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# Topic 1: The question of providing affordable and clean energy in developing countries

# <u>Introduction</u>

Since the dawn of the industrial age, the ability to harness and use different forms of energy has transformed living conditions for billions of people, enabling them to enjoy a level of comfort and mobility that is unprecedented in human history, and freed them to perform increasingly productive tasks. For most of the last 200 years, the steady growth in energy consumption has been closely tied to rising levels of prosperity and economic opportunity in much of the world. However, humanity now finds itself confronting an enormous energy challenge. This challenge has at least two critical dimensions. It has become clear that current patterns of energy use are environmentally unsustainable. The overwhelming reliance on fossil fuels, in particular, threatens to alter the Earth's climate to an extent that could have grave consequences for the integrity of both natural systems and vital human systems. At the same time, access to energy continues to divide the 'haves' from the 'have-nots.' Globally, a large fraction of the world's population—more than two billion people by some estimates—still lacks access to one or several types of basic energy services, including electricity, clean cooking fuel and an adequate means of transportation.

Of course, the need for a profound transformation of the world's energy-producing and using infrastructure has been widely recognized in the mounting concern about global climate change. Countless reports have been written on the subject of sustainable energy, but few have approached this specifically from the perspective of a developing country. In nations where a significant portion of the population still lacks access to basic energy services, the worry about long-term environmental sustainability is often overshadowed by more immediate concerns about energy access and affordability.

The two-fold energy challenge that confronts developing and emerging economies needs to be addressed— expanding access to energy while simultaneously participating in a global transition to clean, low-carbon energy systems.

# **Definition of Key Terms**

Developing country= One that has low levels of industrialization and fares poorly on the Human Development Index (HDI). A low HDI score means that the

citizens of a particular country have lower life expectancy, lower educational attainment, lower per capita incomes, and higher fertility rates than found in other countries.

Sustainable development=Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Renewable energy (sources) or RES= Capture their energy from existing flows of energy, from on-going natural processes, such as sunshine, wind, flowing water, biological processes, and geothermal heat flows

Clean energy= energy that is produced through methods that do not release greenhouse gases or any other pollutants. Clean energy can be generated from renewable sources

## **General Overview**

For the past 10 to 15 years, the energy sectors in most countries have been in turmoil. Many developing countries have been attempting to restructure their energy sectors, but are finding it difficult to implement reforms. The reasons include the multiplicity of actors involved, the changing perceptions of the relative roles of the market and governments, and the accumulation of policies of past decades, many of which may have made sense when they were proposed, but now impose unsustainable burdens. Meanwhile, a sharp run-up in world energy prices over the last two years and growing concerns about the supply of conventional petroleum (and natural gas, in some parts of the world), combined with projections of continued strong growth of demand globally and greater awareness of the threats posed by climate change, have brought a heightened sense of urgency to national and international energy policy debates.

The current energy outlook is challenging to say the least. Whether governments are chiefly concerned with economic growth, environmental protection or energy security, it is clear that a continuation of current energy trends will have many undesirable consequences at best, and risk grave, global threats to the well-being of the human race at worst.

The situation in developing countries is in many ways more difficult than that for developed countries. Not only are there obvious resource constraints, but also a significant part of the population may lack access to basic energy services.

Yet, developing countries also have some advantages. They can learn from past experience, avoid some of the policy missteps of the last half century and have an opportunity to "leapfrog" directly to cleaner and more efficient technologies. Fortunately many essential elements of a sustainable energy transition can be expected to mesh well with other critical development objectives, such as improving public health, broadening employment opportunities, nurturing domestic industries, expanding reliance on indigenous resources and improving a country's balance of trade.

This does not mean that cleaner, more efficient technologies will usually be the first choice or that difficult trade-offs can always be avoided. In the near term, many sustainable energy technologies are likely to remain more expensive than their conventional counterparts. Even when they are cost-effective, as is already the case for many efficient technologies, powerful market failures and barriers often stand in the way. Changing the incentives and overcoming those barriers is now more a question of political will and coordination than one of adequate resources (at least at the global level).

