



GLOBAL PLASTIC TREATY NEGOTIATIONS

COUNTRY POSITIONS

A Briefing Document for the 5th Session of the Intergovernmental
Negotiating Committee (INC 5) to end global plastic pollution

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COUNTRY POSITIONS

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FOREWORD



Resolution 5/14 adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) in March 2022 played a critical role in transitioning from plastic waste management to addressing plastic pollution throughout its life cycle, from production to disposal. As many as 193 UNEP member states came together for the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop a legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution including in the marine environment in response to global concerns about the environmental and health impacts of plastic, particularly in the marine environment which included key issues such as reduction of plastic production, chemicals used in plastics, problematic plastics (products), product design, waste management, and financial mechanisms to support low and middle-income countries in managing plastic pollution.

The negotiations so far have highlighted a global divide, with many countries and environmental advocacy groups proposing strong treaties with legally binding commitments to reduce plastic production and phase out problematic, avoidable, and unnecessary plastics. Large oil and gas producers are hesitant due to the economic stakes involved in reducing plastic production. As the INC moves closer to its final session, the challenge will be to reconcile environmental goals with economic concerns, finding ways to limit plastic pollution while considering the impact on industries and economies dependent on plastic production.

The Chair, Luis Vayas Valdivieso, presented the Chair's non-paper to map areas of convergence and address divergences among member states, aiming to advance the negotiations. This document consolidates common ground among committee members, and its third version is expected to streamline the negotiation process and foster active participation from all parties. Achieving progress on these critical issues requires significant cooperation and collective effort to chart the path forward.

As we approach the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to end plastic pollution, our expectations at Centre for Science and Environment in India will focus on fostering discussions that prioritize human health, equity, and accountability. The harmful effects of plastic pollution on human health—from toxic chemicals emitted and leached throughout the plastic lifecycle to micro-plastics contaminating our food, water, and bodies—must be a key focus in these negotiations. The global treaty must incorporate clear, enforceable measures to protect public health at every stage of the plastic lifecycle.

National efforts alone are insufficient to tackle the escalating plastic pollution crisis without global commitments that are legally binding. Global bans on problematic plastic products and harmful chemicals, guided by scientific criteria, will enable the design of safer and more sustainable materials, fostering a non-toxic circular economy. Establishing uniform standards for product design, composition, and recyclability will enhance recycling efficiency and limit the spread of plastics that disrupt recycling systems.

Operationalizing the polluter pays principle is essential to ensure accountability. Current schemes like Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) have had limited contribution to funding plastic waste management. A more effective approach would be establishing a dedicated fund to support developing countries including Small Island Developing States, which often lack the infrastructure to manage plastic waste effectively. A key tool for this would be the Global Plastic Pollution Fee, requiring producers to cover the true cost of managing plastic pollution. This would encourage better production practices, fund sustainable waste management systems, and promote innovation in reusable and recyclable materials. Support mechanisms such as technology transfer, financial assistance, and capacity building are vital.

The outcomes of INC-5 should strike a balance between ambition and practicality, keeping people at the heart of the negotiations.

My colleagues have put together this report to help build the consensus — it is important that priorities of all countries can be understood and the positions mapped so that a common roadmap can emerge from this. The challenge of plastic is more than the litter that has filled up our cities and oceans, leading to increased health burdens. It is about our approach to build businesses differently in a world that faced with multiple planetary risks.

Sunita Narain
Director General
Centre for Science and Environment

1

INTRODUCTION



The Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to end plastic pollution came into being in response to a growing global concern about the environmental and health impacts of plastics, primarily in the marine environment. Resolution 5/14 was adopted in 2022 — the goal was to put together and agree to a **legally binding international treaty** by 2025 to comprehensively address plastic pollution throughout its life cycle, from production to disposal (*see Box: The UNEA and the INC*).

The INC held its first meeting in 2022, with subsequent sessions focusing on building consensus among participating countries, addressing key issues like reduction of plastic production, chemicals used in plastics, problematic plastics (products), product design, (plastic) waste management and financial mechanisms to support low- and middle-income countries in managing plastic pollution.

So far, these negotiations have underscored a global divide: while many countries and environmental advocacy groups support a strong treaty with legally binding commitments to reduce plastic production and phase out the problematic, avoidable and unnecessary plastics, other nations — primarily large oil and gas producers — are hesitant. This divide centres around the economic stakes involved in reducing plastic production by the oil- and gas-rich and plastic-producing countries.

Plastics are derived primarily from petrochemicals, and as the world shifts away from fossil fuels to other renewable sources of energy, oil and gas industries are increasingly investing in plastic production as an alternative revenue stream. **Limiting plastic production threatens this revenue**, which is why the oil and gas sector and plastic-producing countries often resist strong commitments in a treaty that would limit or reduce plastic manufacturing (*see Table 1: Consumption and production of total petroleum (and other liquids) by oil- and gas-rich countries*). **It should be noted here that not all oil- and gas-producing countries are against a strong legally binding instrument, but all major plastic-producing countries are.**

The group of countries pushing for a treaty with lower ambitions focusing primarily on plastic waste management identifies itself as the **‘Like-minded Countries’ (LMCs)**. There are, also, some member states which continue to sit on the fence and have not publicly admitted to being a part of this group.

As the INC moves closer to its final session, these dynamics will continue to shape the discussions with significant pushback expected from the LMCs. The challenge will be to reconcile environmental goals with economic concerns, finding ways to

THE UNEA AND THE INC

The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) was formed in 2012 to create an effective system of international environmental governance. Every two years, its 193 members states gather with business and civil society bodies to set priorities for global environmental policies, develop international environmental laws, and agree on steps to address the planet’s most pressing environmental challenges.

As the key decision-making body on environmental issues, UNEA resolutions also inform the work of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). During its fifth meeting in March 2022, UNEA adopted resolution 5/14, which mandated the creation of an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop a legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution. INC consists of all the member states of the UNEP that are negotiating the instrument. Resolution 5/14 also mandated that the instrument cover the “full life cycle of plastic”.

One group of countries pushing for a treaty with lower ambitions, which identifies itself as the Like-minded Countries (LMCs), have been challenging the scope of resolution 5/14, and increasing number of discussions have happened around the starting point of the plastic life cycle — or whether the INC should continue to discuss plastics or solely focus on managing plastic pollution, preferably plastic waste.

Many member states have flagged the absence of a definition of basic terminologies like “plastics”, “plastic life cycle”, “problematic, unnecessary, and avoidable plastics” etc, among others.

limit plastic pollution while considering the impact on industries and economies dependent on plastic production.

Table 1: Consumption and production of total petroleum (and other liquids) by oil- and gas-rich countries, 2022

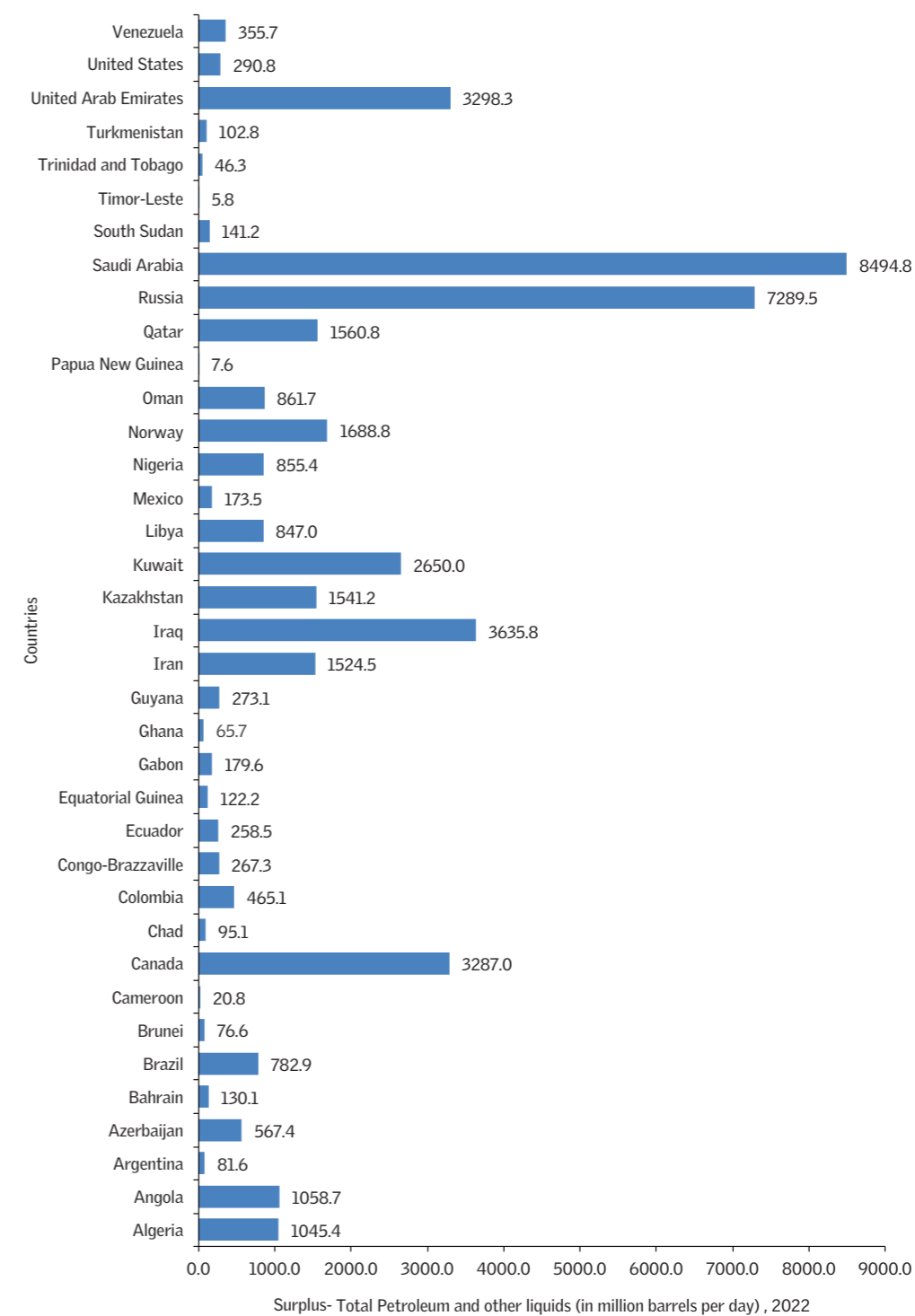
Country	Consumption of total petroleum and other liquids (million barrels per day)	Production of total petroleum and other liquids (million barrels per day)
Algeria	427.6	1473.0
Angola	126.6	1185.3
Argentina	705.6	787.2
Azerbaijan	105.4	672.8
Bahrain	71.6	201.8
Brazil	3027.4	3810.3
Brunei	17.0	93.7
Cameroon	40.5	61.3
Canada	2406.5	5693.5
Chad	14.5	109.6
Colombia	319.9	785.0

GLOBAL PLASTIC TREATY NEGOTIATIONS

Country	Consumption of total petroleum and other liquids (million barrels per day)	Production of total petroleum and other liquids (million barrels per day)
Congo-Brazzaville	12.1	279.3
Ecuador	225.3	483.8
Equatorial Guinea	6.2	128.4
Gabon	15.9	195.5
Ghana	109.5	175.3
Guyana	16.5	289.6
Iran	2136.1	3660.6
Iraq	917.6	4553.4
Kazakhstan	288.1	1829.3
Kuwait	372.2	3022.2
Libya	229.8	1076.8
Mexico	1856.5	2030.0
Nigeria	514.5	1369.9
Norway	218.1	1906.9
Oman	210.9	1072.6
Papua New Guinea	26.9	34.4
Qatar	296.6	1857.4
Russia	3684.3	10973.8
Saudi Arabia	3649.0	12143.8
South Sudan	13.9	155.1
Timor-Leste	4.2	10.0
Trinidad and Tobago	32.5	78.8
Turkmenistan	152.2	255.0
United Arab Emirates	938.5	4236.8
United States	20010.2	20301.0
Venezuela	367.0	722.6

Source: Independent statistics and analysis, US Energy Information Administration

Graph 1: Surplus of total petroleum (and other liquids) in oil- and gas-rich countries



Source: Independent statistics and analysis, US Energy Information Administration

2

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY



The compilation of the draft text of the international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, has been developed on the basis of the interventions made on the floor during the four rounds of global negotiations.

Member states and groups of countries can choose to make in-session submissions which are made public by the secretariat. The submissions shared by the members are uploaded on the INC webpage.

This Briefing Document by CSE has studied the submissions uploaded on the webpage, and has grouped the countries into five categories with specific colour codes, as indicated here:

Grey	No in-session submission
Light green	Agrees with the text (includes minor text changes)
Dark green	Proposes ambitious additions to the text
Orange	Proposes text that lowers ambition
Red	Opts for no text

The document is divided into 22 sections based on the provisions which have been considered for analysis. It presents a bird's eye view of the priorities of the countries as mentioned in the submissions. All the in-session submissions related to the provisions (*see Box: Provisions analysed by CSE*) have been considered.

Please note: To ensure ease of understanding, names of the provisions listed in the box may not appear as they appear on the revised zero draft or the compilation of the draft text.

PROVISIONS ANALYSED BY CSE

- Primary plastic polymers
- Chemicals and polymers of concern
- Problematic and avoidable plastic products, including short-lived and single use plastic products
- Products containing intentionally added microplastics
- Exemptions available to a party upon request
- Product design, composition and performance
- Reduce reuse, recycling, refill and repair of plastics and circularity approaches for plastic products
- Use of recycled plastic contents
- Alternative plastics and plastic products
- Non-plastic substitutes
- Extended producer responsibility
- Emissions and releases of plastic throughout its life cycle
- Plastic waste management
- Fishing gear
- Trade in listed chemicals, polymers and products
- Transboundary movement of plastic waste
- Existing plastic pollution, including in the marine environment
- Just transition
- Transparency, tracking, monitoring and labelling
- Financing mechanisms
- Capacity building, technical assistance and technology transfer
- Health aspects



3

**COUNTRY
POSITIONS**

PRIMARY PLASTIC POLYMERS

Primary plastic polymers, which are the basic building blocks for most plastic products, are at the center of ongoing global discussions aimed at addressing plastic pollution. These polymers include materials such as polyethylene (PE), polypropylene (PP), polyvinyl chloride (PVC), and polyethylene terephthalate (PET), among others. Their widespread production and use have contributed significantly to global economic growth, but have also raised serious environmental concerns.

Rwanda, Peru and the EU have put forward ambitious proposals for managing primary plastic production. Rwanda has proposed a new text with a strong public health focus, suggesting 2025 as a baseline year with a 40 per cent reduction target by 2040. Peru suggested inter-session work to establish sustainable production and consumption baselines, including an analysis of global imports and exports, while the EU has advanced a comprehensive approach that includes nationally determined targets, regular reviews, and discouraging subsidies for plastic production. The EU has also proposed science- and risk-based procurement policies to ensure sustainable plastic use.

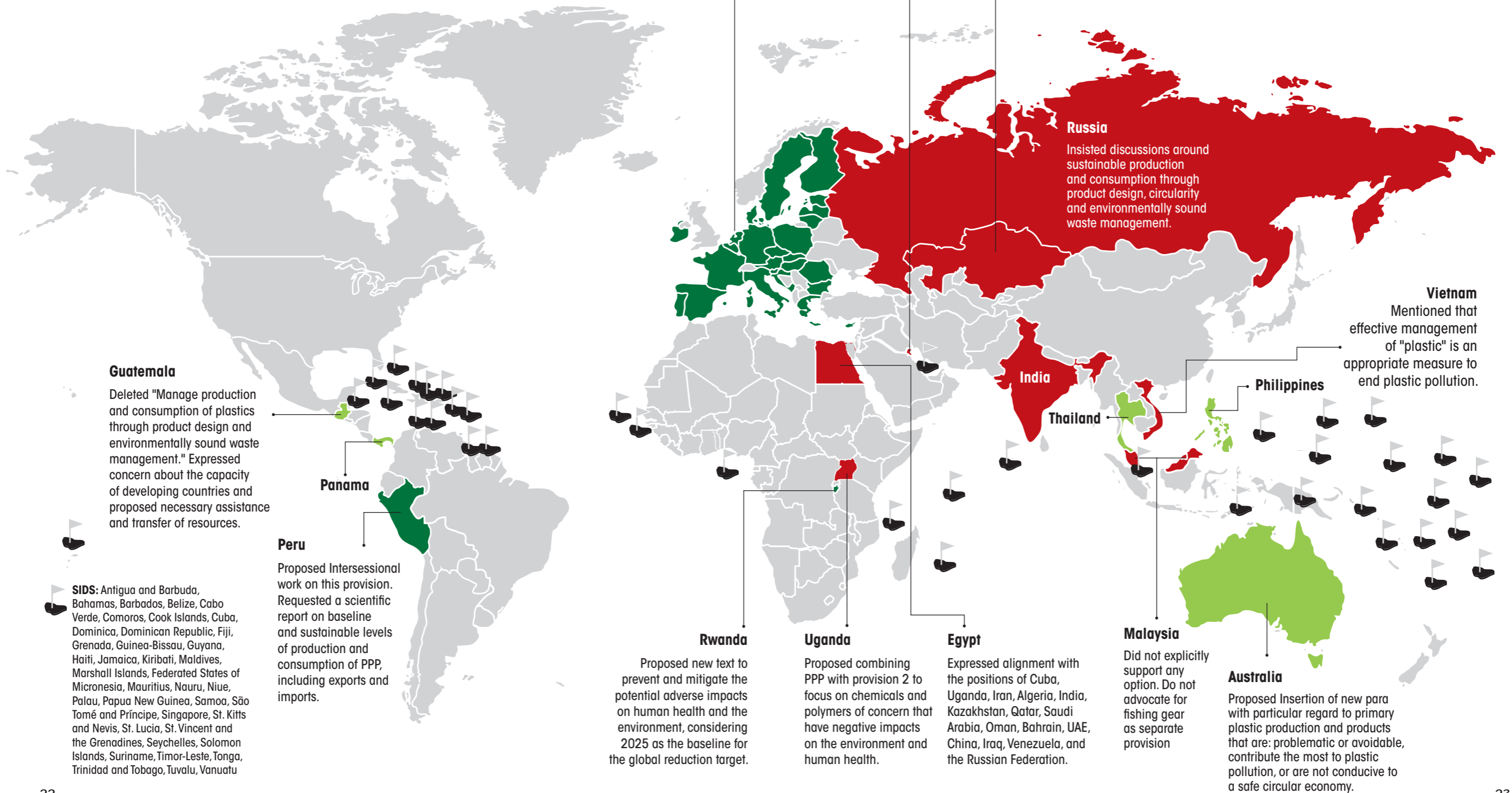
Guatemala, the Philippines, Thailand, Panama and Australia have supported progressive but flexible approaches, emphasising on capacity building and national discretion. Guatemala has expressed concern about the implementation capacities of developing countries and has advocated resource assistance, while Australia has underscored the need to prioritise plastics that are most harmful or challenging to recycle.

