

International Waste Shipments

Updated controls for the export of waste plastics to Turkey

02 March 2021

Background

On 1 January 2021, the Basel Convention was amended to strengthen the controls for the export of waste plastics and these amendments were written into GB law via the International Waste Shipments (Amendment of Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006) Regulations 2020.

Turkey did not implement the requirements of the Basel Convention but have notified the OECD that they have implemented additional controls on the import of wastes, including plastics, which came into force on 1 January 2021. The notice* includes detail on Turkey's requirements for waste import certificates of conformity and waste conformity checks and of numerous wastes which they will no longer accept into the customs zone of Turkey including any free zones. Article 9 of the notice refers to prohibiting the import, into Turkey, of wastes listed in the notice's associated Annexes 2A & 2B.

Impact on Plastic waste exports

From 1 January 2021, the Turkish authorities will no longer accept plastic waste polymer mixtures or any plastic which has been produced as a result of mechanical treatment of wastes (EWC code **19 12 04**).

Therefore our interpretation of the Turkish import restrictions is that the following plastics are prohibited:

- Y48 plastic mixtures (single polymer types, like PVC, may be allowed subject to obtaining prior informed consent).
- B3011 - PET, PP and PE mixtures.
- Plastic wastes containing any polymers (single or mixtures) produced as a result of mechanical treatment of wastes and therefore classified as EWC **19 12 04**.

Turkey has not prohibited the import of other plastic waste codes such as **15 01 02** (plastic packaging). However our understanding of the rules is that such wastes can only be exported to Turkey if they are in single polymer form and haven't undergone mechanical treatment. Mechanical treatment such as trommel screening, disc screening, optical sorting and shredding used in order to produce the waste stream from a mixed material would result in that waste being classified under **Chapter 19** of the List of Wastes. We do not believe that simply compacting/baling plastics would be regarded as a treatment that produces the waste stream and therefore the resulting material would not fall under **Chapter 19**.

Application of EWC Codes

Waste codes **must not** be interchanged in order to circumvent national import restrictions. That is misdescription of waste which diverts waste away from appropriate waste management. Waste should be classified based on the process that gave rise to it and not by simply choosing a waste code that describes the waste type and it remains the responsibility of waste producers and operators to classify their waste. We cannot provide overarching guidance to assist with waste coding and subsequent waste exports. We strongly advise those seeking to export waste to Turkey make appropriate checks with the Turkish authorities beforehand.

Please contact Askshipments@environment-agency.gov.uk for any enquiries.

[*31 Aralık 2020 PERŞEMBE \(resmigazete.gov.tr\)](http://resmigazete.gov.tr)