This doesn't make the task any easier. In surveying the current landscape, one can find ample justifications for a profoundly pessimistic view—or an equally optimistic view. Which outlook proves more accurate will depend to a large extent on how quickly developed and developing countries recognize and begin to act upon their shared stake in achieving positive outcomes that can be managed only by working together.

# Major Parties Involved

- ➤ The SDG (sustainable energy development) Fund programmes promote the use of renewable and sustainable sources of energy. At the same, time they promote construction techniques that are more energy efficient. Goal 7 targets include:
  - By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services
  - By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix
  - By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency

- By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology
- By 2030, expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States, and land-locked developing countries, in accordance with their respective programmes of support
- Developing countries with raw resources that can switch to renewable energy resources, such as India
- ➤ The International Energy Agency which provides <u>data</u>, <u>analysis</u>, and <u>solutions</u> on all fuels and technologies.
- The Energy Storage Partnership (ESP) comprises the World Bank Group and 29 organizations working together to help develop energy storage solutions tailored to the needs of developing countries. By connecting stakeholders and sharing international experiences in deploying energy storage solutions, the ESP will help bring new technological and regulatory solutions to developing countries, as well as help develop new business models that leverage the full range of services that storage can provide. The ESP will take a holistic, technology-neutral approach by including all forms of energy storage, including batteries. The ESP will help expand the global market for energy storage, leading to technology improvements and accelerating cost reductions over time.

# Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

➢ One approach that has worked well in many countries is the so-called "feed-in-tariff," which is a guarantee that renewable energy producers will be able to sell the electricity they generate at a price set in advance by the government. To date, there are 78 countries, states, and provinces that have passed feed-in-tariffs for renewable energy, including a rising number of developing countries. These include major emerging

- economies such as China and India, as well as smaller countries such as Tanzania and Thailand. In all of them, the feed-in-tariffs have led to more investment in renewable energy generation and an increased share of renewables in the electricity mix.
- India's use of policies to create stable demand for wind power has led to development of a successful manufacturing base, making India the fifth largest wind power market in the world. An Indian company, Suzlon, which began in 1995 with just 25 people, is now the third largest
- ➤ In Brazil, after experimenting with various incentive schemes for increasing investments in renewable energy, the National Agency for Electrical Energy held the country's first wind-only power auction in December 2009. More than 1800 MW of wind power was contracted for.
- ➤ MEXICO CITY'S Sustainable Buildings Certification Programme, developed and implemented in partnership with the local construction and building industry, covers 8,220 square meters of floor area across 65 buildings and has reduced 116,789 tons of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions, saved 133 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity and 1,735,356 cubic meters of potable water, and created 68 new jobs between 2009 and 2017.
- ➤ Uganda's capital city, KAMPALA, has partnered with businesses to scale up an array of clean cooking technology initiatives, installing 64 improved eco-stoves in 15 public schools, constructing bio digesters in 10 public schools, and funding companies that train women and youth to produce low-carbon briquettes from organic waste

## **Possible Solutions**

- Promoting energy efficiency and adopt minimum efficiency standards for buildings, appliances and equipment, and vehicles.
- > Reforming and re-directing energy subsidies.
- ➤ Identifying the most promising indigenous renewable energy resources and implementing policies to promote their sustainable development.
- > Seeking developed-country support for the effective transfer of advanced energy technologies, while building the indigenous human and institutional capacity needed to support sustainable energy technologies.
- > Speed the distribution of clean, efficient, and affordable cook stoves.

# **Appendix/Appendices**

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# Topic 2: The question of the decline in pollinating insects, especially bees

## **Introduction**

## **Pollinators by Numbers**

Three-fourths of the world's flowering plants and about 35 percent of the world's food crops depend on animal pollinators to reproduce. More than 3,500 species of native bees help increase crop yields. Some scientists estimate that one out of every three bites of food we eat exists because of animal pollinators like bees, butterflies and moths, birds and bats, and beetles and other insects.

## **How Animal Pollination Works**

Pollinators visit flowers in their search for food (nectar and pollen). During a flower visit, a pollinator may accidentally brush against the flower's reproductive parts, unknowingly depositing pollen from a different flower. The plant then uses the pollen to produce a fruit or seed. Many plants cannot reproduce without pollen carried to them by foraging pollinators.

