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# PWMI Newsletter

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NO 46 2017.4



Plastic Waste Management Institute  
JAPAN

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## Plastic Products, Plastic Waste and Resource Recovery [2015]

### Background information and notes on the publication of the Flowchart of Plastic Products, Plastic Waste and Resource Recovery (2015)

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The Plastic Waste Management Institute (PWMI) conducts a variety of annual surveys in relation to plastic waste including questionnaires on recycling figures, surveys on plastic waste discharge, surveys targeting local governments, and surveys on industrial waste. The results of these surveys are processed together with various types of statistical data to produce and release the Flowchart of Plastic Products, Plastic Waste and Resource Recovery on a yearly basis. This flowchart serves as quantitative material for Japan in the form of a macro flow covering the annual production of plastic, the use and discarding of plastic products, and the manner in which discarded plastic is disposed and recovered for reuse as a resource.

Japan in 2015 made substantial progress in beating deflation and reviving the economy with the result that a gradual economic recovery is

taking hold. Resin production increased slightly compared with 2014 signaling a clear end to the drop in resin production that began in 2010 and a turn toward positive growth. Nevertheless, it remains about 4,000 kt short of the 2007 level prior to the Lehman Brothers collapse (Lehman Shock).

The Industrial Structure Council and Central Environmental Council in Japan make periodic inspections of recycling-related laws centered about Japan's Basic Law for Establishing the Recycling-based Society, but this year saw no changes that could have a major quantitative impact on the flow of plastic recycling.

We continue to study ways of improving the accuracy of this material flowchart, but as there are no changes worthy of mention at this time, we prepared this year's flowchart according to the same method as last year.

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# 2015 Highlights

**(1) Resin production increased by 250 kt (+2.3%) relative to 2014. On the other hand, domestic plastic products consumption decreased by 130 kt (-1.3%).**

**(2) Total plastic waste discharge decreased by 110 kt (-1.1%) relative to the previous year to 9,150 kt.**

**(3) Effectively used plastic waste decreased by 50 kt (-0.7%) relative to the previous year to 7,630 kt keeping the effective plastic utilization rate the same at 83%.**

In 2015, resin production increased slightly from the previous year to 10,860 kt (+250 kt relative to 2014; +2.3%). In addition, resin export increased to 3,850 kt (+330 kt; +9.5%). Resin import, product export, and product import, meanwhile, decreased to 2,470 kt (-150 kt; -5.8%), 790 kt (-20 kt; -2.4%), and 1,900 kt (-70 kt; -3.6%), respectively. As a result, domestic plastic products consumption decreased to 9,640 kt (-130 kt; -1.3%).

Total plastic waste discharge decreased slightly to 9,150 kt (-110 kt; -1.1%). This result can be broken down into domestic (general) plastic waste at 4,350 kt (-80 kt; -1.7%) and industrial plastic waste at 4,800 kt (-30 kt; -0.6%).

As for disposal and recovery methods, mechanical recycling increased to 2,050 kt (+60 kt; +3.0%) and feedstock recycling<sup>\*1</sup> increased to 360 kt (+20 kt; +5.5%). Energy recovery<sup>\*2</sup> in total decreased slightly

to 5,210 kt (-130 kt; -2.4%).

The percentage contributions to the effective plastic utilization rate by mechanical recycling, feedstock recycling, and energy recovery were 22%, 4%, and 57%, respectively, indicating that the overall plastic utilization rate remained the same as the previous year at 83%.

Exports of plastic waste for mechanical recycling showed a decrease to 1,450 kt (-60 kt; -3.8%). In addition, reclaimed products (domestic) increased together with a decrease in exports owing to a corrected value for “plastic scrap” in last year’s trade statistics.

\*1: feedstock recycling = blast/coke furnaces + gasification + liquefaction

\*2: energy recovery = densified-refuse derived fuel and cement material/fuel + incineration with power generation + incineration with heat utilization facility

## Explanation of flowchart items

### (1) Resin production, resin processing, and marketing of products

#### 1-1 Resin production

• This figure was prepared by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) on the basis of chemical-industry statistics.

#### 1-2 Reclaimed products

• For convenience sake, the figure used here is that of mechanical recycling at the previous year taking figures for export and import of plastic waste into account (Ministry of Finance, trade statistics).