In contrast, countries such as Kazakhstan, India, Egypt, Kuwait, Malaysia and Russia have expressed resistance to stricter mandates, emphasising a preference for innovative waste management and sustainable plastic use over global production restrictions. Egypt, notably, has aligned with a coalition of countries opposing stringent measures, reflecting a unified stance against binding production limits and favoring national discretion on plastics management.

UPSTREAM

Primary plastic polymers

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



CHEMICALS AND POLYMERS OF CONCERN

Discussions on plastic pollution in the global negotiations have increasingly focussed on specific chemicals and polymers that are particularly problematic due to their toxicity, persistence or environmental impacts. These include additives such as phthalates, bisphenols and certain flame retardants that are known to leach out during use and disposal, posing risks to both human health and ecosystems. The ongoing talks aim to establish comprehensive regulations that either limit or ban the use of such harmful chemicals in plastic production. By addressing these hazardous substances, the treaty seeks to curb their release into the environment and reduce the negative impacts associated with plastics across their life cycle.

Norway has proposed a stringent criteria to classify hazardous chemicals in plastics and recommending lists to designate chemicals for elimination or minimisation.

The EU and the Philippines have agreed to this provision and suggested constructive measures, with the EU advocating alignment with other international chemical agreements and adding exporters as key stakeholders; the Philippines called for an inter-sessional work programme to develop a hazard-based approach considering sustainability, essentiality and transparency.

In contrast, other countries have signalled resistance. Kazakhstan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait firmly oppose the provision, with Russia arguing that chemical discussions fall outside the INC's mandate, suggesting that these should be managed by other international fora. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, similarly opposed, further limit the treaty's potential scope for managing hazardous substances in plastics.

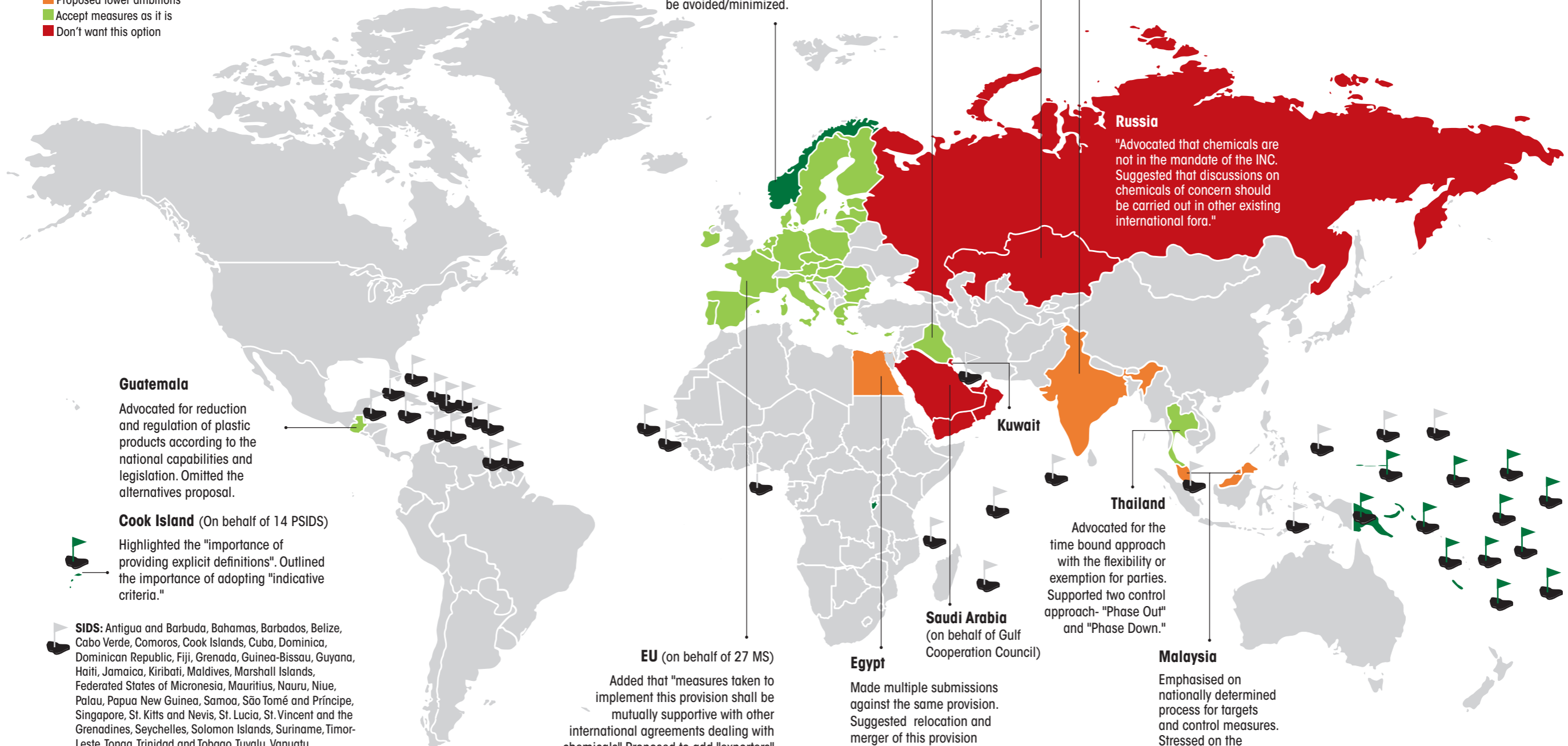
Countries like India and Egypt, while less stringent, have proposed lower ambitions. India has suggested leaving regulation to national discretion with risk-based criteria, and Egypt has proposed merging the chemical provision with those addressing emissions throughout plastics lifecycle.

Meanwhile, Guatemala has taken a neutral stance, advocating caution to avoid overlap with the Rotterdam, Stockholm and Basel Conventions and emphasising that treaty definitions should be ratified by member states.

UPSTREAM

Chemicals and polymers of concern

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



Norway (on behalf of Norway, Cook Islands, and Rwanda)
Presented a CRP to the committee. Proposed an initial hazard criteria for identifying chemicals of concern in plastics that pose harm to human health and/or the environment- (CMR, STOT, EDC, PBT, vPvB). Proposed 2 lists of chemicals: List 1: Chemicals to be eliminated and List 2: Chemicals to be avoided/minimized.

Iraq
Proposed a (elimination and avoidance/reduction) criteria for chemicals of concerns. Suggested intersessional work through the formation of the scientific committee with good geographical representation.

Kazakhstan
Made multiple submissions against the same provision.

India
Excluded polymers of concern. Suggested that the regulation of chemicals must be nationally driven, based on agreed scientific criteria that are risk-based.

Russia
"Advocated that chemicals are not in the mandate of the INC. Suggested that discussions on chemicals of concern should be carried out in other existing international fora."

Guatemala
Advocated for reduction and regulation of plastic products according to the national capabilities and legislation. Omitted the alternatives proposal.

Cook Island (On behalf of 14 PSIDS)
Highlighted the "importance of providing explicit definitions". Outlined the importance of adopting "indicative criteria."

SIDS: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Cook Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Kiribati, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Mauritius, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Singapore, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

GCC: The Gulf Cooperation Council countries — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates

EU (on behalf of 27 MS)
Added that "measures taken to implement this provision shall be mutually supportive with other international agreements dealing with chemicals" Proposed to add "exporters" as stakeholders in addition to producers and importers.

Egypt
Made multiple submissions against the same provision. Suggested relocation and merger of this provision with provision on emissions and releases of plastic throughout its lifecycle.

Saudi Arabia (on behalf of Gulf Cooperation Council)

Thailand
Advocated for the time bound approach with the flexibility or exemption for parties. Supported two control approach- "Phase Out" and "Phase Down."

Malaysia
Emphasised on nationally determined process for targets and control measures. Stressed on the development of annex to provide guiding criteria.

PROBLEMATIC AND AVOIDABLE PLASTIC PRODUCTS including short-lived and single use plastic products

The treaty negotiations highlight the urgent need to address problematic and avoidable plastic products. These products have a short life span and are often not recyclable, leading to their accumulation in the environment. Governments are advocating for clear guidelines and definitions on which products should be phased out or restricted based on their utility and environmental impacts. This approach is supported by data that highlights the disproportionate harm caused by such items, which often end up in landfills or oceans.

The UK has proposed a two-pronged approach to categorise plastics as either “problematic and avoidable” or “problematic but not avoidable”, calling for elimination or minimisation. Switzerland has advocated for a five-point criteria to identify hazardous plastics, focusing on factors such as health hazards, recyclability and environmental impacts, while Samoa has proposed forming expert working groups with representation from Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to address hazardous chemicals, waste management, and financing in inter-sessional work.

Kazakhstan, India, Guatemala, Malaysia and Russia have called for flexibility, emphasising national discretion and scientific criteria to guide action on problematic plastics. Kazakhstan, for instance, has suggested using “regulate” instead of “not allow” or “restrict” and opposed setting a timeframe, while India argues that global mandates are impractical, advocating instead for a science-based approach that accounts for alternative availability. Russia has also emphasised national-level identification of problematic plastics and expressed concerns about terms like “single-use” and “short-lived,” calling for standardised definitions.

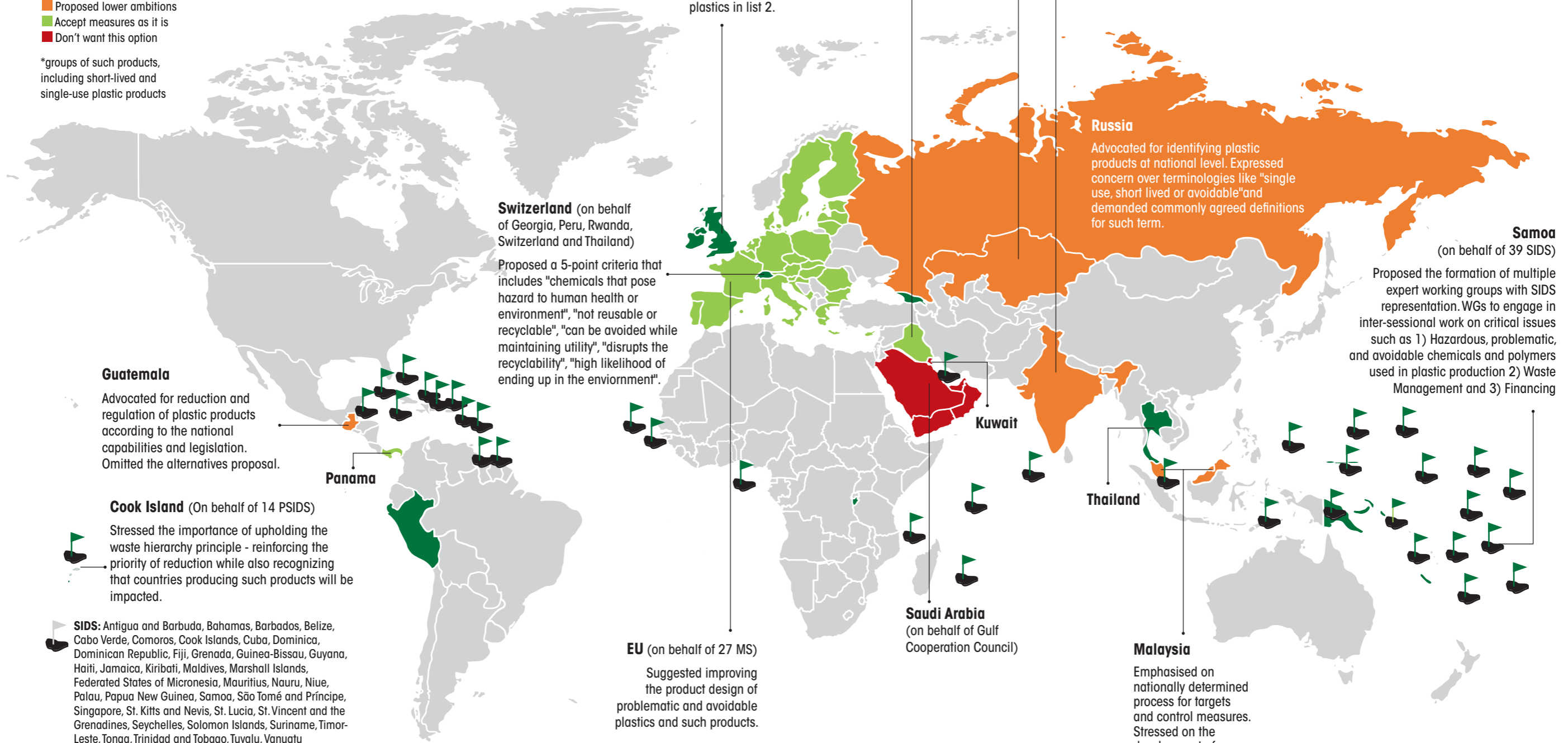
The EU has stressed on improved design standards for problematic plastics to reduce their environmental impacts, while the Cook Islands have pointed to the importance of following the waste hierarchy to prioritise reduction, while recognising that restrictions on certain plastic products might disproportionately impact producer countries.

UPSTREAM

Problematic plastic products and avoidable plastic products*

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option

*groups of such products, including short-lived and single-use plastic products



United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
(on behalf of UK and Thailand)

Presented a proposal to the committee that advocated for a 2 criteria approach to identify plastics as "problematic and avoidable" (list 1) and "problematic but not avoidable" (list 2). Proposed elimination of plastics in list 1 and minimization of plastics in list 2.

Iraq

Proposed a (elimination and avoidance/reduction) criteria for chemicals of concerns. Suggested intersessional work through the formation of the scientific committee with good geographical representation.

Kazakhstan

Suggested a new text, used "regulate" by deleting "not allow," "reduce," "restrict." Did not agree to a time frame. Advocated for a science based criteria.

India

Proposed that there cannot be a global mandate in this regard. Mentioned that products that need to be regulated must be identified based on scientific criteria and the availability of sustainable alternatives.

Russia

Advocated for identifying plastic products at national level. Expressed concern over terminologies like "single use, short lived or avoidable" and demanded commonly agreed definitions for such term.

Samoa

(on behalf of 39 SIDS)

Proposed the formation of multiple expert working groups with SIDS representation. WGs to engage in inter-sessional work on critical issues such as 1) Hazardous, problematic, and avoidable chemicals and polymers used in plastic production 2) Waste Management and 3) Financing

Switzerland (on behalf of Georgia, Peru, Rwanda, Switzerland and Thailand)

Proposed a 5-point criteria that includes "chemicals that pose hazard to human health or environment", "not reusable or recyclable", "can be avoided while maintaining utility", "disrupts the recyclability", "high likelihood of ending up in the environment".

Guatemala

Advocated for reduction and regulation of plastic products according to the national capabilities and legislation. Omitted the alternatives proposal.

Panama

Cook Island (On behalf of 14 PSIDS)

Stressed the importance of upholding the waste hierarchy principle - reinforcing the priority of reduction while also recognizing that countries producing such products will be impacted.

SIDS: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Cook Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Kiribati, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Mauritius, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Singapore, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

GCC: The Gulf Cooperation Council countries — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates

EU (on behalf of 27 MS)

Suggested improving the product design of problematic and avoidable plastics and such products.

Saudi Arabia

(on behalf of Gulf Cooperation Council)

Thailand

Malaysia

Emphasised on nationally determined process for targets and control measures. Stressed on the development of annex to provide guiding criteria.

PRODUCTS CONTAINING INTENTIONALLY ADDED MICROPLASTICS

Micro and nano-plastics, tiny fragments resulting from the breakdown of larger plastic items or released from products during use, are an emerging concern due to their pervasive presence in waterbodies, soil and even the air. These particles are small enough to be ingested by wildlife and humans, leading to potential health risks that are still being studied but include inflammation, toxicity and bioaccumulation in the food chain. The treaty negotiations emphasise the importance of understanding and mitigating the sources of these particles, which include tire wear, textiles and degradation of improperly disposed plastics.