## **Pollinators Are in Trouble**

You may have heard that bees are disappearing and bats are dying. These and other animal pollinators face many challenges in the modern world. Habitat loss, disease, parasites, and environmental contaminants have all contributed to the decline of many species of pollinators.

# <u>Definition of Key Terms</u>

**Pollinating insects**: insect pollination is a form of pollination whereby pollen of plants, especially but not only of flowering plants, is distributed by insects. ... Many plants, including flowering plants such as grasses, are instead pollinated by other mechanisms, such as by wind.

**Agricultural sector**: The Agriculture sector comprises of establishments primarily engaged in growing crops, raising animals, and harvesting fish and other animals from a farm, ranch, or their natural habitats.

**Pesticides**: Pesticides are substances that are meant to control pests, including weeds. Most pesticides are intended to serve as plant protection products (also known as crop protection products), which in general, protect plants from weeds, fungi, or insects.

## **General Overview**

Human activity is transforming natural systems and endangering the ecosystem services they provide, which has consequences for human health. The study of the European Commission in 2016, quantified the human health impact of losses to pollination, providing the first global analysis of its kind. The researchers say pollinator declines could increase the global disease burden and recommend increased monitoring of pollinators in at-risk regions, including Eastern and Central Europe. Human activity is accelerating the loss of biodiversity. Pollinators are experiencing particular declines, including insects like bees. In the past 10 years, the number and species diversity of both managed and wild pollinators has decreased. The main reasons for global decline are industrial agriculture, parasites/pathogens and climate change. The loss of biodiversity, destruction of habitat and lack of forage due to monocultures and pesticides are particular threats for honeybees and wild pollinators. It is becoming increasingly evident that some insecticides, at concentrations applied routinely in the current chemical-intensive agriculture system, exert clear, negative effects on the health of pollinators - both individually and at the colony level.

These declines are of direct concern for human health. This is because the work of pollinators is critical for growing crops — pollinators contribute to yield for an estimated 35% of global food production. They are also directly responsible for up to 40% of the global supply of certain nutrients, including vitamin A, which is important for growth and development, and folic acid, which is essential for bodily function and cannot be synthesised by humans. Pollinator loss could therefore not only reduce energy intake, but also threaten population health. This study estimated the effect pollinator declines might have on human health by modelling impact on food and nutrient intake across the globe. The researchers assembled a database of supplies of 224 different food types in 156 countries, based on 2009 FAO data. To estimate the reductions in nutrient and food intakes caused by pollinator declines, they quantified the nutrient composition and pollinator dependence of the foods. Calorie intake was kept constant by assuming replacement with staple foods, such as cereals. This is supported by evidence of increased intake of cheap staple foods as a coping strategy during food shortages. If all pollinators were eliminated, global fruit supplies would decline by 23%, vegetables by 16% and nuts and seeds by 22%. Seventy-one million people in low-income countries could become deficient in vitamin A and a further 2.2 billion already consuming below the average would

experience further declines in supply. For folic acid, 173 million people may become newly deficient in the vitamin and a further 1.23 billion already deficient would experience further declines. Changes in food and nutrient intake were linked to risk of three groups of disease: noncommunicable (non-infectious, chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease), communicable (transmissible diseases such as TB and influenza) and malnutrition-related (e.g. vitamin deficiencies like rickets), using the Global Burden of Disease 2010 risk assessment framework. Global deaths from non-communicable and malnutrition-related diseases were estimated to increase by 1.42 million (2.7%) every year, and 'disability-adjusted life years' (DALYs: years lost due to poor health, disability or early death) would increase by 27 million (1.1%) each year.

Regions identified as at risk — central and eastern Europe, south and southeast Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa — may particularly benefit from increased monitoring of local pollinators to protect public health, as well as economic well being. By estimating per-person intake of nutrients and foods under full and partial pollinator decline scenarios, and then quantifying the health effects, this study provides the first worldwide analysis of the contribution of pollination services to human health. Overall, the authors say policymakers (especially in vulnerable nations) should mitigate the risk by implementing management strategies. They cite the EU, which has restricted use of neonicotinoid pesticides and promoted natural beekeeping practices, as an example. By revealing the potential impact of and national vulnerabilities to pollinator decline, this study will help policymakers to make decisions about which strategies to use and where.