#### 1-3 Domestic plastic products consumption

• (domestic plastic products consumption) = (resin production) – {(resin export) – (resin import)} – (liquid resin, etc.) – {(resin

processing waste) – (reclaimed products)} – {(product export) – (product import)}

- Resin export and import figures are based on trade statistics from the Ministry of Finance.
- Figures for liquid resin, synthetic fiber, etc. that fall outside plastic waste discharge are based on chemical-industry statistics from METI.
- Figures for plastic product export and import are based on trade statistics from the Ministry of Finance.
- Figure for resin processing waste is discharged waste from the processing step that is not turned into products.

#### 1-4 Domestic plastic input

• (domestic plastic input) = (domestic plastic products consumption) – {(exported plastic parts from assembled products) – (imported plastic parts from assembled products)}

- Assembled products: automobiles, home appliances (televisions, refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners, washing machines and dryers)
- Number of exported/imported assembled products: Automobile figures are based on Monthly Motor Vehicle Statistics of Japan from Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association (JAMA); home appliance figures are based on “Current Production Statistics” from Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI).

## (2) Discharge

### 2-1 Post-use products discharge

- This figure is calculated by an estimation system developed by PWMI based on usage quantities by demand-generating fields and by resin type (usage quantities have been calculated annually from 1976) and on product lifetimes by demand-generating fields (using a PWMI 60-year discharge model).
- Since the export of used automobiles affects the amount of plastic waste in Japan, corrections are made to plastic waste discharge in the transport industry. Here, the number of used automobiles is based on “number of post-use automobiles” issued by JAMA and the number of exported used automobiles is based on data released by Japan Automobile Dealers Association (JADA).
- Discharge ratios for domestic waste and industrial waste have been estimated using a PWMI discharge model by demand-generating fields.

### 2-2 Production and processing waste discharge

- Amount of resin production waste is not included in amount of resin production, and amount of resin production waste and amount of resin processing waste are estimated using each predefined waste ratio.

### 2-3 Total plastic waste discharge

- (total plastic waste discharge) = (post-use products discharge) + (resin production waste) + (resin processing waste)

### 2-4 Breakdown of total plastic waste discharge by resin type

- These breakdown figures were estimated from amounts of post-use products discharge, production and processing waste discharge, resin production, etc.

## (3) Disposal and recovery

### 3-1 Mechanical recycling

- Figures for the mechanical recycling of domestic plastic waste are based on the weight of collected PET bottles (The Council for PET Bottle Recycling) and weight of collected white trays (Japan Plastic Food Container Industry Association), and figures for the mechanical recycling of other plastic containers and packaging are based on data released by The Japan Containers And Packaging Recycling Association. Residual amounts after the mechanical recycling of other plastic containers and packaging will be allocated to densified-refuse derived fuel and other items using as coefficients figures released by The Japan Containers and Packaging Recycling Association.
- Total figures and breakdowns for the mechanical recycling of

industrial waste are extrapolated from the results of questionnaires sent to recycling companies. Production waste and processing waste are taken to be the total of mechanical recycling.

- “Recycled material” indicates pellets, flakes, fluff, blocks, and ingots, while “recycled products” refer to film sheets, stakes, pipes, etc. other than the above.

The export figure under “destination of recycling use” for mechanical recycling is based on “scrap plastic” statistics from Ministry of Finance trade figures.

### 3-2 Densified-refuse derived fuel, blast-furnace/coke-oven raw materials, gasification, liquefaction

- Figures for densified-refuse derived fuel includes plastic waste for power generation; figures for densified-refuse derived fuel and cement kiln fuel are based on the results of surveys targeting industry associations.
- With respect to domestic waste, figures for blast furnace raw materials, coke-oven chemical materials, gasification, and liquefaction approved as product recycling methods by the Containers and Packaging Recycling Law are based on data released by The Japan Containers And Packaging Recycling Association.
- With respect to industrial waste, these figures are based on the results of questionnaires.

### 3-3 Disposal and recovery of domestic waste

- Incineration/landfilling ratio  
This ratio is determined from the results of past PWMI surveys based on the “FY2014 Nation Survey on the State of Discharge and Treatment of Municipal Solid Waste” of the Ministry of the Environment.
- Incineration with power generation / incineration with heat utilization
- “Incineration with power generation” means incineration processing by an incinerator equipped with power-generation facilities and “incineration with heat utilization” means incineration processing by an incinerator that, while not equipped with power-generation facilities, has facilities for utilizing heat externally. The ratios shown are determined by PWMI surveys based on values released by the Ministry of the Environment.