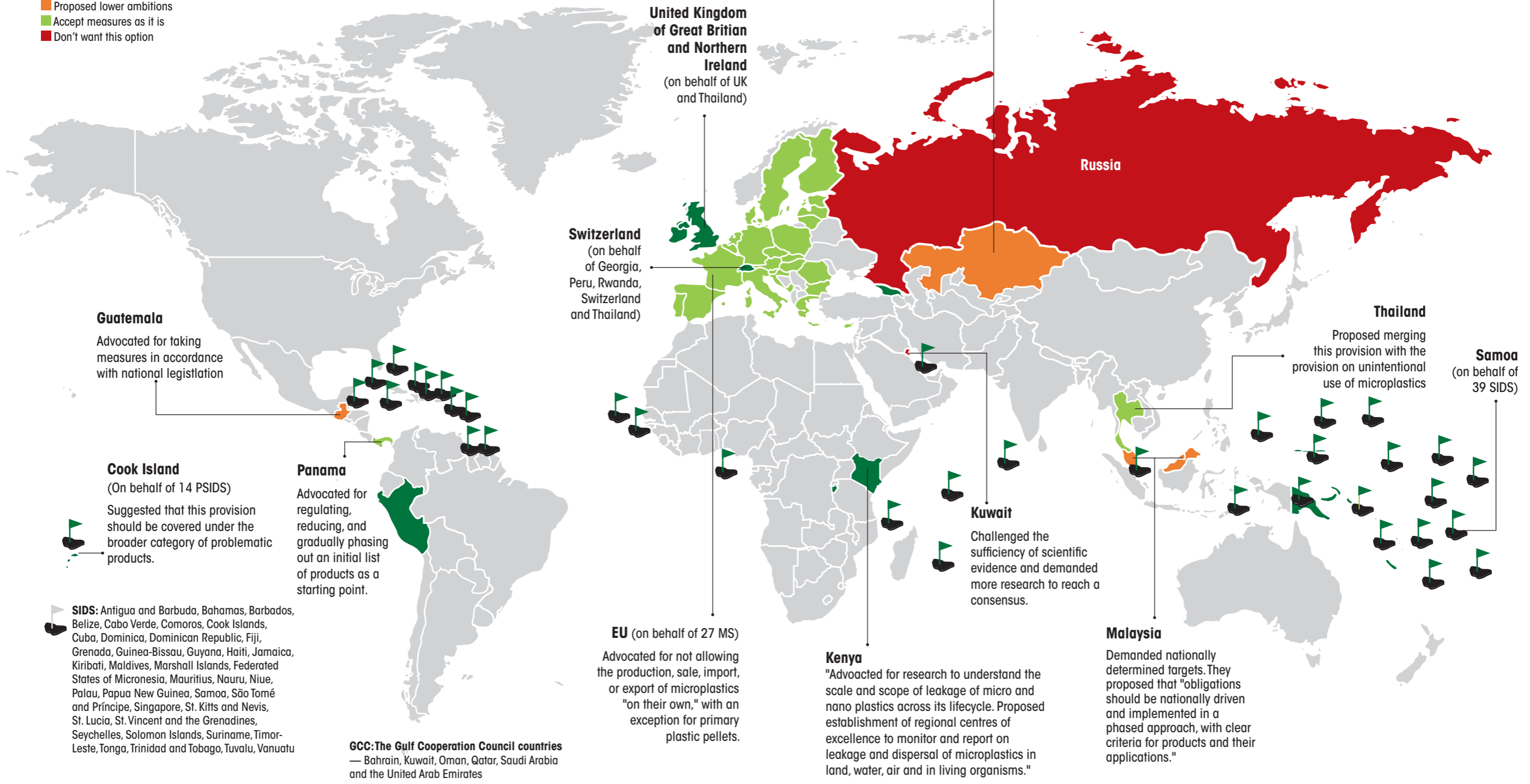
Kenya has advocated for extensive research on micro and nano-plastics' life cycles, proposing the creation of regional centers of excellence to monitor and report microplastic leakage and dispersal in land, water, air and living organisms. The Cook Islands have backed Kenya's proposal, also recognising the need to link this provision with other treaty aspects such as product design, emissions and transparency, as suggested by the EU and USA.

Kuwait has voiced concerns, arguing that the existing scientific evidence is insufficient, and has called for more research to build a consensus.

UPSTREAM

Products containing Intentionally added microplastics

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



EXEMPTIONS AVAILABLE TO A PARTY UPON REQUEST

In the framework of international treaties, the availability of exemptions for certain parties can be a crucial tool for ensuring broad participation while acknowledging varying levels of capacity and development. In the context of the plastic pollution treaty, discussions include provisions for countries to request exemptions from specific obligations under certain conditions. These exemptions would cater to nations that face unique challenges in implementing stringent regulations, such as limited infrastructure, economic constraints or dependence on specific plastic products for essential uses. The exemption process aims to be transparent and based on clear criteria to prevent misuse while supporting countries in gradually aligning with global standards.

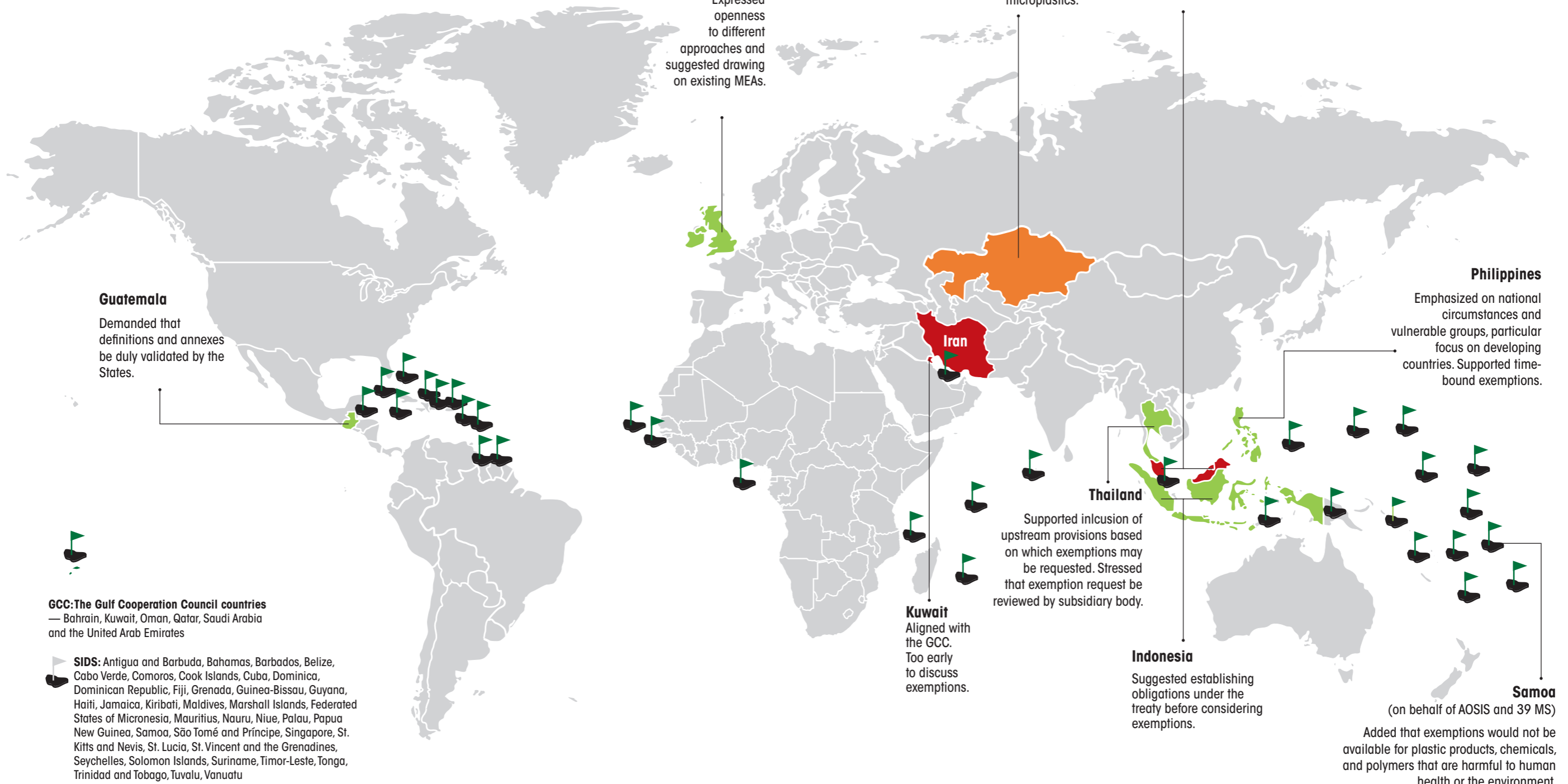
There has been no clear consensus among the parties on this issue. Some have proposed including provisions for exemptions, while others considered it premature to discuss exemptions before establishing the treaty's core obligations. Samoa, on behalf of AOSIS, has emphasised that exemptions should not be granted for plastic products, chemicals and polymers that are harmful to human health or the environment. Kazakhstan has called for a cautious approach, suggesting that more provisions should be considered before defining exemptions. It has also requested clarification on terms like intentionally added microplastics. The Philippines has stressed the need to consider national circumstances and protect vulnerable groups when discussing exemptions, highlighting the potential challenges developing countries may face in meeting strict obligations without some flexibility. Thailand has supported including provisions for exemptions, particularly for upstream activities in the plastic lifecycle.

The UK has expressed openness to different approaches and has suggested drawing on existing multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) for guidance. Malaysia believes it is too early to discuss exemptions, and has suggested focusing on establishing the treaty's core obligations first.

CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

Exemptions available to a party upon request

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



PRODUCT DESIGN, COMPOSITION AND PERFORMANCE

Product design plays a pivotal role in addressing plastic pollution, as it determines how a product will be used, its recyclability, and its environmental impact at the end of its life. The treaty negotiations stress the need for eco-friendly design principles that promote sustainability. This includes creating products that are easier to disassemble, use fewer mixed materials, and incorporate recycled content. Discussions also revolve around establishing global standards for product composition, ensuring that harmful additives are minimised or eliminated and that materials used do not impede the recycling process. Performance criteria must be designed to maintain functionality while adhering to environmentally safe practices.

The EU and the Philippines are among the most ambitious, calling for minimum design and performance criteria that align with international standards, promote circularity, and reduce emissions such as microplastics and chemicals of concern. These countries aim to establish universal standards for product safety and recyclability. Pacific Small Islands Developing States (PSIDS) and Thailand have generally supported current measures, with Thailand suggesting an upstream approach and emphasising universal criteria and innovation to encourage sustainable product design.

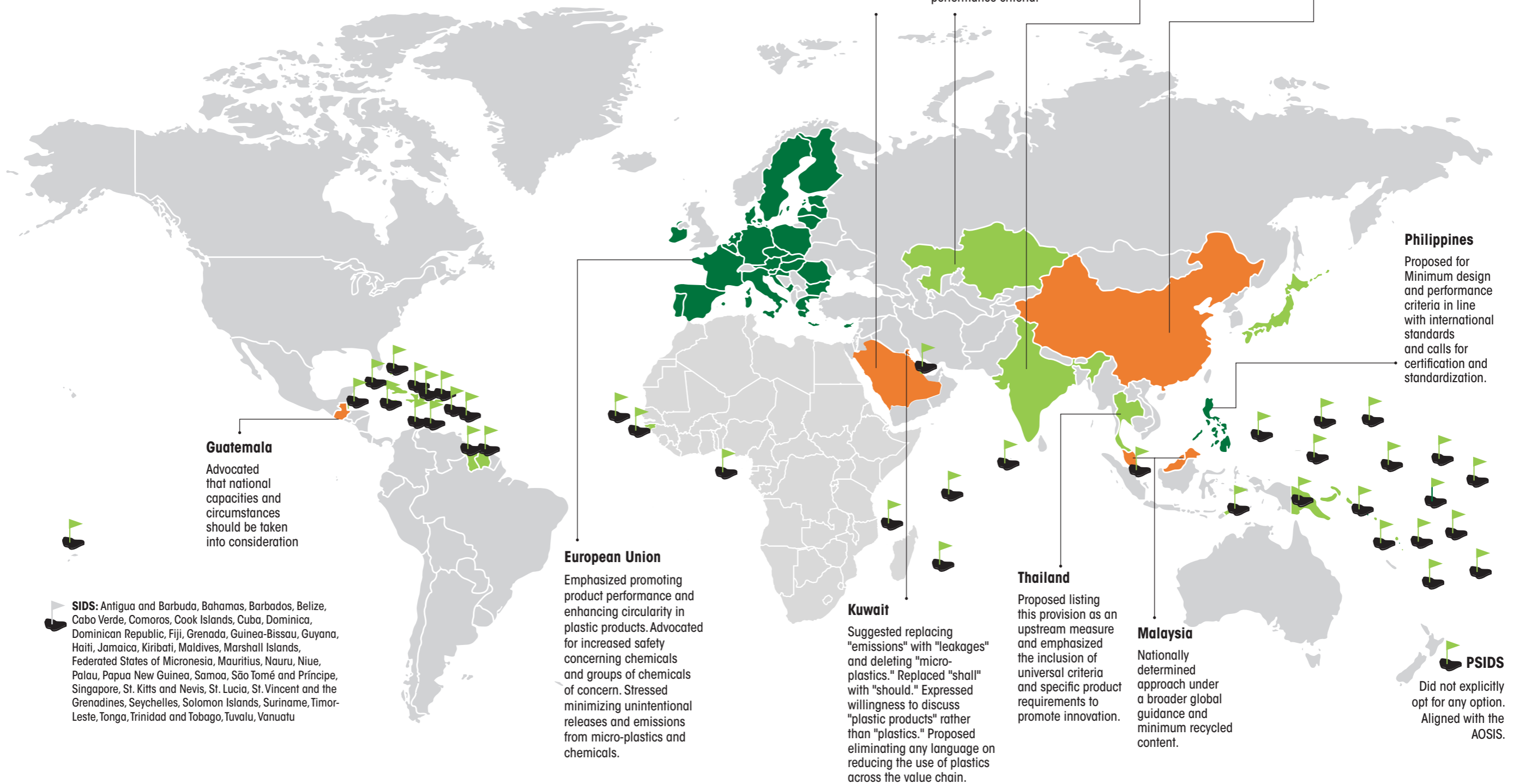
Countries like Kazakhstan, India and Japan have agreed to the provision — however, they support a more nationally driven approach, but still aligned with international standards, indicating some commitment to uniform measures while allowing for local discretion.

In contrast, countries such as Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Guatemala, China and Kuwait have proposed lower ambition levels, emphasising national circumstances over strict global standards. Malaysia calls for a nationally determined approach with a minimum recycled content, while Saudi Arabia and Kuwait notably weaken the language by replacing terms like plastics with plastic products and emissions with leakages, as well as removing references to microplastics. Guatemala and China also advocate flexibility, with China emphasising cost considerations and Guatemala stressing national capacities.

MIDSTREAM

Product design and performance

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



Saudi Arabia
Deleted the word "Plastics" and "microplastics." Replaced the word "emissions" with "leakages."

Kazakhstan
Favoured plastics and plastic products within its territory and those available on the market to comply with global design and performance criteria.

India
Proposed a nationally driven approach based on national circumstances and capabilities, with attention to international standards.

China
Did not explicitly opt for any option. Suggested accounting the cost and quality of recycled product.

Philippines
Proposed for Minimum design and performance criteria in line with international standards and calls for certification and standardization.

Guatemala
Advocated that national capacities and circumstances should be taken into consideration

European Union
Emphasized promoting product performance and enhancing circularity in plastic products. Advocated for increased safety concerning chemicals and groups of chemicals of concern. Stressed minimizing unintentional releases and emissions from micro-plastics and chemicals.

Kuwait
Suggested replacing "emissions" with "leakages" and deleting "micro-plastics." Replaced "shall" with "should." Expressed willingness to discuss "plastic products" rather than "plastics." Proposed eliminating any language on reducing the use of plastics across the value chain.

Thailand
Proposed listing this provision as an upstream measure and emphasized the inclusion of universal criteria and specific product requirements to promote innovation.

Malaysia
Nationally determined approach under a broader global guidance and minimum recycled content.

PSIDS
Did not explicitly opt for any option. Aligned with the AOSIS.

SIDS: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Cook Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Kiribati, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Mauritius, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Singapore, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLING, REFILL AND REPAIR OF PLASTICS and circularity approaches for plastic products

The principles of reduction, reuse, recycling, refill, and repair are fundamental to creating a sustainable plastic life cycle. These concepts form the core of discussions aimed at transitioning from a linear to a circular economy. The treaty emphasises on promoting practices that extend the life of plastic products, thereby reducing the demand for virgin plastic production and minimising waste. Policies supporting refillable packaging systems, incentives for repair services, and advanced recycling technologies are being considered to create robust infrastructure for sustainable plastic management. Ensuring the feasibility and scalability of these practices is key, and discussions often involve sharing best practices and technologies that enable effective implementation.

The EU advocates incentivised systems for reuse, return and refill, alongside repair systems, calling for the development of standardised definitions, metrics and implementation guidelines to harmonise and scale reuse solutions in priority sectors. Similarly, the UK has proposed setting global targets for reuse and refill, alongside national action plans with specific timelines to ensure compliance, which would bolster international commitments to circularity.