# **Major Parties Involved**

### > The agricultural sector

As pollinating insects keep plants alive by taking up the produced pollen they are vital to keep many ecosystems alive. also agricultural goods that we depend on, which are also goods that make up a large amount of developing GDPs is highlighly crucial for human well-being and economic activities. Thus the decline of these insects could well affect the agricultural sector, leading to unemployment and a lower national wealth.

#### > Scientists

☐ There are many scientific explanations to why pollinating insects are declining, but there hasn't been a globally recognised piece of scientific research accepted by the mass world population that highlights the real reason behind this issue. Thus, as this is such a

scientific topic, scientists offer a very important aspect to the discussion.

## > National governments

☐ This problem is double edged, on the one hand it could leave a nation without enough resources, but secondly it could destroy the economies of whole regions which rely on these insects to give them resources to produce goods from, for example honey produced in Russia. Thus, national governments are major parties as they need to keep a good economic standard with low unemployment and many job aspects, whilst keeping the standard of living fairly high.

# <u>Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue</u>

- > Fifth iteration of the Save America's Pollinators Act in the USA
  - ☐ The bill's latest form calls for a joint initiative by the U.S.

    Department of Agriculture, Environmental Protection Agency and

    Department of the Interior to monitor wild bee species, including

    bumble and mason bees. It also proposes changes to the EPA's

    pesticide review process—namely, establishing a board of

    beekeepers, scientists and farmers who would review research on

    pesticides' effects on pollinators before the chemicals could be
    approved for use on agricultural plants.

### > Bill A-3398

Bill A-3398 requires pesticide applicators to notify both honeybee and native beekeepers when they are applying pesticides within three miles of a registered beehive or bee yard.

#### > Bill A-3400

☐ Assembly bill A-3400 would require the Department of Environmental Protection to establish an educational course on pesticides' effects on bees for pesticide applicators and operators.

# **Possible Solutions**

Documenting pollinator decline. One of the main recommendations emerging is to seek quantification of pollinator declines through careful case history studies. Long-term

- monitoring of pollinators and comparative assessments at specific study areas were recommended approaches for gathering the needed data on decline. This has proved to be quite a challenge because of natural fluctuations in pollinator populations and the lack of long-term baseline data. Where decline has been detected, loss of habitat is suggested as the main cause.
- ➤ Causes of decline and restoration of pollinators. Habitat loss is a convenient general explanation for the cause of decline, but detailed information is needed on the precise factors causing decline. Further, specific causes of decline are not always obvious, and this becomes an important issue when considering projects to restore or establish pollinators and their required resources (often diverse) to an area.
- More research on non-honey-bee pollinators. Honey bees can be likened to a monoculture in agriculture; overdependence on a single organism in agriculture can lead to disastrous results when natural mortality factors get out of balance. Such was the case with blight on a large portion of the U.S. corn crop several years ago. Because <a href="honey bees">honey bees</a> are now showing great vulnerability to two species of parasitic mites, more research on these parasites and on other bees (especially native solitary species) is being conducted.
- Conservation of pollinators. Much has been written on conserving pollinators and especially bees. Unfortunately, there is little evidence to suggest that conservation recommendations, which would result in measurable increases in pollinator numbers, have been put into action. Many possibilities exist for increasing pollinators through manipulations of preferred food plants, nonfloral plant products (e.g., resins), and planned efforts to increase nesting sites and other requisites such as alternate food plants for moths, beetles, wasps, flies, bats, etc
- ➤ Increasing awareness of pollinator services. The conservation of pollinators and calling attention to vital services provided by pollinators become issues of information transfer that biologists must address. They are the only professionals who know the needs and fragilities of small organisms such as bees, flies, beetles, and nocturnal organisms such as moths and bats. Pollinator/pollination professionals will need to form closer working relationships with policy-makers, land stewards, and a wide variety of government and nongovernmental organizations to realize future successes in the management of pollinators.