### 3-4 Disposal and recovery of industrial waste

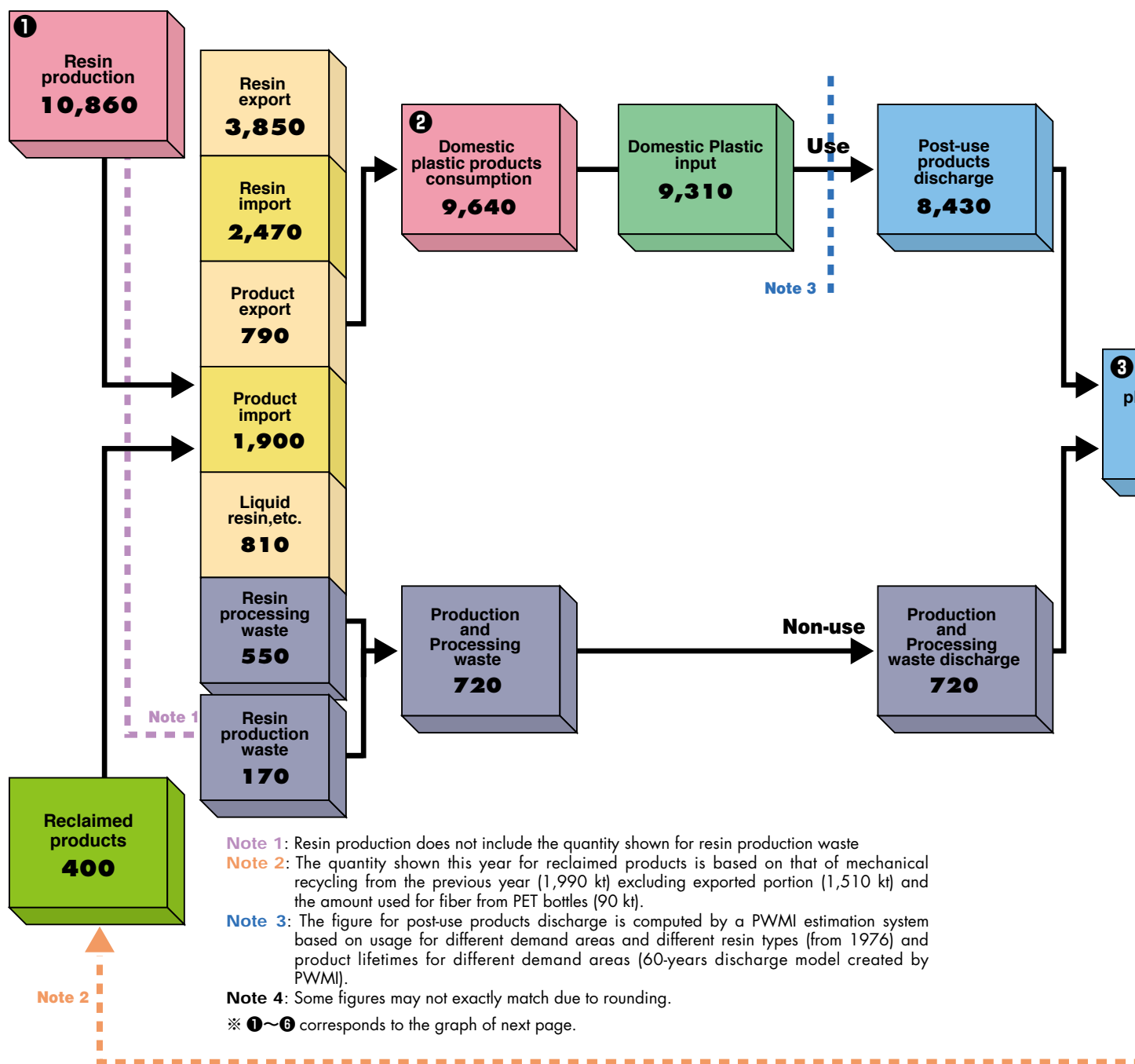
- Disposal and recovery of industrial waste is partially commissioned to local governments as business-related waste. The ratio of such processing by business operators to that commissioned to local governments is determined on the basis of PWMI surveys. The percentage breakdown of commissioned processing into incineration with power generation, incineration with heat utilization facility, incineration without power generation or heat utilization facility, and landfilling is based on figures for domestic waste processing.
- The incineration/landfilling ratio in the processing of industrial waste is based on the latest survey conducted by PWMI in fiscal year 2013. The energy recovery rate in incineration by power generation, etc. is taken to be the same as the results of previous surveys conducted by PWMI in fiscal years 2006/2008.
- Figures for incineration with power generation includes plastic waste traded for a price.