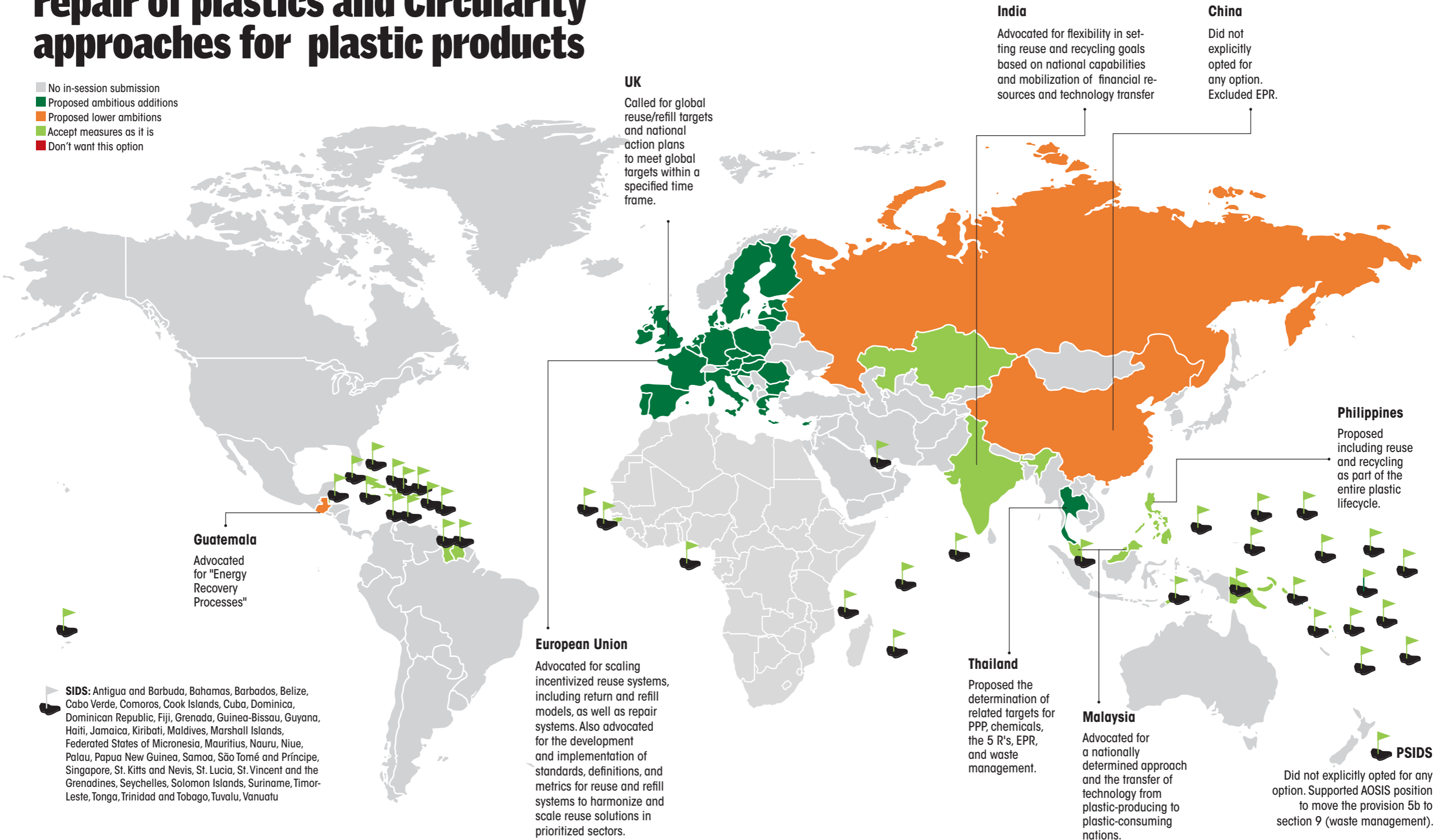
Thailand also aligns with this ambition, proposing target-setting for the five R's, extended producer responsibility (EPR), and chemical safety as part of a comprehensive circular approach. The Philippines has also supported integrating reuse and recycling across the plastic lifecycle, while Kazakhstan and India favour flexible, nation-specific goals.

In contrast, Malaysia, Russia, Guatemala and China prefer a lower ambition, advocating for flexibility over stringent global commitments. Malaysia has called for a nationally determined approach and highlights the importance of technology transfer from plastic-producing to consuming nations. Guatemala suggests including “energy recovery processes” which typically involve incineration as part of the circular economy. China, while supporting recycling, has explicitly excluded EPR from its proposal.

MIDSTREAM

Reduce, reuse, recycling, refill and repair of plastics and Circularity approaches for plastic products

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



USE OF RECYCLED PLASTIC CONTENTS

Incorporating recycled plastic content into new products is an important strategy discussed during treaty negotiations: this is done to reduce reliance on virgin plastics and lower the carbon footprint associated with plastic production. The focus is on setting mandatory targets for recycled content, which would create a demand-driven market for recycled materials and incentivise better collection and processing systems. However, challenges such as contamination, quality assurance and regulatory barriers in food-grade applications need to be addressed. Harmonising standards for recycled content across borders and providing technical support for developing countries to meet these standards are also under discussion.

The EU has led in advocating ambitious global measures, proposing certification schemes and international cooperation to develop harmonised best practices, aiming for consistency and reliability in recycled plastic content usage worldwide. The PSIDS generally support the current direction by aligning with AOSIS. Similarly, Thailand supports discussing recycled content alongside EPR and waste management.

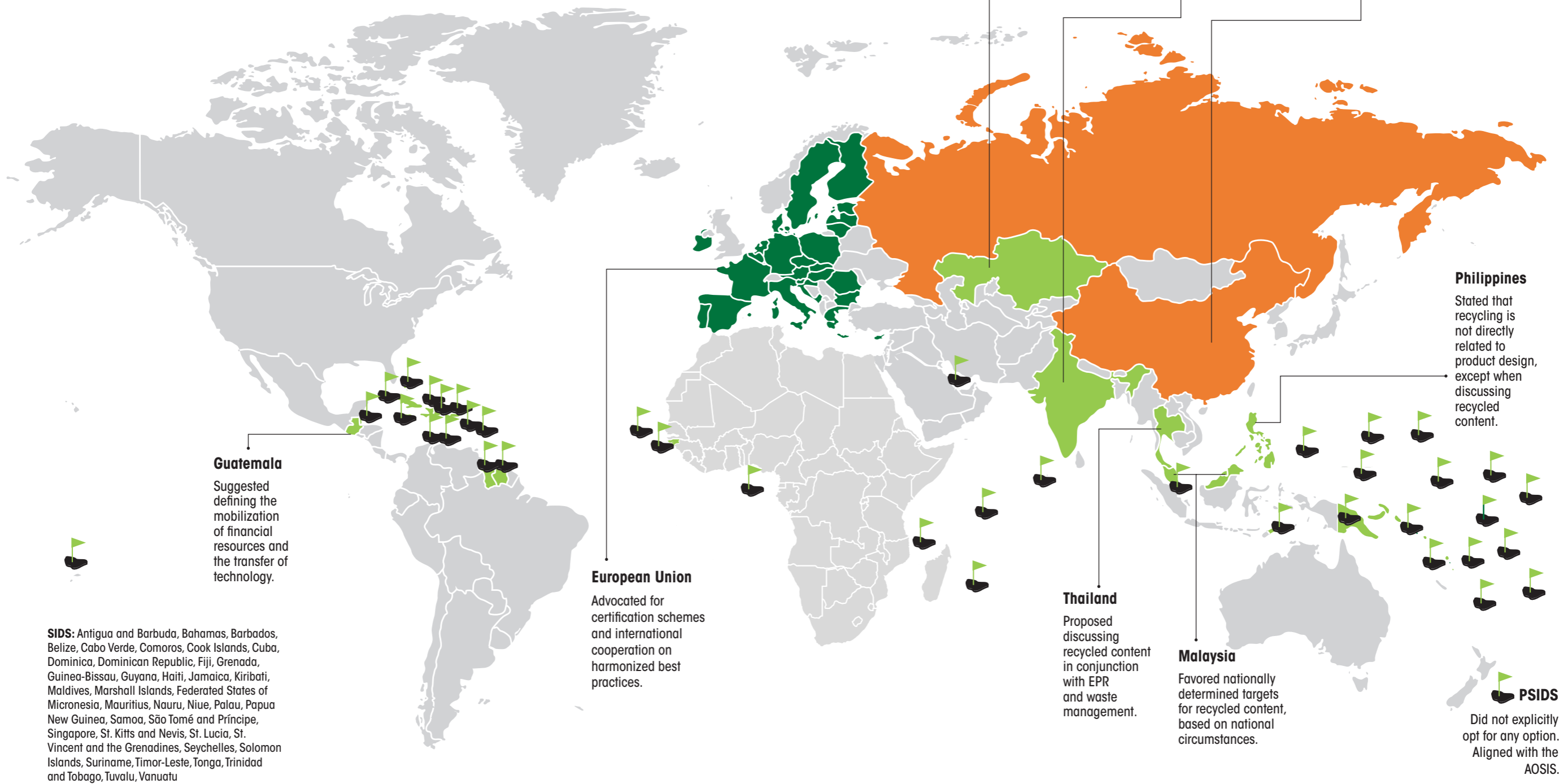
Countries such as Kazakhstan, India, the Philippines and Guatemala have agreed to the provision, but they support more flexible implementations that can be adapted nationally. The Philippines indicates that recycled content should be approached separately from broader product design discussions. India and Guatemala have emphasised the need for flexibility, with India advocating adaptable recycled content targets based on national capacity, and Guatemala recommending the mobilisation of financial resources and technology transfer to support effective implementation.

Meanwhile, countries like Malaysia, Russia and China have shown caution in embracing globally standardised recycled content targets. Malaysia advocates for nationally determined targets tailored to individual national circumstances, emphasising the importance of context. China stresses that recycled content should be approached with considerations of technical feasibility and economic viability, reflecting a preference for flexibility based on practical challenges.

MIDSTREAM

Use of recycled plastic contents

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



ALTERNATIVE PLASTICS AND PLASTIC PRODUCTS

The development and adoption of alternative plastics and plastic products that have reduced environmental impacts are also a significant focus of the negotiations. Biodegradable, compostable and bio-based plastics are being evaluated for their potential to replace conventional plastics. However, there is recognition that alternatives must be truly sustainable, meaning that they should break down under natural conditions without leaving harmful residues. The discussions include the need for clear standards and certifications to distinguish between genuinely eco-friendly products and those that only appear to be so. Policymakers are also considering incentives to promote research and development in alternative materials that align with the treaty's goals of reducing plastic pollution.

The EU advocate cautious incorporation of alternative plastics, and has suggested text to specify bio-based, biodegradable and compostable plastics; PSIDS pushes for a criteria-based approach that could set clear environmental standards. The Philippines too favours a rigorous approach, proposing that alternative plastics meet the same criteria as conventional plastics, addressing safety, sustainability, transparency and essentiality.

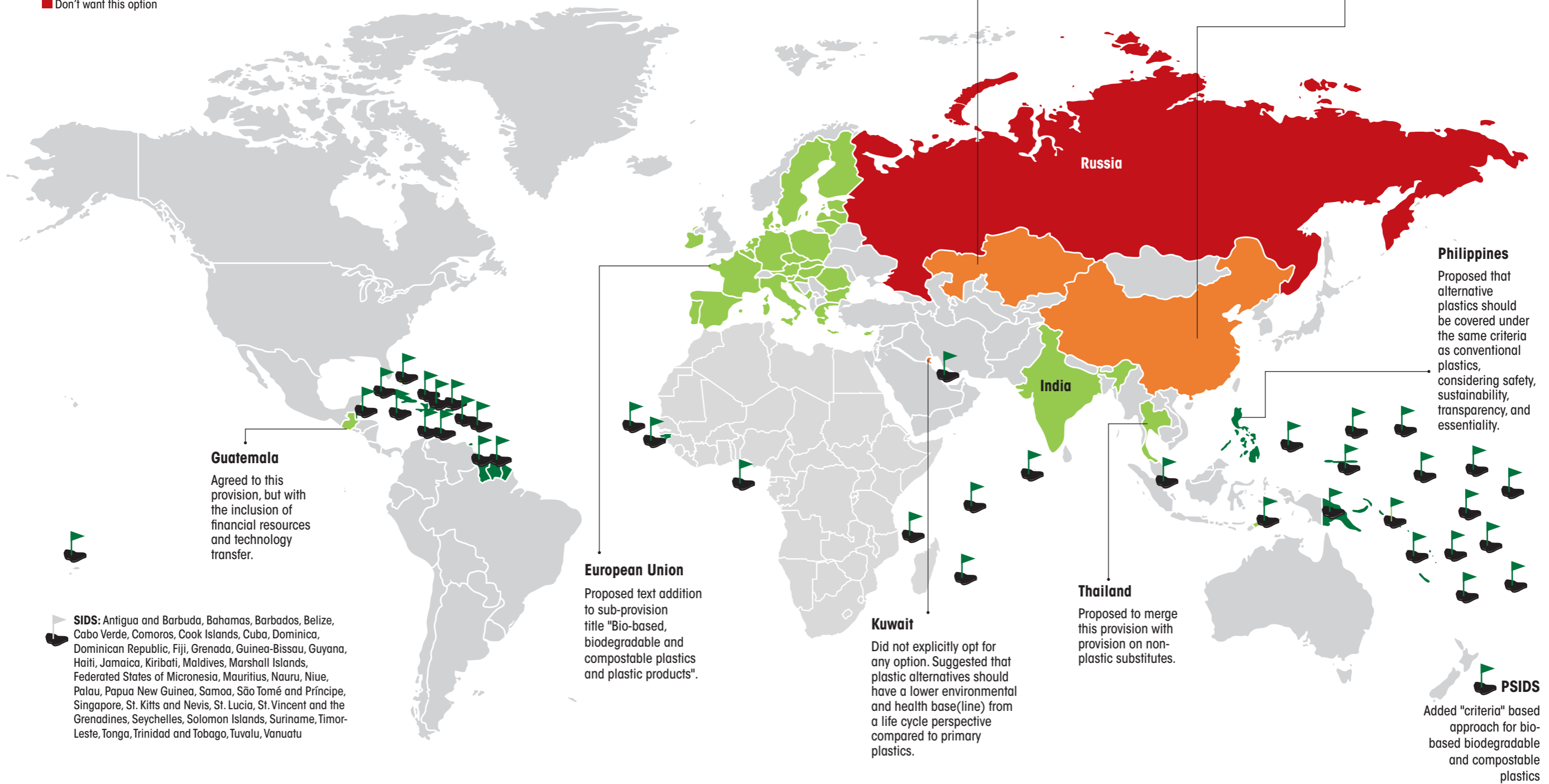
Thailand has agreed to the provision — but suggests merging it with the one on non-plastic substitutes, which could create a more streamlined framework. Guatemala has emphasised the need for financial resources and technology transfer to help developing countries adopt alternative materials effectively.

In contrast, Russia proposes no text under this provision, indicating opposition to formal inclusion. China and Kuwait take a moderate stance, with China advocating for the “promotion” of safe and sustainable alternatives without strict mandates, with Kuwait suggesting that alternatives should have a lower environmental and health impact than primary plastics from a life cycle perspective.

MIDSTREAM

Alternative plastic and plastic products

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



SIDS: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Cook Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Kiribati, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Mauritius, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Singapore, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

NON-PLASTIC SUBSTITUTES

Non-plastic substitutes such as glass, metal, paper and natural fibers are gaining attention as potential replacements for certain plastic products. The treaty deliberations explore the feasibility, economic impact and environmental footprint of scaling up these alternatives. While non-plastic substitutes can offer a viable solution for reducing plastic use, they come with their own set of challenges, including higher production costs and potential environmental impacts from extraction and processing. Policymakers are tasked with finding a balanced approach that encourages the use of substitutes where feasible, without creating unintended consequences that might offset their benefits. The focus is on sustainable alternatives that do not simply shift the burden from one environmental issue to another.

Several countries, including the EU, Samoa (representing AOSIS), Kuwait and Saudi Arabia (representing GCC), Kazakhstan, Thailand, Guatemala, Malaysia, the UK, the Russian Federation, Brazil, Egypt, Panama, Chile, Vietnam and Indonesia have not presented specific positions on non-plastic substitutes. India has advocated for a national-driven approach towards developing and utilising non-plastic substitutes, stressing on the need for financial and technological support for developing countries.

The Philippines has expressed support for incentivising research and innovation in this area. Iran has highlighted the importance of capacity building and technology initiatives, particularly for developing countries, and stressed the need for comprehensive life cycle assessments of alternatives.

CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

Non-plastic substitutes

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

Extended producer responsibility (EPR) is a critical component being discussed to hold producers accountable for the end-of-life management of their products. EPR frameworks require manufacturers to bear the financial and operational responsibility for collecting, recycling or disposing of plastic waste. The treaty negotiations emphasise on designing EPR systems that are transparent, enforceable and capable of driving producers to adopt more sustainable practices. By shifting the responsibility from consumers and local governments to producers, EPR aims to reduce waste and encourage circularity in product design and packaging.

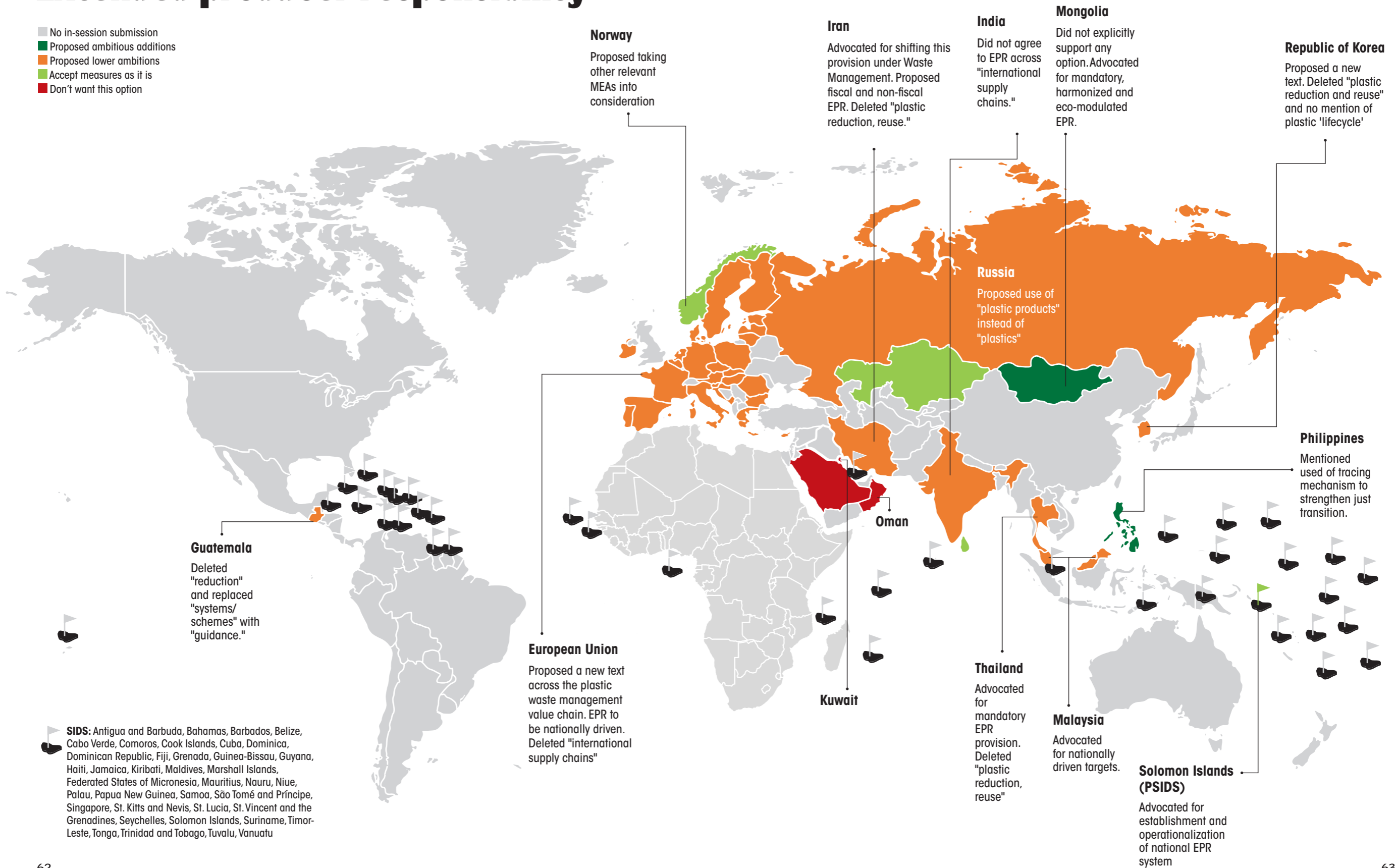
Member states like Mongolia and the Philippines have proposed incorporation of language on mandatory, harmonised, eco-modulated schemes and just transition respectively. Others such as the Republic of Korea and Guatemala have deleted language on “reduction”. Thailand too has stressed on deletion of “reduction” — at the same time, it advocates a mandatory EPR system.

