

In Case You Missed It... The Comment Period On The Federal Government Consultation On Plastic Waste And Pollution From Textile And Apparel Sector Closes September 1



Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) published a [consultation document](#) on July 4, 2024, seeking input from stakeholders on a proposed roadmap for addressing plastic waste and pollution from the textile and apparel sector. Governments, Indigenous groups, industry members, public advocacy and environmental groups, and the general public are invited to provide their feedback on the proposed elements of the roadmap, with the consultation process closing shortly on **September 1, 2024**.

This is one part of a multi-pronged approach being taken by ECCC to move forward with its zero plastic waste initiative, which also includes the plastics registry and a proposed regulatory framework for recycling content and labelling for plastic products.

Background

The federal government reports in the consultation document

that textiles represent the fifth largest category of plastic waste in Canada in terms of absolute numbers discarded, with very few textile and apparel products being recycled in Canada. The federal government also reports that synthetic microfibres are widely released in the ocean environment as microplastics. While jurisdictions across the globe have started to address environmental concerns posed by the textile and apparel industry, including programs that require extended producer responsibility, to date, the federal and provincial governments have taken limited actions with respect to plastic waste and pollution from this sector.

Draft Roadmap

The proposed objective of the draft roadmap is to prevent textile and apparel waste (including microfibres) from going to landfill or incineration or being discharged into the environment as pollution. The draft roadmap would adopt a waste management hierarchy approach, with a focus on reduce, repair, reuse and recycle over energy recovery and landfilling.

The consultation document discusses key issues, proposes potential solutions and asks for specific stakeholder input in respect of each of these. These issues include how to better manage textile and apparel waste (including take-back programs and extended producer responsibility programs), how to extend the life of a textile or apparel product, solutions to manage microfibre pollution (such as washing machine filters and design standards to reduce microfibre shedding from clothing), identifying who is best placed to implement initiatives and at which points in the waste management hierarchy and along the textile value chain measures should be applied.

ECCC acknowledges that collaboration with all levels of government will be required to effectively address plastic waste and pollution from this sector given the shared responsibility for managing waste.

Next Steps

The deadline for submission of comments on the consultation paper is September 1, 2024. Following the consultation period and prior to publishing the draft road map, ECCC has indicated that it will hold a one-day webinar for stakeholders to discuss the feedback as well as publish a “what-we-heard” report summarizing the input received through the consultation process.

The content of this article is intended to provide a general guide to the subject matter. Specialist advice should be sought about your specific circumstances.

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