# Flowchart of plastic products, plastic waste and resource recovery 2015

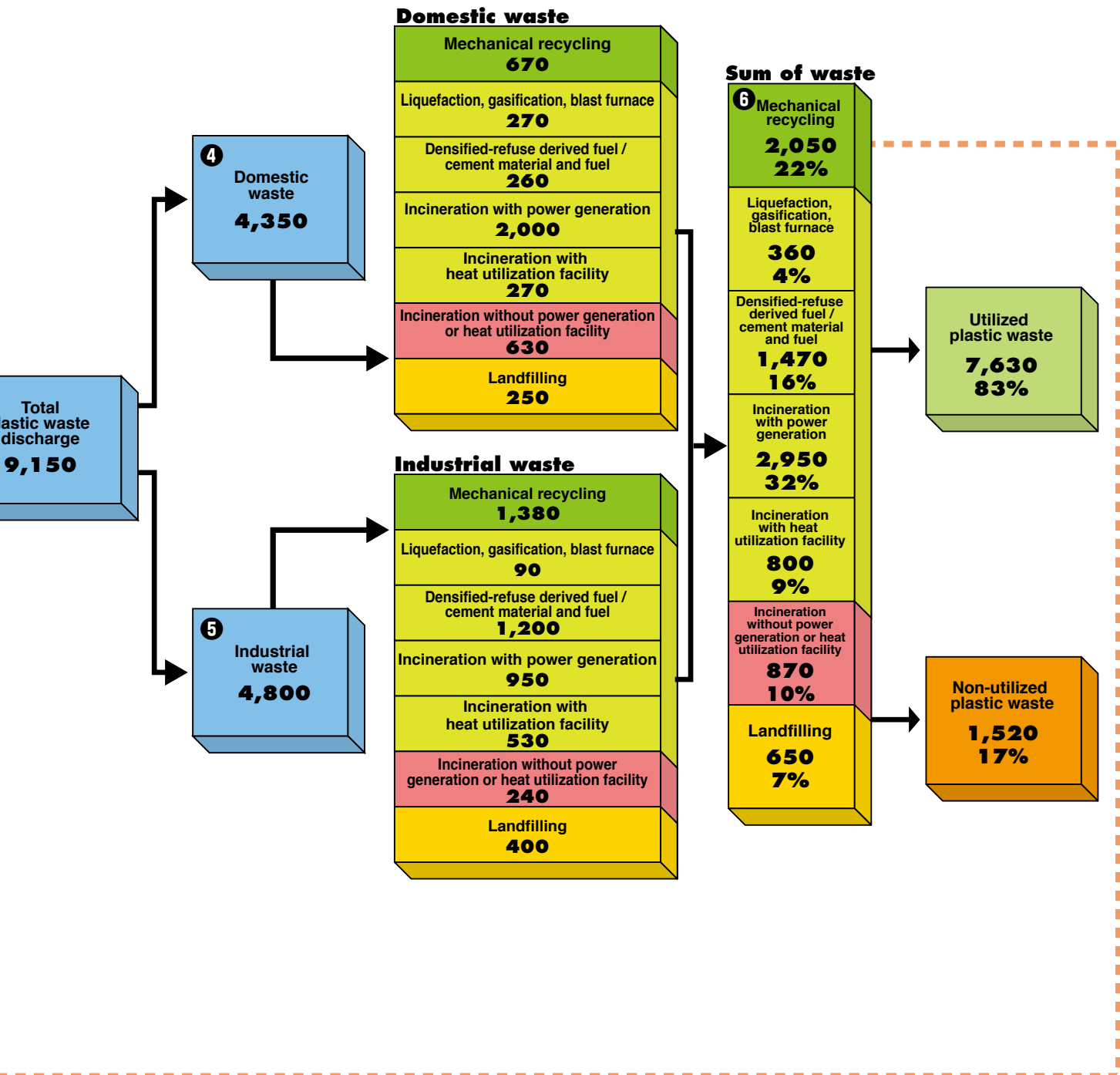
[ Unit; kt (thousand tons) ]