Kuwait and Oman say that they do not want this provision to feature in the final text.

DOWNSTREAM

Extended producer responsibility

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



EMISSIONS AND RELEASES OF PLASTIC THROUGHOUT ITS LIFE CYCLE

Negotiations are paying close attention to emissions and releases of plastic pollutants at every stage of the plastic life cycle — from production to disposal. This holistic approach aims to identify and mitigate environmental and human health risks associated with greenhouse gas emissions, toxic chemical releases and microplastics produced throughout these phases. Policymakers are discussing methods to monitor and reduce emissions from plastic manufacturing, transportation, use and end-of-life processing, including incineration and landfilling.

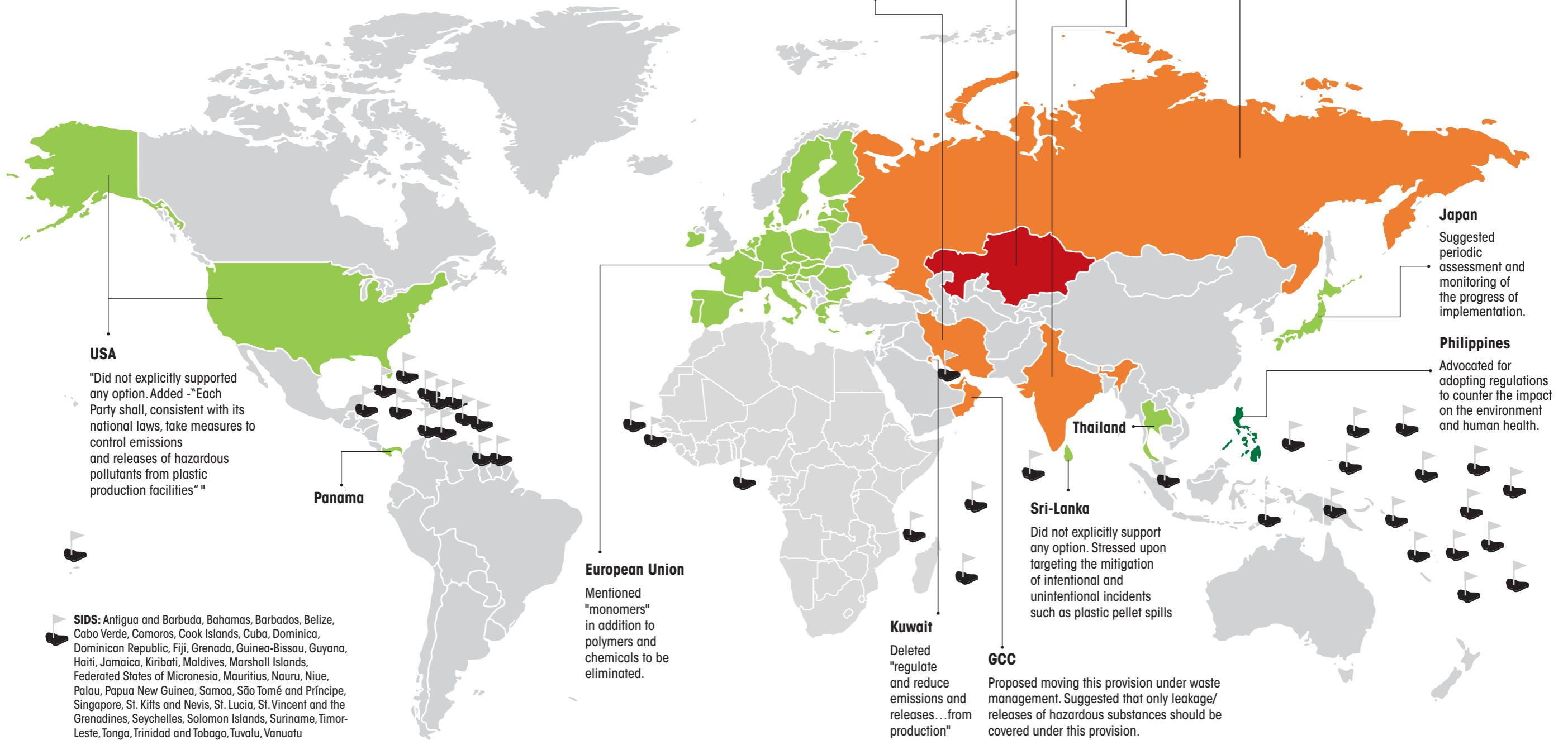
The Philippines has taken a proactive stance on managing emissions throughout the entire life cycle of plastics. Several countries, including Japan, USA, Panama, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, as well as groups like the EU, have supported retaining the provision as it stands in the draft document. While the Sri Lankan delegation did not explicitly endorse a specific option, they have emphasised on the importance of addressing both intentional and unintentional incidents, such as plastic pellet spills. The EU has also recommended extending the scope to phase out monomers (in addition to polymers) as emissions across the plastic life cycle.

Proposals from members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), such as Kuwait as well as from Russia, and Iran have suggested that the related provision be included under waste management rather than as a stand-alone one in the document. Similarly, India has proposed moving certain clauses to the waste management section. Kuwait has opted to remove the clause addressing the need to “regulate and reduce” emissions from the production phase. Russia has also advocated against including any clauses pertaining to upstream measures.

DOWNSTREAM

Emissions and release of plastics throughout it's life cycle

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



USA

"Did not explicitly supported any option. Added - "Each Party shall, consistent with its national laws, take measures to control emissions and releases of hazardous pollutants from plastic production facilities"

Panama

SIDS: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Cook Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Kiribati, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Mauritius, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Singapore, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

GCC: The Gulf Cooperation Council countries — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates

European Union

Mentioned "monomers" in addition to polymers and chemicals to be eliminated.

Iran

Suggested an alternate title - "Impacts of Plastic Product Releases and Waste". Focused on innovation to prevent and capture releases. No mention of emissions of hazardous substances or releases of chemicals and polymers of concern.

Kazakhstan

Supports - No provision

India

Emissions and releases should be controlled according to national laws. Advocated for shifting the provisions on fishing gear to waste management.

Russia

"Establish system of control over permissible environmental impact". Expressed disagreement over inclusion of any upstream measures

Japan

Suggested periodic assessment and monitoring of the progress of implementation.

Philippines

Advocated for adopting regulations to counter the impact on the environment and human health.

Thailand

Sri-Lanka

Did not explicitly support any option. Stressed upon targeting the mitigation of intentional and unintentional incidents such as plastic pellet spills

Kuwait

Deleted "regulate and reduce emissions and releases... from production"

GCC

Proposed moving this provision under waste management. Suggested that only leakage/ releases of hazardous substances should be covered under this provision.

PLASTIC WASTE MANAGEMENT

Plastic waste management is central to the treaty discussions, as countries seek solutions to the persistent problem of plastic pollution. The treaty focuses on establishing robust waste collection, sorting and recycling systems that minimise plastic leakage into the environment. Enhanced infrastructure for waste segregation and advanced recycling techniques are being considered to improve the efficacy of plastic waste processing. Strategies include encouraging the adoption of circular economy principles, investing in waste management technologies, and promoting cross-border collaboration for better resource utilisation.

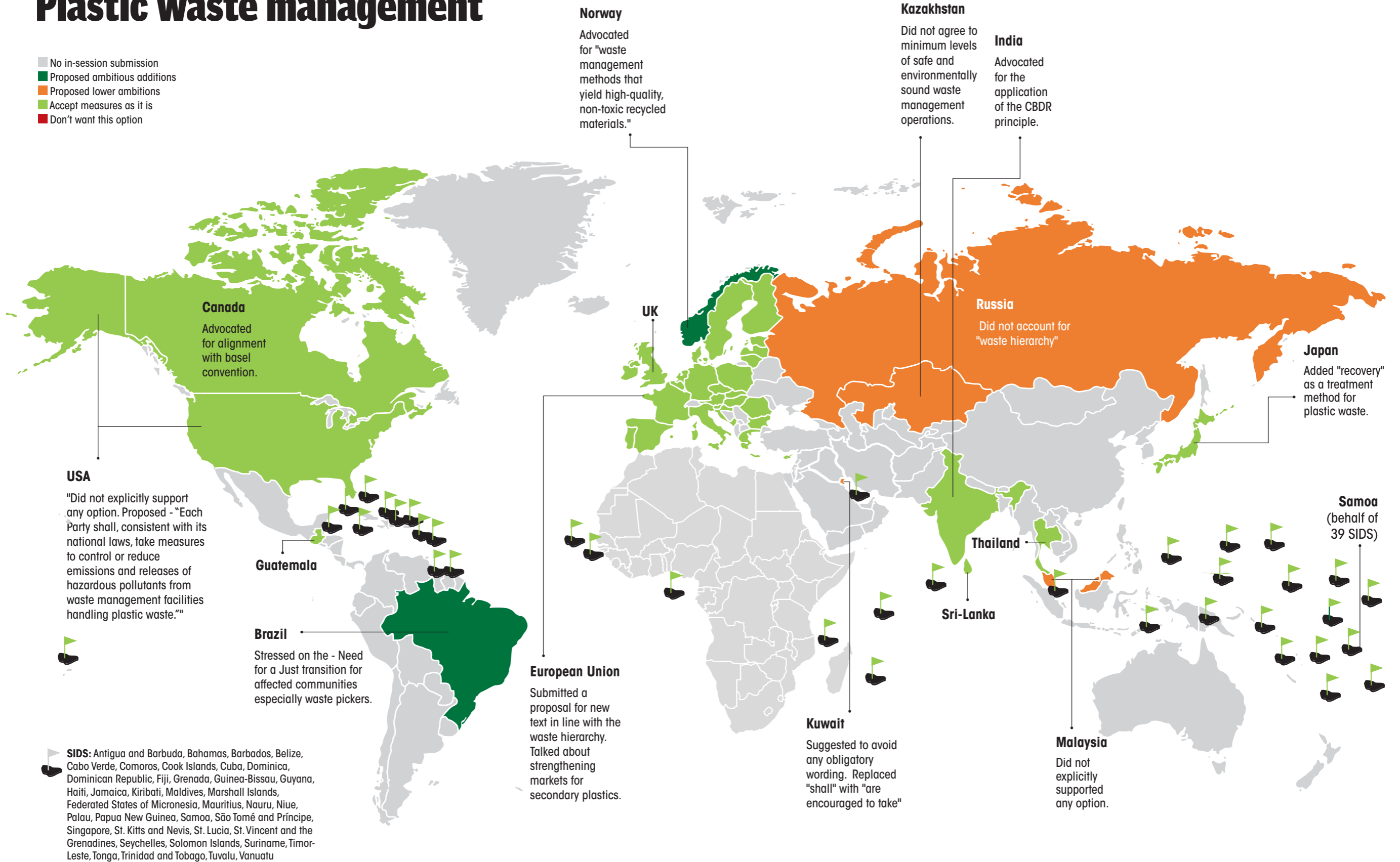
Brazil and Norway have been leading the way with proactive proposals that strengthen the draft agreement. Norway has emphasised the importance of recycling practices that produce high-quality, non-toxic recycled materials. Brazil, meanwhile, has highlighted the necessity of ensuring a just transition for impacted communities, particularly waste pickers.

Countries such as Canada, the UK, USA, Japan, Sri Lanka, Guatemala, Thailand, India and the EU have shown alignment with the existing provisions. India has specifically supported the inclusion of ‘common but differentiated responsibilities’ (CBDR). The EU has pushed for measures to strengthen the market for secondary plastics, and Japan has incorporated “recovery” as an additional treatment mechanism in plastic recycling.

DOWNSTREAM

Plastic waste management

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



FISHING GEAR

Abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear, often referred to as “ghost gear,” is a significant source of marine plastic pollution. The negotiations include measures to address this by encouraging the development of durable, eco-friendly gear and implementing better tracking and recovery mechanisms. Countries are discussing the need for international standards and collaborative programmes to mitigate the impacts of ghost gear on marine life and ecosystems.

Some proactive submissions have come from Panama, Samoa (on behalf of SIDS), and the EU. The EU has proposed measures to improve design, minimise releases and emissions, conduct formal risk assessments, and implement effective marking and gear labelling to enhance recyclability and ensure material traceability. Panama has advocated using strong language such as “reduce and eliminate” and has called for a “database for monitoring and traceability.” A joint proposal from a group of countries (Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Grenada, Panama, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago) has emphasised on the need for a just transition for fishing communities and fishers.

Guatemala, Kazakhstan, USA and Indonesia have expressed their support for the provision as it stands. Meanwhile, India and Malaysia have agreed that fishing gear should not be a separate provision.

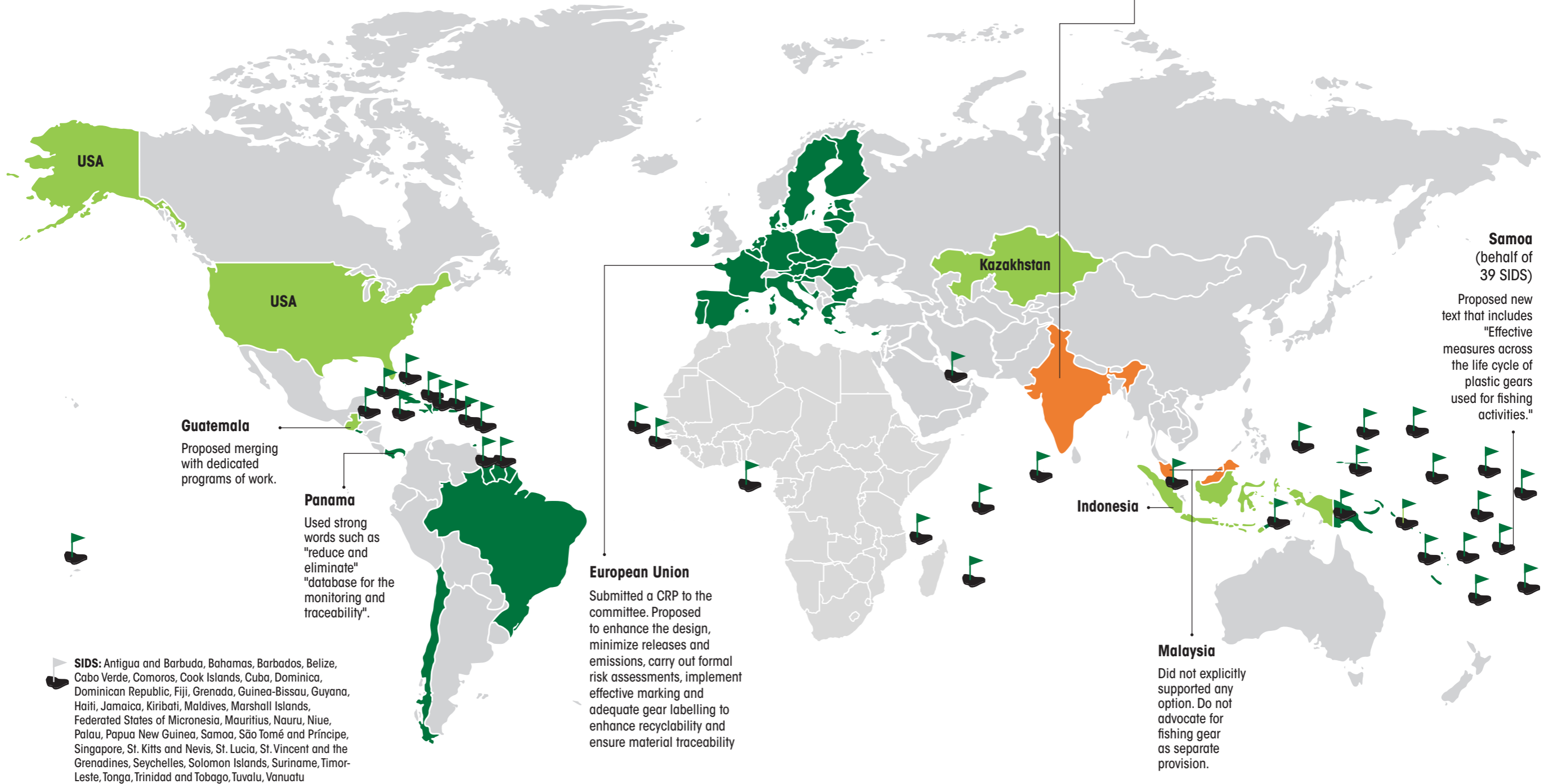
DOWNSTREAM

Fishing gear

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option

Joint proposal (Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Grenada, Panama, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago):

"Submitted a fresh proposal that includes "across the lifecycle" and talks about plastic gears used for fishing activities. Proposed development and enhancement of new technologies, inclusion of "performance criteria" and "effective marking of gears" and proposed a database for the monitoring, reporting and traceability of lost gears. Mentioned about just transition for fishers and fishing communities, including artisanal and small-scale fishers and incentivize the ecologically sensitive retrieval of reported lost gear."