# Appendix/Appendices

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# Topic 3: Enter your committee's third topic in full here

## Introduction

Single use plastics have long been used in economic activities. Ever since plastic was founded, producers have long realised that single use versions of plastics offer higher profit and lower costs than other more durable options. Thus, the production of these single use plastics have been increasing steadily ever since. Although, in contrary to general belief it is usually the developing world which favours single use plastics more than developed nations who have seen research which proves that these single use plastics pollute the environment more than sustainable ones, whereas the developing nations have not faced the consequences yet, nor do they have the economic or societal mindset to take a radical step away from single use plastics.

although most leaders are aware of the threatening problems, they feel as if the utility they gain from single use plastics are much greater than the costs, as it is also a way to push for economic growth. Which is one of the counter arguments proposed by these countries that feel as if their growth opportunities are being diminished by reports that originate from already developed countries that do not need to enjoy economic growth as much as the developing ones.

On the other hand, no report has highlighted how these developing countries can still grow without using these single use plastics, nor does these nations have the trust in other nations to follow suit with them, (this will be explained more in the general overview).

# **Definition of Key Terms**

**Single use plastics**: or disposable plastics, are used only once before they are thrown away or recycled. These items are things like plastic bags, straws, coffee stirrers, soda and water bottles and most food packaging

**Economic activities**: the activity of making, providing, purchasing, or selling goods or services. Any action that involves producing, distributing, or consuming products or services is an economic activity

**Economic growth**: an increase in the amount of goods and services produced per head of the population over a period of time, often caused by increased consumption and demand by consumers

**Plastic pollution**: Plastic pollution is the accumulation of plastic objects and particles (e.g.: plastic bottles and much more) in the Earth's environment that

adversely affects wildlife, wildlife habitat, and humans. Plastics that act as pollutants are categorized into micro-, meso-, or macro debris, based on size.

## **General Overview**

The first steps to produce plastic were done by Leo Baekeland in 1907, in the USA. At a time where plastic was highly needed to insulate materials but also for single use plastics

Plastics are an important material in our economy, and modern daily life is unthinkable without them. At the same time however, they can have serious downsides on the environment and health. Firstly, these plastics and moreover single use plastics are destroying the environment, seen by research done by the UN that states that Each year, an estimated eight million tonnes of plastic end up in the ocean – equivalent to a full garbage truck dumped into the sea every minute, also Between 60 to 90 per cent of the litter that accumulates on shorelines, the surface and the sea floor is made up of plastic.

The most common items are cigarette butts, bags, and food and beverage containers. Consequently, marine litter harms over 800 marine species, 15 of which are endangered. And plastic consumed by marine species enters the human food chain through fish consumption.

Alarmingly, in the last 20 years, the proliferation of microplastics, microbeads and single-use plastics have made this problem even more pronounced.

During the 21st century, the fact that these problems were evident were being seen, thus the issue of single use plastics became a hot topic that needs to be addressed.

Some countries, mainly developed ones, brought about immediate change, for example Washington DCs ban on single use plastics, or many other initiatives by other countries. However, it is still and extremely new topic that is still in discussion in many countries.

The reason why many countries aren't changing their policies even after seeing the harmful effects are mainly due to 2 reasons, one being that they will lose out on a lot of economic growth opportunities if they decide to not use single use plastics which are cheaper and offer a boost in consumption leading to economic growth. Secondly, some countries feel the effects of plastic pollution less than others, for example inland countries send their plastic waste to other less developed countries such as Thailand. However this is definitely not a single country problem, as when countries stop demanding single use plastics, then the major producers, which are usually in other countries, will tend to

lower production as they do not want to have surpluses due to ever increasing storage costs and durability issues

In conclusion, single use plastics are causing irreparable damage to the environment but also offer much needed economic ease and growth in times of such competitive world trade. Thus the question stands, is economic growth and power more valuable than another man's suffering?

