan (2024), and Geneva (August 2025), without agreement.¹ After the chair resigned in October 2025, a one-day session in February 2026 elected Ambassador Julio Cordano of Chile as chair, with no substantive negotiations.^{1, 2}

The deadlock

As of mid-2026, parties remained divided over whether the treaty should include binding limits on plastic production, a position held by the roughly 70 members of the High Ambition Coalition, or focus mainly on waste and recycling. The new chair backs the consensus-based process.³ Check the latest news before teaching.

Sources

1. UNEP (2026). New Chair elected to lead negotiations on global plastic pollution treaty. [unep.org](https://www.unep.org)
2. IISD (2026). INC-5.3: where the global plastics treaty talks stand. [iisd.org](https://www.iisd.org)
3. Mongabay (2026). With plastic treaty in limbo, Mongabay speaks to top negotiator Julio Cordano. [mongabay.com](https://www.mongabay.com)

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