TRADE IN LISTED CHEMICALS, POLYMERS AND PRODUCTS

Trade regulations concerning chemicals, polymers and plastic products listed in the treaty are under scrutiny to prevent the spread of problematic substances globally. This includes setting restrictions on importing and exporting plastics containing hazardous chemicals. By regulating trade, the treaty aims to minimise environmental and health risks associated with the global distribution of harmful materials. The discussion also involves establishing a transparent system for monitoring trade flows and ensuring compliance with international standards.

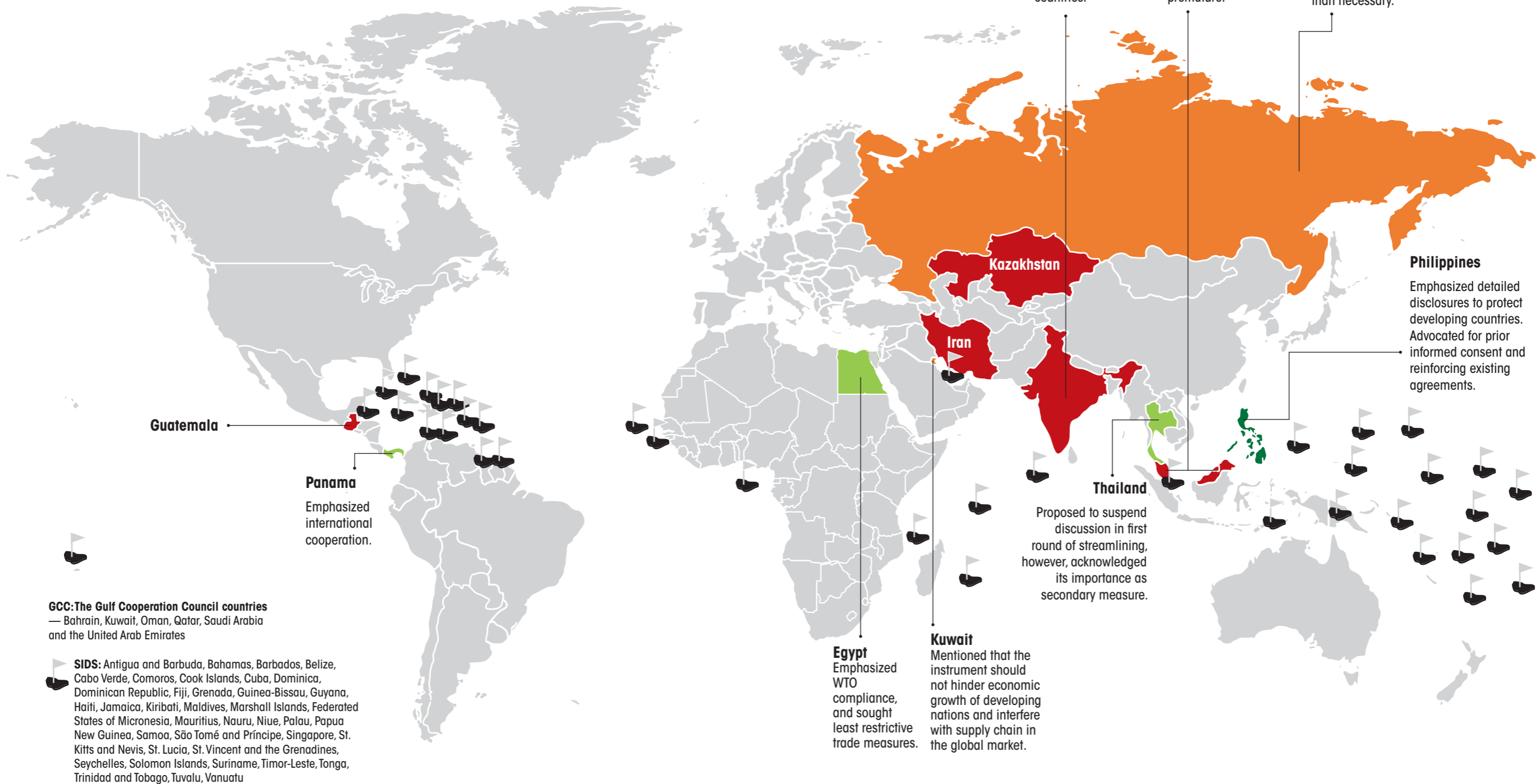
Kuwait, representing the GCC, says that the treaty should not hinder the economic growth of developing nations or interfere with the global supply chain; it has emphasised on the need for a balanced approach that considers economic impacts. India has prioritised economic interests and expressed concerns about the potential negative impacts of diminishing trade on developing countries. Thailand has proposed suspending discussions on this issue in the first round of streamlining while acknowledging its importance as a secondary measure, suggesting a focus on other priority areas initially. Malaysia has focused on national implementation and avoiding duplication with existing multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), believing discussions on trade in listed chemicals, polymers and products to be premature.

The Russian Federation has advocated adhering to WTO rules and emphasised that measures under the treaty should not be more trade restrictive than necessary. The Philippines has stressed on the need for detailed disclosures to protect developing countries and advocated for prior informed consent and reinforcing existing agreements, highlighting the importance of transparency. Egypt has opted for WTO compliance and has sought the least restrictive trade measures. Panama has emphasised the importance of international cooperation in regulating trade in listed chemicals, polymers and products, highlighting the need for collaborative solutions.

CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

Trade in listed chemicals, polymers and products

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



TRANSBOUNDARY MOVEMENT OF PLASTIC WASTE

The transboundary movement of plastic waste is a significant issue, especially with the risk of exporting waste to countries ill-equipped to manage it sustainably. Treaty discussions focus on tightening regulations to prevent illegal or unethical waste transfers and ensuring that any transboundary movements are consistent with environmentally sound management practices. Proposals include developing stronger monitoring and reporting systems and setting clearer guidelines for waste shipments to promote transparency and accountability. Aligning these efforts with the Basel Convention's amendments on plastic waste is also under consideration to reinforce global cooperation.

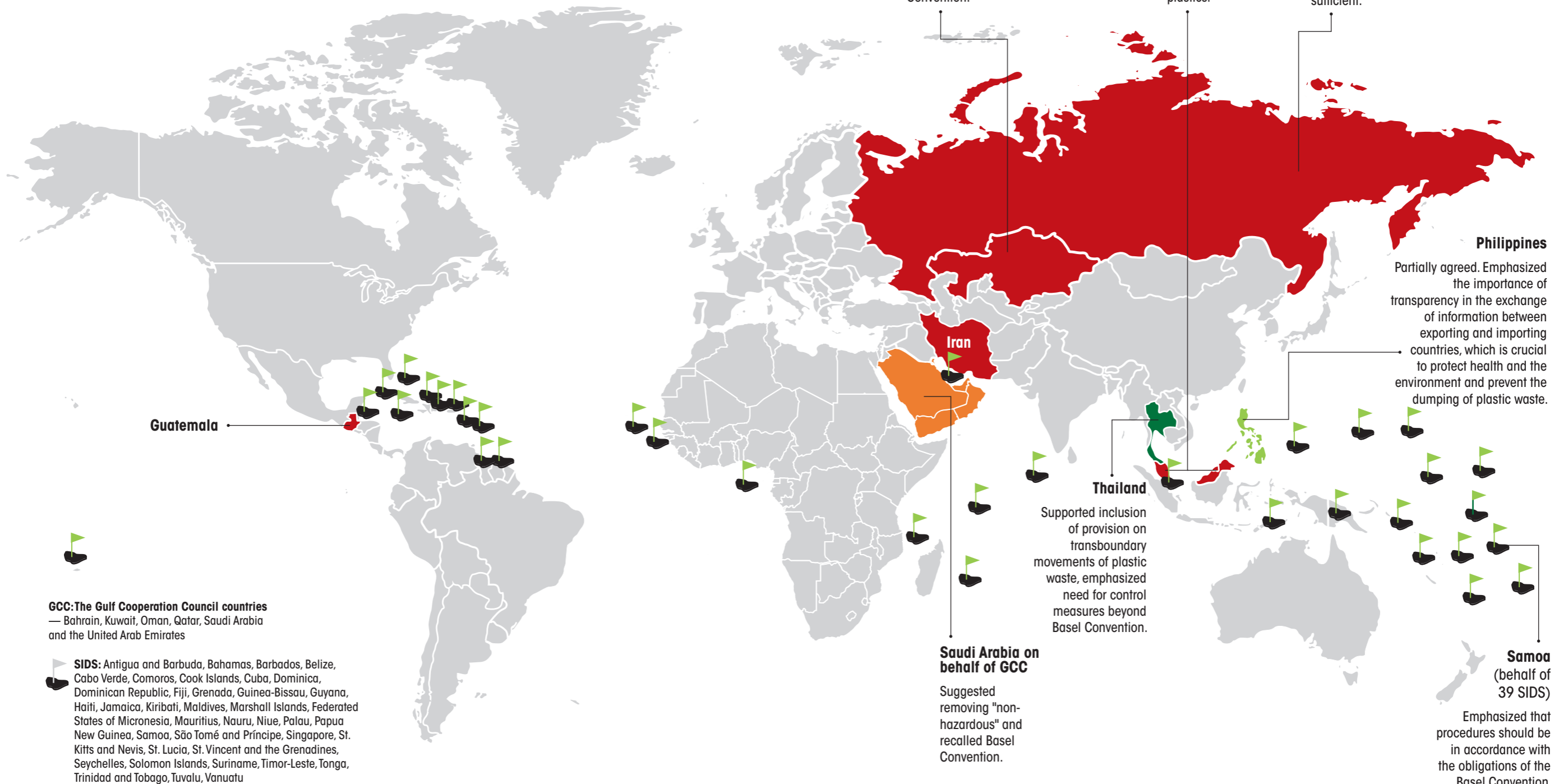
Samoa, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), has emphasised the importance of aligning procedures for transboundary plastic waste movements with the obligations outlined in the Basel Convention, highlighting the need for consistency and adherence to existing international frameworks. Kazakhstan says that the movement of hazardous waste, including plastics, is already regulated by the Basel Convention — it highlights the need for the Global Plastic Treaty to complement and avoid duplication of existing mechanisms.

Thailand has expressed support for including provisions on transboundary movements of plastic waste and emphasised the need for control measures that go beyond the Basel Convention, advocating for a more comprehensive approach to regulating plastic waste movements. Malaysia has sought to avoid duplication with existing multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) while advocating for regulated transboundary movement of plastics, highlighting the need for a balanced approach that complements existing frameworks. The Philippines has partially agreed to provisions on transboundary movement, while emphasising the importance of transparency in information exchange between exporting and importing countries to protect health and the environment and prevent plastic waste dumping.

CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

Transboundary movement of non-hazardous plastic waste

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



EXISTING PLASTIC POLLUTION, INCLUDING IN THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

Addressing existing plastic pollution, especially in marine environments, is a key priority. Negotiations emphasise on the need for coordinated clean-up efforts, investment in restoration projects, and technological innovations to remove accumulated plastic waste. Strategies being discussed include incentivising research and development of effective clean-up technologies. Additionally, promoting international collaboration to tackle pollution hotspots and sharing best practices are seen as critical steps.

The EU has proposed a comprehensive approach to identify the “main transfer channels” of plastics into the environment, pinpointing pollution hotspots and the sectors most affected by existing plastic pollution.

Samoa, on behalf of AOSIS, has advocated for a strong, legally binding commitment to remediate existing plastic pollution, particularly for Small Island Developing States (SIDS). It has stressed the need for solutions tailored to these countries’ specific circumstances, supported by necessary financial and technological assistance. India has advocated a thorough assessment of existing plastic pollution, the mobilisation of financial resources, and technology transfer to support developing countries in meeting their commitments to address this challenge.

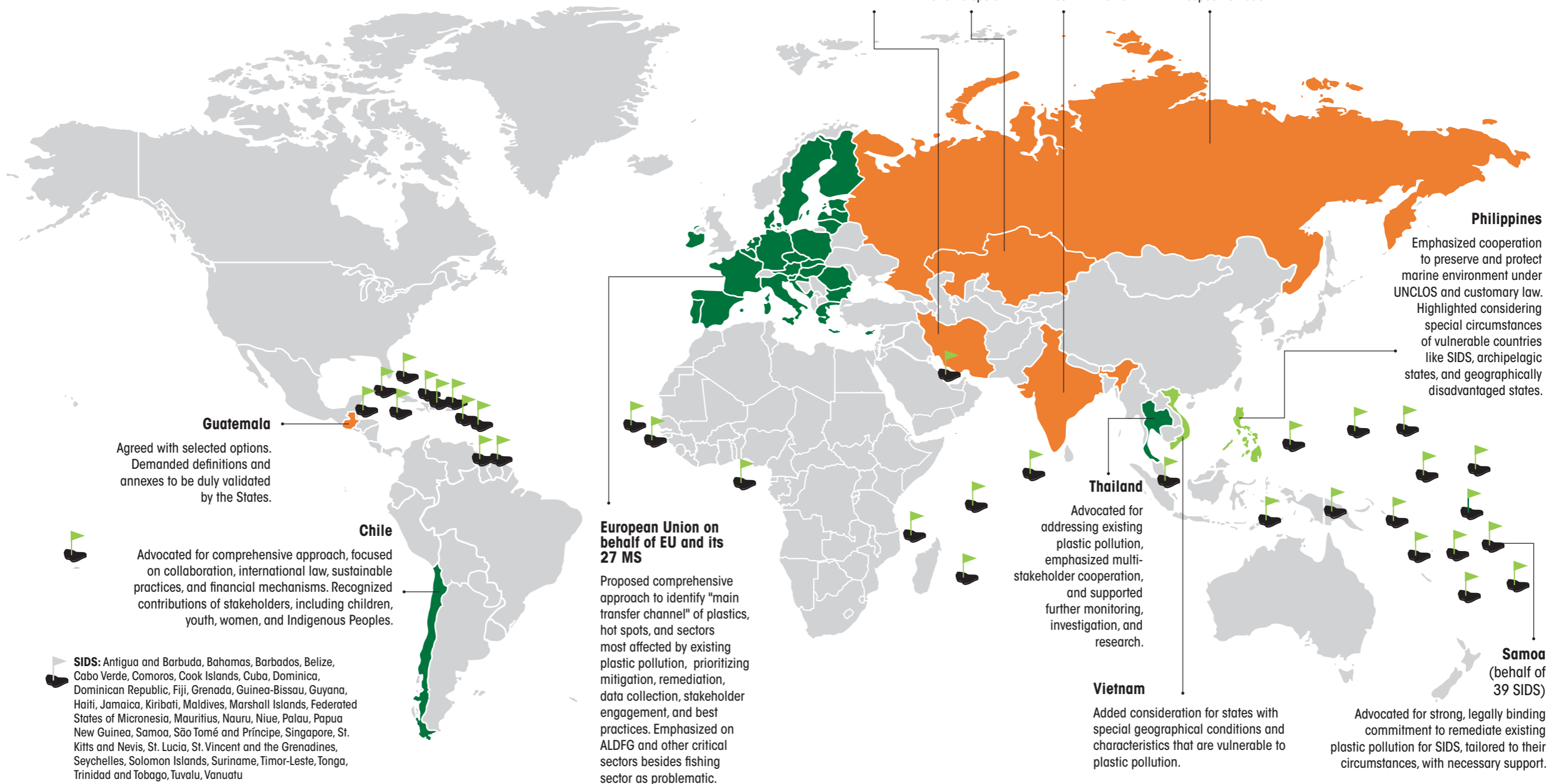
Kazakhstan has deleted important terminologies like “accumulation zones and hotspots”. Thailand has called for addressing existing plastic pollution, emphasising on multi-stakeholder cooperation and supporting further monitoring, investigation and research to better understand and tackle the problem.

The Russian Federation has focused on remediation activities for existing plastic pollution, but has deleted mention of “chemicals, polymers and products” with respect to trade. The Philippines has highlighted the need to consider the special circumstances of vulnerable countries like SIDS, the archipelagic states, and geographically disadvantaged states when addressing existing plastic pollution. Chile has advocated for a comprehensive approach, focusing on collaboration, international law, sustainable practices and financial mechanisms. Vietnam has specifically mentioned considering states with special geographical conditions and characteristics that make them vulnerable to plastic pollution, highlighting the need for tailored solutions for such countries. Iran has stressed the responsibility of developed countries to take the lead in addressing legacy plastic pollution.

CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

Existing plastic pollution, including in the marine environment

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



JUST TRANSITION

A just transition ensures that workers and communities dependent on plastic production and waste management are supported as the industry shifts toward more sustainable practices. The treaty discussions highlight the importance of equitable policies that create new green jobs, support retraining programmes, and provide social protection for affected workers. This approach aims to balance environmental goals with economic and social considerations, ensuring that the transition to a sustainable plastic economy does not leave vulnerable communities behind.

The EU has prioritised a just transition that respects human rights and worker protection, aligning with international standards. India emphasises on considering national circumstances in any just transition framework, highlighting the need for flexibility. Kazakhstan has stressed on the role of developed countries in providing financial and technological support for just transition in developing nations.

