

# KERATAN AKHBAR

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## Action plan to **stem** illegal plastic waste imports

Joint enforcement to prevent nation from becoming dumping ground'

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**BUTTERWORTH:** The Ministry of Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change (MESTECC) plans to draw up a national action plan against the tide of illegal shipments of plastic waste to the country.

As statistics revealed that Malaysia was among the leading importers of plastic waste in recent years, MESTECC Minister Yeo Bee Yin intends to curb such illegal importation and nip it in the bud.

She vowed to continue with joint enforcement action, to weed out the importers of illegal plastic waste.

The plan will be used to guide relevant enforcement agencies to strengthen and standardise enforcement activities and procedures to combat illegal transboundary movement of plastic waste.

"As a party to the Basel Convention, Malaysia also imposes strict requirements in line with Article 4 (11) of the Convention on imports of mixed plastic waste to ensure that any transboundary movement of it is conducted in a manner to protect human health and the environment," Yeo said after visiting the North Butterworth Container Terminal with state executive councillor Phee Boon Poh and the Department of Environment (DOE) director-general Norlin Jaafar.

Earlier, Yeo disclosed that Malaysia shipped back 150 containers of plastic waste at no cost to their countries of origin.

"To date, MESTECC, through the DOE has repatriated 150 containers, with approximately 3,737 metric tonnes of plastic waste, which was illegally brought into Malaysia."

The repatriation was borne by the exporters or the shipping liners.

"This is an unprecedented move by Malaysia."

Yeo said inspections at ports and data from the Customs Department showed most of the smuggled waste came from developed countries such as France, United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Spain, and Japan.

"This is not about money, it is about dignity and Malaysia cannot become the world's dumping ground."



Yeo showing a document for repatriation of a container load of illegal plastic waste to the country of origin at the North Butterworth Container Terminal yesterday. —MASRY CHE ANI/THE SUN