# **Major Parties Involved**

## > The European Union:

- Currently holding 28 countries in its bloc, the EU sets out legislation on this topic, which the 28 countries follow, but also this sets an example to the world, thus creating knock on effects as well, for example:
  - They have recently set out an aim to lower use of single use plastic monumentally until 2030, whilst setting out possible fines to member states that do not comply within the time framehttps://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20180830STO11347/how-to-reduce-plastic-waste-eu-strategy-explained

#### > The UN.

By setting out their sustainable development goals, the UN tries to persuade countries into decreasing their use of single use plastics in economic activities. they try to do this by bringing in scientists, policy makers and think tanks in order to give them a platform to come up with a viable solution whilst also showing the countries part of the UN why the over reliance of single use plastics is bad. this is highlighted on the 12th goal of the sustainable development goals.

(https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainableconsumption-production/)

## > Individual governments:

Governments can set out policies to combat single use plastics, as they have the right to impose a law on citizens which they have to comply to, for example:

India has set a plan to eliminate single use plastics within 3 years, with their new plan, the Clean India Mission, which has recently been overruled

#### □ Consumers

Consumers choose to buy the products they wish, their demand pushes supply upwards or wipes out whole production lines themselves, thus consumers that are more aware tend to buy less goods with single use plastics, although this is not a majority of the world population and is generally seen in the more developed sides of the world

#### > NGOs

- NGOs are a crucial party as they aren't bound to any government forces, meaning that they usually operate for the betterment of society, thus we can be sure that their aims at solving this issue is just and that they are usually portraying the right facts with no bias, as they have no political agenda to follow in these cases.
- An example is green dot, which tries to show the public how single use plastics affect our Island and then push for new legislation in parliament(<a href="https://www.google.com.tr/search?">https://www.google.com.tr/search?</a> source=hp&ei=ArOMXJ2TLLCNIwTFjLSICg&q=green+dot+alleviate+ single+use+plastics&btnK=Google
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# Current Attempts to Resolve the Issue

- ☐ EU PARLIAMENT APPROVES SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BAN
  - Citing a need to protect the ocean from a deluge of plastic pollution, the bill calls for a European ban on plastic cutlery and plates, cotton buds, straws, drink-stirrers, and balloon sticks, as well as reductions in other types of single-use plastics like food and beverage containers.

#### □ CONSUMER COMPANIES INVEST IN WASTE COLLECTION

☐ Circulate Capital, a New York City-based investment firm started in 2018, says they have raised \$90 million to invest in this issue in

- Southeast Asia, a move endorsed by conservation group the Ocean Conservancy. CEO of Circulate Capital Rob Kaplan says this investment will go toward improving plastic waste collection on the ground and creating markets for collected material.
- PepsiCo, Coca-Cola, Procter and Gamble, Danone, Unilever, and Dow are committed to funding the \$90 million investment, and Circulate Capital says a deal will be inked by early 2019. The firm says they are also working on ways for medium and small companies to invest.
- ☐ EU, UK, AND INDIA PROPOSE PLASTIC BANS
  - In draft rules released May 28, the European Commission proposed a ban on 10 common items that it says make up about 70 percent of the litter in EU waters. This includes plastic straws, drink stirrers, plates, and more. The rules would still need approval from member states and the European Parliament to move forward. They would likely not go into effect for several years. The proposed law would also mandate that EU countries collect and recycle 90 percent of plastic bottles by 2025. Plastic producers would be on the hook for most of the expense of waste management and cleanup efforts.
- ☐ The UN vows to end the use of single use plastics until the year 2030, after passing a resolution 541 for 71 against.

## **Possible Solutions**

- → Ensure to countries that there is a worldwide attempt to solve the issue, so not using single use plastics will not put developing countries at an economic disadvantage from the ones using them
- → Instead of punishing countries for using these plastics, reward ones that aren't, thus there is a profit motive to change consumption and for countries to pursue possible legislation against the use of single use plastics
- → highly developed countries can come into contact with less developed countries, teaching them how they have managed to bring out such change, sharing expertise and increasing the knowledge contained by the general population but also the leaders and policy makers of the country.

→ pursue options that allow for countries that do not use single use plastics to still compete economically with countries that will carry on operating on single use plastics

# **Appendix/Appendices**

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