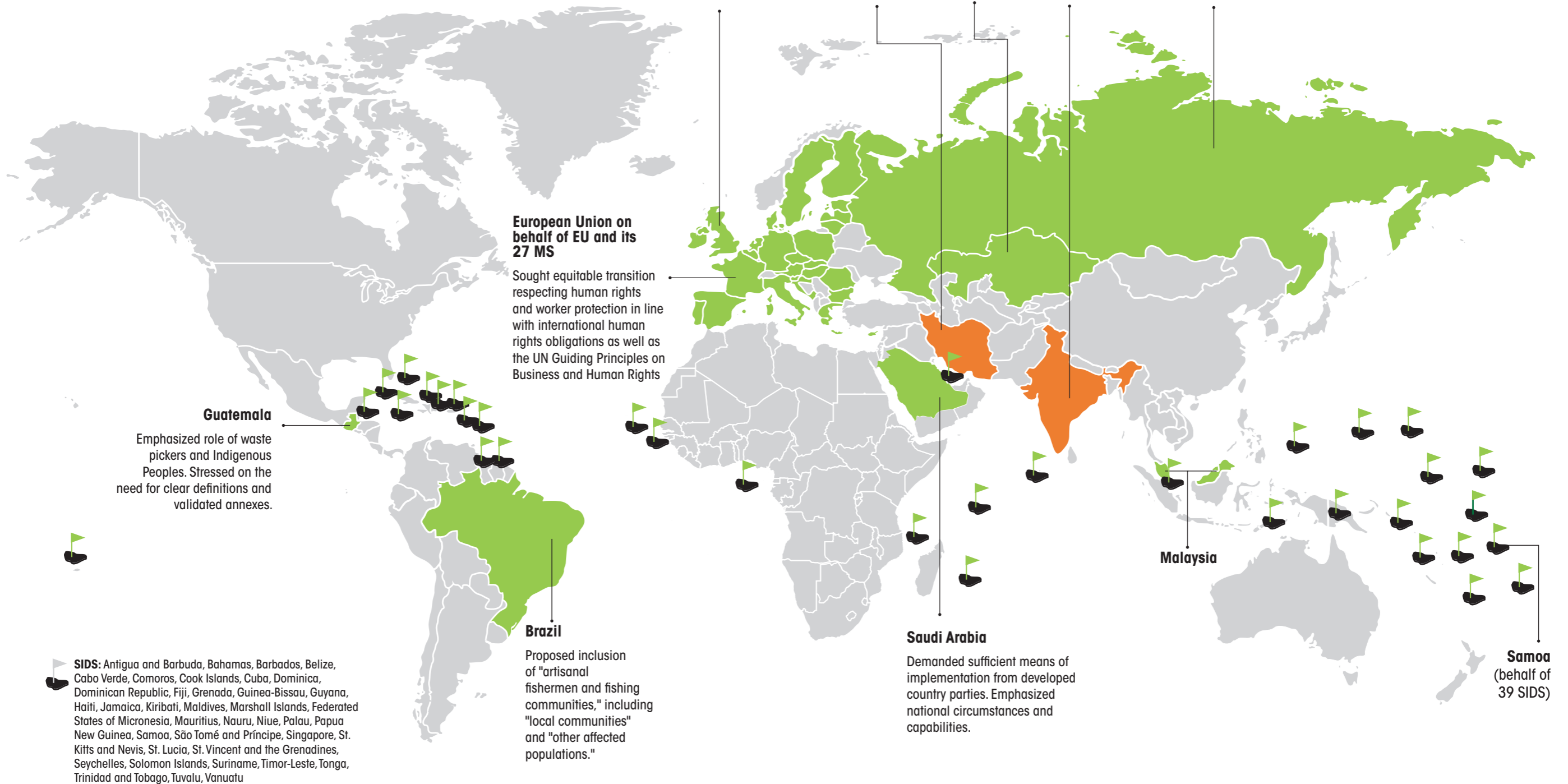
Guatemala has emphasised on the role of waste pickers and indigenous peoples in the process, advocating for their inclusion and protection. The UK supported a just transition in line with ILO (International Labour Organization) guidelines, emphasising the inclusion of vulnerable groups. It has expressed concerns about the reference to affected population and aligns with the EU and the US on not directly financing the transition.

The Russian Federation has suggested using “just transition pathways” within the broader context of sustainable development. Brazil has proposed including artisanal fisherfolk, fishing communities, local communities and other affected populations in any just transition framework. Iran emphasises considering domestic laws and regulations when formulating just transition pathways, advocating for flexibility and national ownership.

CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

Just transition pathways

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



TRANSPARENCY, TRACKING, MONITORING AND LABELLING

Transparency, tracking, monitoring, and labelling are crucial elements to ensure compliance with the treaty's provisions. Discussions involve creating systems that track plastic production, trade and waste management in real time. Proposals include mandatory labelling of plastic products to indicate their composition, recyclability and environmental impacts. Developing a global tracking system for plastic waste and pollution will help monitor progress and hold parties accountable.

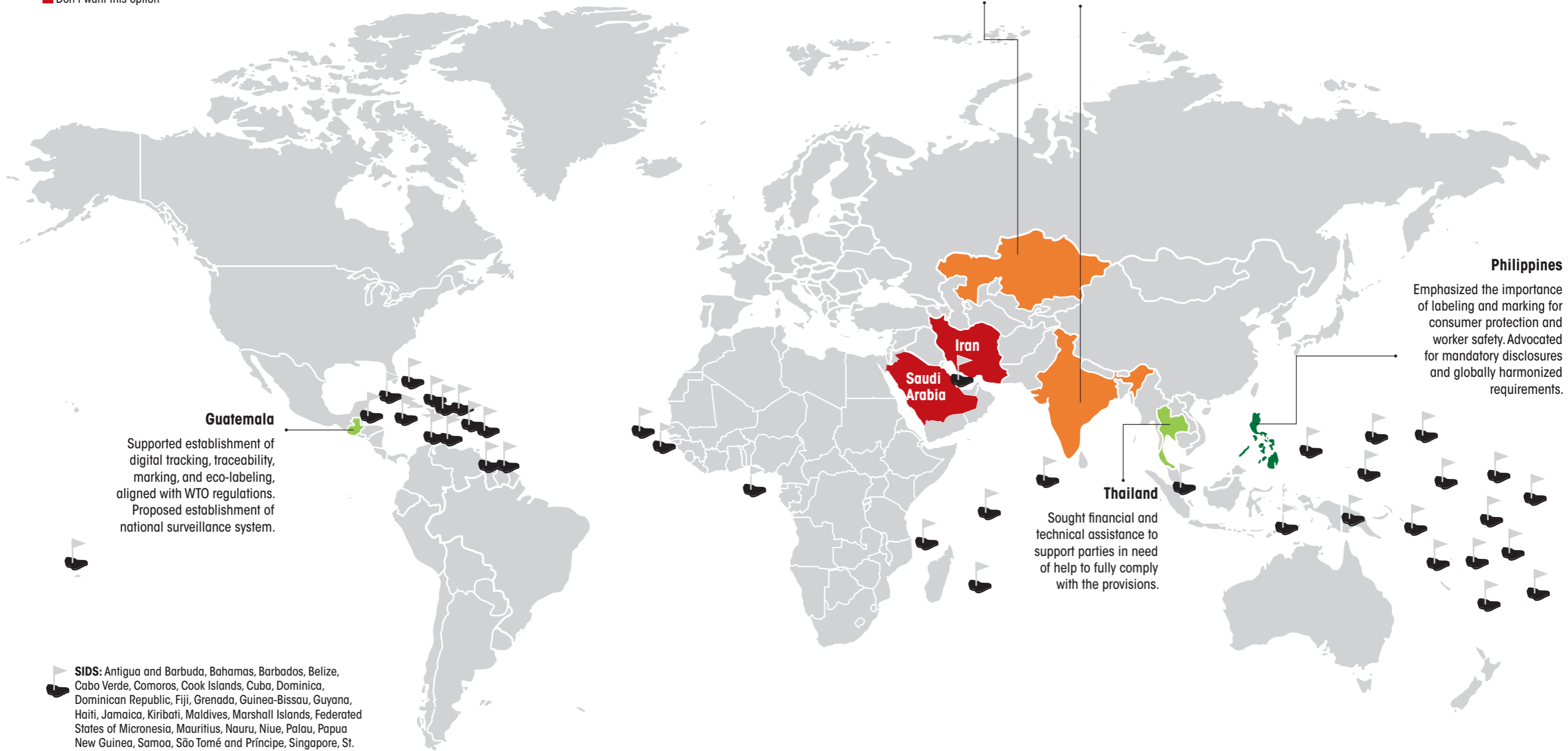
India has emphasised on nationally-driven implementation and on avoiding duplication with existing multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) regarding transparency, tracking, monitoring and labelling. Kazakhstan has requested clarification on issues such as tracking and mentioned that significant funds would be required for implementing transparency, tracking, monitoring and labelling measures. Thailand has sought financial and technical assistance to support parties that need it to comply fully with transparency, tracking, monitoring and labelling provisions.

Guatemala has supported the establishment of digital tracking, traceability, marking and eco-labelling, aligned with WTO regulations. It has also proposed establishing a national surveillance system to monitor and track plastic pollution. The Philippines has emphasised on labelling and marking for consumer protection and worker safety and advocates mandatory disclosures and globally harmonised requirements for transparency and labelling.

CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

Transparency, tracking, monitoring and labelling

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



Guatemala
Supported establishment of digital tracking, traceability, marking, and eco-labeling, aligned with WTO regulations. Proposed establishment of national surveillance system.

Kazakhstan
Requested clarification on issues, such as tracking. Mentioned that significant funds would be required for implementation.

India
Emphasized nationally-driven implementation and the need to avoid duplicacy with existing MEAs.

Saudi Arabia
Iran

Thailand
Sought financial and technical assistance to support parties in need of help to fully comply with the provisions.

Philippines
Emphasized the importance of labeling and marking for consumer protection and worker safety. Advocated for mandatory disclosures and globally harmonized requirements.

SIDS: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Cook Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Kiribati, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Mauritius, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Singapore, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

FINANCING MECHANISMS

Financing mechanisms are a significant part of the treaty, as they provide the necessary resources to implement plastic pollution control measures. Discussions are centered on creating a sustainable funding model that supports developing countries in building infrastructure, enhancing waste management, and adopting cleaner technologies. Options being considered include contributions from producers, levies on plastic products, and international funding bodies.

Ghana and the Philippines advocate for strong financial commitments, with Ghana proposing an annex to levy a global plastic fee based on production and supply thresholds, while the Philippines supports a clear structure to outline parties' roles, identify funding sources, and establish governance mechanisms.

Countries such as Samoa, Kuwait, USA, Brazil, Bangladesh, Somalia, Rwanda, UK, Micronesia, Indonesia and Panama have supported measures that highlight resource mobilisation, technical support and enhanced cooperation. USA recommends merging financing and capacity building as “means of implementation” for more streamlined support, while Brazil has proposed a new provision to emphasise on technical and scientific cooperation; Panama has echoed Brazil's approach.

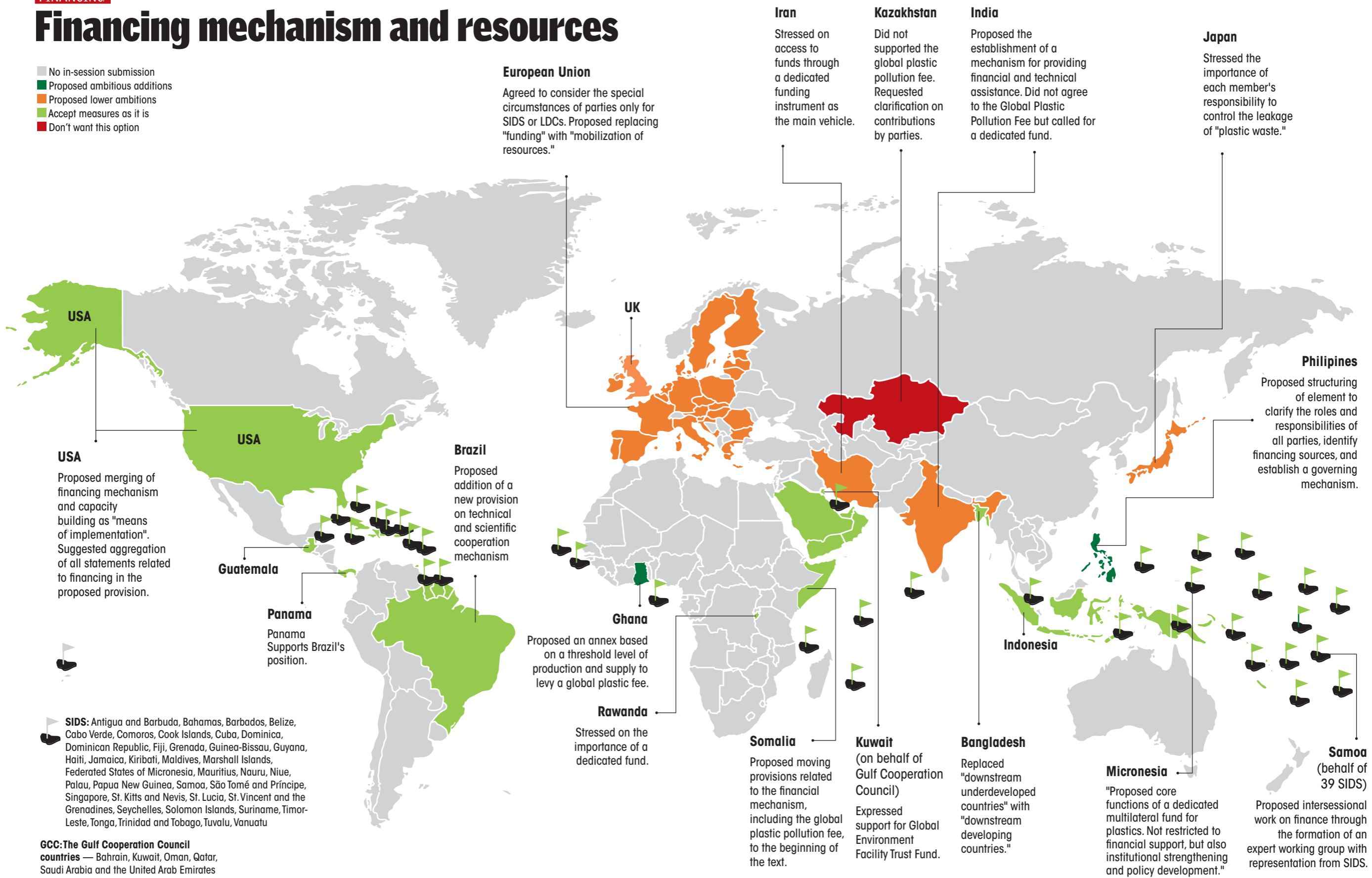
On the other hand, countries such as India, EU, Japan and Iran have expressed conditional support, stressing national-level responsibilities and favouring certain restrictions on who qualifies for assistance. India has proposed establishing a financial and technical assistance mechanism, but has rejected a global plastic pollution fee — instead calling for a dedicated fund. The EU has supported financial mobilisation specifically for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs), proposing “mobilisation of resources” instead of “funding.” Japan has underscored the responsibility of each member to control plastic waste, emphasising on self-accountability. Iran, like India, advocates a dedicated funding instrument as the primary financial vehicle.

Kazakhstan and Kuwait have rejected the global plastic pollution fee, with Kazakhstan calling for clarification on parties' contributions.

FINANCING

Financing mechanism and resources

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



European Union
 Agreed to consider the special circumstances of parties only for SIDS or LDCs. Proposed replacing "funding" with "mobilization of resources."

Iran
 Stressed on access to funds through a dedicated funding instrument as the main vehicle.

Kazakhstan
 Did not support the global plastic pollution fee. Requested clarification on contributions by parties.

India
 Proposed the establishment of a mechanism for providing financial and technical assistance. Did not agree to the Global Plastic Pollution Fee but called for a dedicated fund.

Japan
 Stressed the importance of each member's responsibility to control the leakage of "plastic waste."

Philippines
 Proposed structuring of element to clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties, identify financing sources, and establish a governing mechanism.

USA
 Proposed merging of financing mechanism and capacity building as "means of implementation". Suggested aggregation of all statements related to financing in the proposed provision.

Brazil
 Proposed addition of a new provision on technical and scientific cooperation mechanism

Guatemala
 Panama Supports Brazil's position.

Panama
 Panama Supports Brazil's position.

Ghana
 Proposed an annex based on a threshold level of production and supply to levy a global plastic fee.

Rawanda
 Stressed on the importance of a dedicated fund.

Somalia
 Proposed moving provisions related to the financial mechanism, including the global plastic pollution fee, to the beginning of the text.

Kuwait
 (on behalf of Gulf Cooperation Council)
 Expressed support for Global Environment Facility Trust Fund.

Bangladesh
 Replaced "downstream underdeveloped countries" with "downstream developing countries."

Micronesia
 "Proposed core functions of a dedicated multilateral fund for plastics. Not restricted to financial support, but also institutional strengthening and policy development."

Samoa
 (behalf of 39 SIDS)
 Proposed intersessional work on finance through the formation of an expert working group with representation from SIDS.

SIDS: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Cook Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Kiribati, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Mauritius, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Singapore, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

GCC: The Gulf Cooperation Council countries — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates

CAPACITY BUILDING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

Capacity building, technical assistance, and technology transfer are integral to the treaty's implementation, particularly for developing nations. These elements focus on providing countries with the knowledge, skills and technology needed to manage plastic pollution effectively. Discussions have ranged on establishing programmes that facilitate the sharing of best practices, training workshops, and the transfer of advanced technologies for plastic waste management and recycling.

Samoa and Indonesia have accepted the provision, and support capacity building measures that emphasise on equitable support for developing nations. Indonesia has called for capacity building from developed to developing countries and suggested adding "South-South cooperation" to facilitate regional exchanges and knowledge sharing, showing a focus on mutual assistance among developing nations.

Armenia advocates expanding support to include "countries with economies in transition," which underscores the need for resources to support nations beyond the traditional North-South development divide. This inclusivity approach emphasises that middle-income or transitioning economies also need assistance to address plastic pollution.

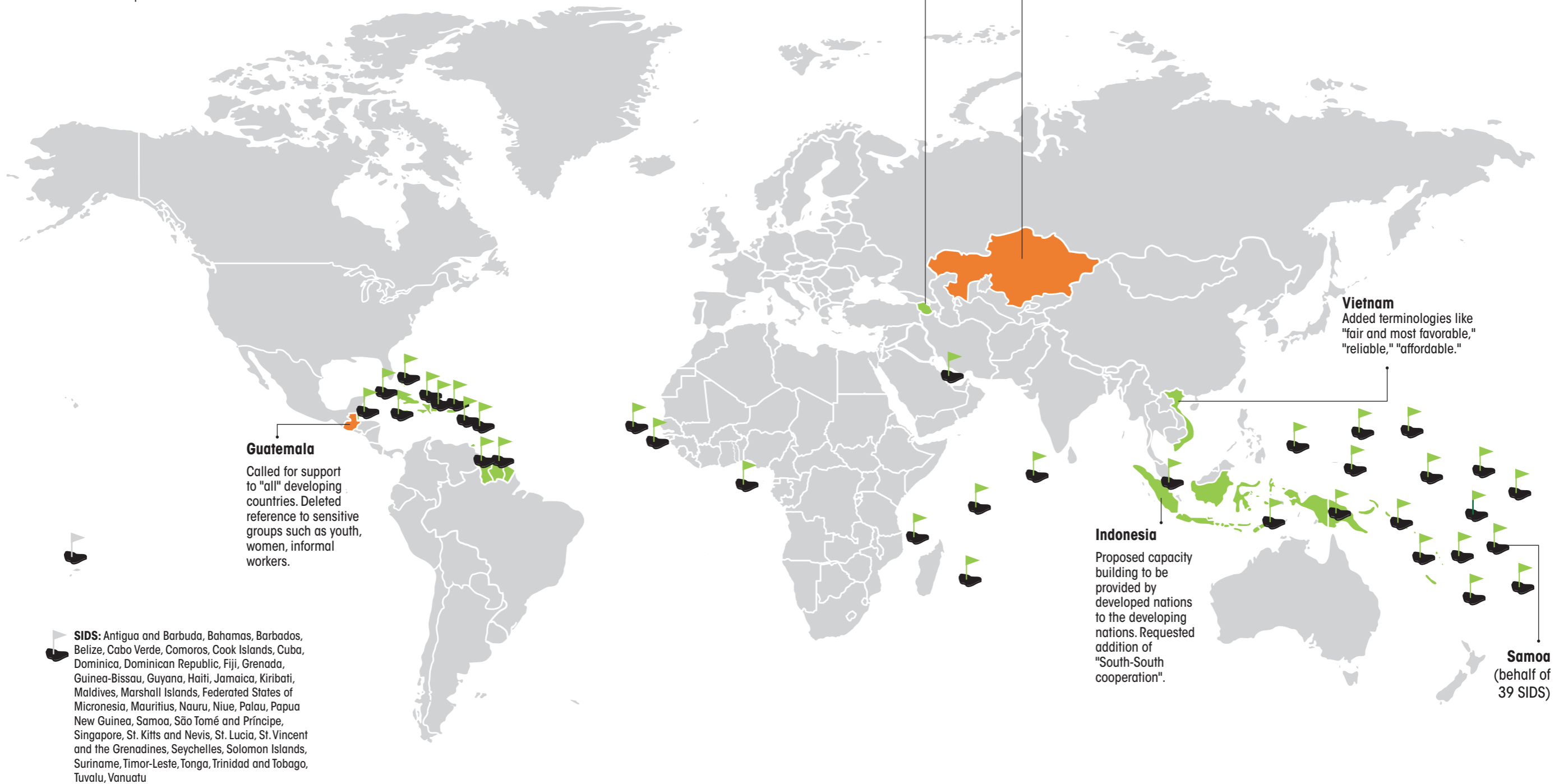
Countries such as Kazakhstan and Guatemala have expressed a cautious stance, seeking clarification and modifications. Kazakhstan has requested details on how capacity building initiatives would be executed, reflecting a need for clarity on operational mechanisms. Guatemala, while supporting assistance, has proposed broadening support to "all" developing countries, but has omitted specific references to vulnerable groups such as youth, women and informal workers, which could limit focused support for these communities.

Armenia and Vietnam advocate technology transfer with conditions to ensure accessibility and equity. Vietnam, stressing on fairness, has advocated technology transfer to be "fair and most favorable," as well as "reliable and affordable," ensuring that technology access remains within reach for nations with varying resource levels.

FINANCING

Capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option



HEALTH ASPECTS



The health implications of plastic pollution are a significant concern, as toxic chemicals associated with plastic production and waste management can pose serious risks to human health. The treaty discussions emphasise on integrating health considerations into all aspects of plastic pollution control. This includes setting regulations on toxic additives, reducing emissions from plastic production, and controlling microplastics that can enter food and water supplies.

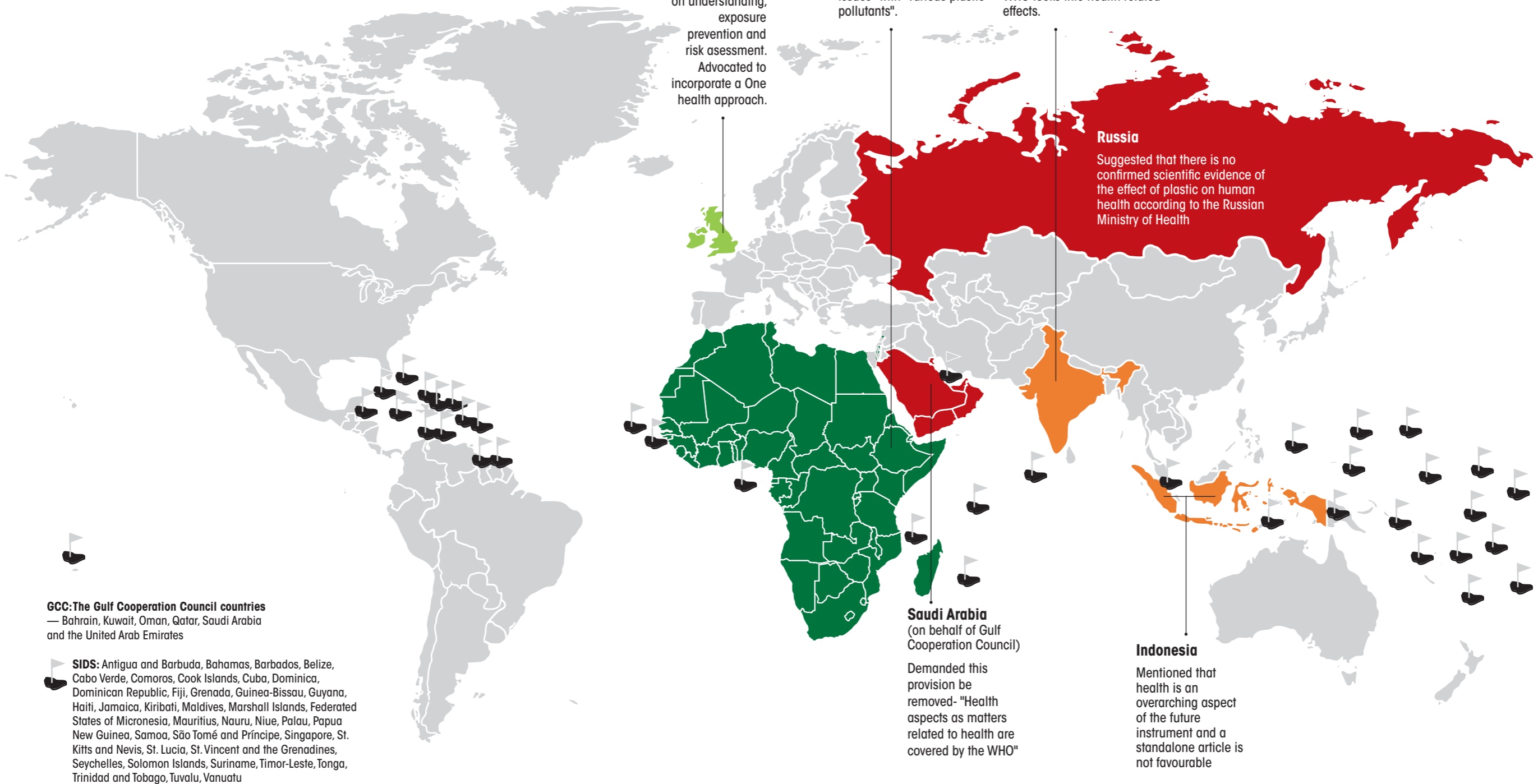
This provision, proposed by Kenya as a placeholder, has seen support from all the members of the African group — but has faced resistance from Russia and members of the GCC like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, among others.

The UK has suggested to focus on understanding, exposure prevention and risk assessment, while India has said that linkages to human health effects should be based upon best available science. Malaysia has mentioned that health is an overarching aspect of the future instrument and a stand-alone article is not favourable.

HEALTH IMPACT

Health aspect

- No in-session submission
- Proposed ambitious additions
- Proposed lower ambitions
- Accept measures as it is
- Don't want this option





4

THE NEGOTIATIONS: RESULTS AND EXPECTATIONS FROM INC 4 TO INC 5

WHAT HAPPENED IN INC 4 (OTTAWA, CANADA, APRIL, 2024)

The committee reviewed and discussed the revised zero draft text of the international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. The focus was on narrowing down options and streamlining the draft text as a preparation for the final session. There were significant discussions on the need for structured inter-sectional work before the final session to allow thorough preparation and high quality inputs. Two main contact groups and several sub-groups were established to work on specific sections of the draft text, focusing on various elements such as obligation, means of implementation, and governance structures.

While many delegates agreed on the importance of a robust financial mechanism, there were different views on its structure and scope. Diverging opinions emerged on whether the future instrument should include strict regulations on primary plastic polymer production or focus primarily on downstream measures. Countries had varying stances on how ambitious the targets and commitments should be, particularly concerning the balance between binding measures and national circumstances.

There was broad support for ensuring that waste pickers and vulnerable communities are included in the instrument, promoting a just transition. The importance of aligning the instrument with existing multilateral environmental agreements to avoid duplication and create synergies was acknowledged.

In its 4th session, the INC decided to establish two ad-hoc expert groups to focus on:

- **Financial mechanisms and resource mobilisation:** To explore and analyse funding options and means of supporting implementation of the treaty.
- **Criteria on products and chemicals of concern:** To propose criteria for identifying problematic products, chemicals and design standards for consideration at the fifth session in Busan, South Korea.

WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN INC 4 AND INC 5

Inter-sessional work

The expert groups met both virtually and in-person. The committee decided that the expert groups would start their work using electronic means following the conclusion of the fourth session. They were expected to begin working virtually and were also requested to organise an in-person meeting for each expert group in the inter-sessional period leading up to the fifth session.

Financial mechanisms and resource mobilisation

The expert group conducted both virtual and in-person meetings, culminating in a comprehensive report. The report highlights various decisions and findings aimed at facilitating the development of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

A wide array of funding sources and mechanisms were reviewed, including public finance (national budgets and multilateral funds), private sector contributions (CSR, impact investments), and innovative tools such as plastic credits and bonds. The group emphasised the importance of aligning public and private financial flows with the objectives of the treaty and catalysing additional finance through partnerships and blended finance models. Consensus emerged on the need for a specific financial mechanism that would support obligations like reporting, capacity building and legacy pollution remediation.

The report outlined that both public and private sectors play critical roles in implementing the treaty. Public sectors are tasked with creating an enabling environment, while the private sector's engagement, incentivised through policies like EPR, is considered critical for sustainable impact.

Experts noted a gap in comprehensive, disaggregated data for assessing plastic pollution's impact, underscoring the need for more detailed reporting. The report called for targeted capacity-building efforts and for ensuring that financial mechanisms are accessible and inclusive, especially for developing countries.

Various models for funding, from stand-alone dedicated funds to hybrid structures within existing mechanisms, were assessed. Pros include flexibility and targeted focus, while cons highlighted potential high costs and fragmentation risks.

RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE AD-HOC EXPERT GROUP

- Establish financial mechanisms aligned with treaty goals.
- Ensure the administrative and governance structure is efficient and inclusive.
- Create avenues for both public and private funding sources, maintaining flexibility for future scalability.

Criteria on products and chemicals of concern

The expert group debated whether global harmonised criteria or nationally determined measures should guide regulations on plastic products, chemicals and product design. Balancing global standards with national flexibility was a key consideration. Emphasis was placed on product design for recyclability and reusability, exploring how to enhance recycling capabilities through better design standards.

The group discussed approaches for identifying and managing chemicals used in plastic products, considering existing frameworks like the Basel and Stockholm Conventions. A focus on the importance of transparent data collection and reporting mechanisms was highlighted to monitor compliance and progress effectively. Ensuring that any new treaty would complement existing international agreements without redundancy was essential.

There was divergence on whether to use hazard-based or risk-based approaches for chemicals of concern and the level of obligation for regulations (mandatory or voluntary). Different views emerged on the balance between mandatory global criteria versus allowing nations to adopt locally tailored measures. Opinions varied regarding the economic and technical feasibility of implementing stringent measures in developing versus developed countries.

There was general agreement on adopting phased approaches to implement criteria progressively, allowing countries time to adapt. Experts concurred on the importance of grounding decisions in robust, science-based data. Promoting circularity in plastics was a shared goal, emphasizing upon reducing environmental impact and supporting recycling innovation.

These findings and recommendations from both the expert groups are meant to inform the discussions and negotiations at the fifth session of the INC in Busan, South Korea.

RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE AD-HOC EXPERT GROUP

- A combination of global guidelines with national flexibility could be an effective path forward.
- The final recommendation included leveraging existing environmental agreements to build a cohesive framework that avoids duplicative efforts.
- Proposals for transparent data reporting and the establishment of mechanisms for traceability and accountability were highlighted.

The Chair's non-paper

The effort to streamline the text during the fourth round of meetings led to an expansion of the document, resulting in over 3,000 brackets in the compiled text. The Chair, Luis Vayas Valdivieso, expressed concern that using the compiled text as the basis for discussion might require more time than is available.

To address this, he presented the Chair's non-paper, which consolidates areas of convergence among committee members. The second version of this non-paper was shared during the heads of delegations meeting in Nairobi from September 30 to October 1, 2024. Most committee members agreed in principle to use the non-paper as the foundation for negotiations at the fifth and final INC session to end plastic pollution.

The third version of the Chair's non-paper was unveiled on October 30, 2024. This document mentions the provisions as articles for the first time in the plastic treaty negotiations — indicating that the non-paper will be presented before the negotiating committee and will become the basis of discussions, subject to consensus.

The 31 articles mentioned in the Chair's non-paper are as follows:

1. Objective
2. Definitions
3. Scope
4. Principles and Approaches
5. General Obligations
6. Control Measures
7. National Action Plans
8. Measures to Support Reduction
9. Measures to Support Circular Economy
10. Product Design and Standards
11. Sustainable Production and Consumption
12. Reduction in the Use of Primary Plastic Polymers
13. Environmentally Sound Waste Management
14. Plastic Waste Prevention
15. Plastic Waste Management Hierarchy
16. Transboundary Movements of Plastic Waste
17. Remediation and Rehabilitation
18. Monitoring and Reporting
19. Implementation and Compliance
20. Scientific and Socioeconomic Assessments

21. Institutional Arrangements
22. Secretariat
23. Conference of the Parties (COP)
24. Subsidiary Bodies
25. Financial Mechanism
26. Technical Assistance and Capacity Building
27. Technology Transfer
28. Research and Development
29. Stakeholder Engagement
30. Transparency and Information Sharing
31. Final Provisions

The Chair suggests that further work and the development of detailed guidance, terms of reference, and modalities for implementation should be undertaken between the diplomatic conference of plenipotentiaries and the first Conference of the Parties (COP).

Several major groups and civil society organisations have expressed concern on the contents of the Chair’s non-paper and have accused it of compromising on the ambition to build a treaty that may not be operational or effective.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM INC 5

- As the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC 5) approaches, several anticipations exist. One of the most significant is that the Chair’s non-paper may serve as the primary basis for negotiations, reflecting areas of convergence identified in previous sessions. This document has already been discussed at prior meetings, indicating strong support from various committee members for using it as a negotiation framework.
- Procedural elements such as the re-election of bureau members and discussions surrounding the Rules of Procedure may consume valuable time during INC 5, potentially delaying substantive negotiations. This could be a pivotal aspect to monitor as it may impact the pace at which discussions progress.
- Observers also anticipate compromises from High Ambition Countries — in their pursuit to push for stringent measures, they may need to navigate negotiations with other countries to reach a middle ground that enables collective agreement.
- Conference Room Papers (CRPs) are expected to play a significant role, with numerous CRPs likely to be introduced to address specific issues and shape detailed discussions. The nature of CRPs can provide real-time insights into how countries seek to influence the text and can indicate areas where consensus is either emerging or proving difficult.
- As consensus is reached on specific articles, these sections may be forwarded to the legal drafting group for formalisation. This approach ensures that progress made during discussions can be consolidated, maintaining momentum even as negotiations continue on more contentious points.
- While there is a high likelihood that a final treaty text could be achieved at INC 5, it is also plausible that some of the more complex and challenging topics

might be deferred to the diplomatic conference or subsequent Conference of Parties (CoP) meetings. This strategic postponement could allow for more focused discussions on these issues at a later stage, giving time for further deliberation and collaboration among nations. However, the Committee members must be cautious to include a placeholder for non-negotiable topics and avoid situations where member states could exercise veto power, which has weakened many multilateral agreements in the past.

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The world is gearing up for the final meeting in Busan, where nations will aim to agree on a legally binding text to combat plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. Significant progress has been made between the fourth and fifth sessions of the negotiating committee, with the Chair of the committee successfully building the momentum needed to reach a consensus in Busan. The pressing question remains: will the final text be robust, actionable, and financially sustainable enough to lead to a world free from plastic pollution?