Resin production, resin processing, and marketing of products

Discharge

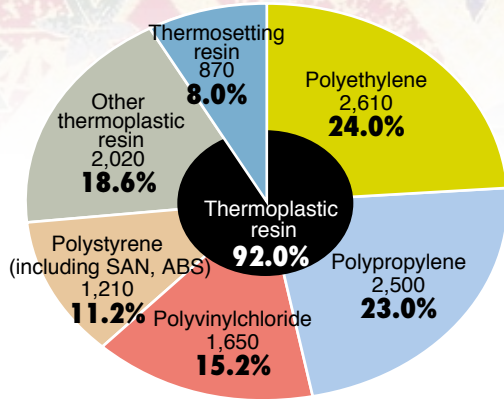


## Disposal and recovery

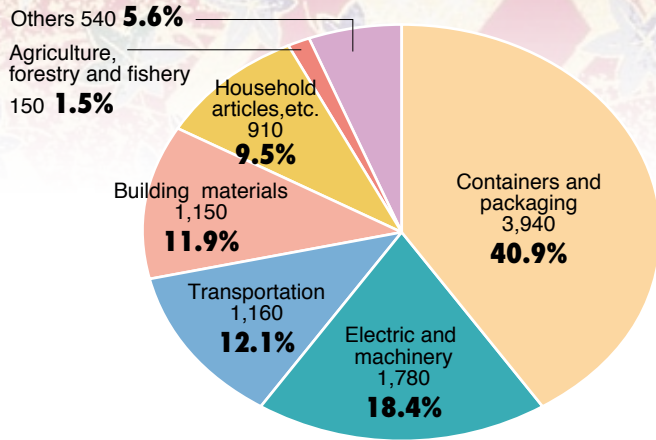


# Details of flowchart elements (unit : kt (thousand tons))

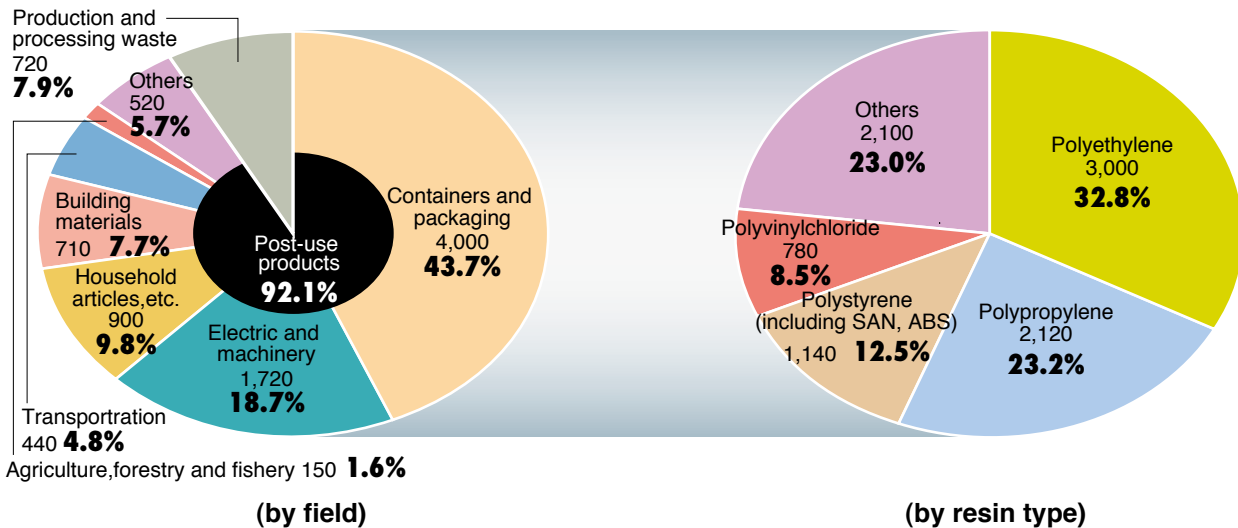
① Breakdown of resin production (10,860kt) by resin type



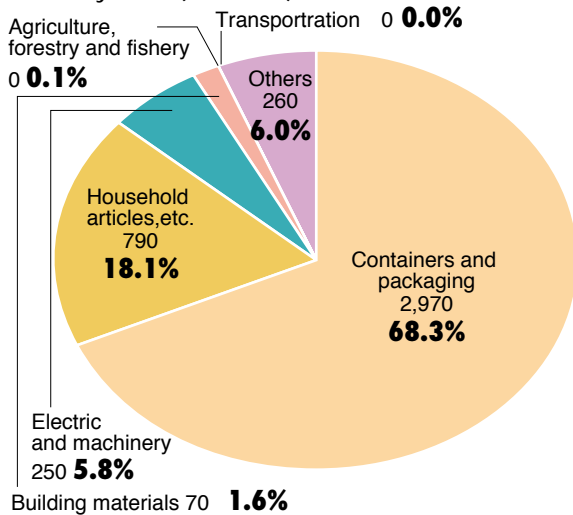
② Breakdown of resin products by field (9,640kt)



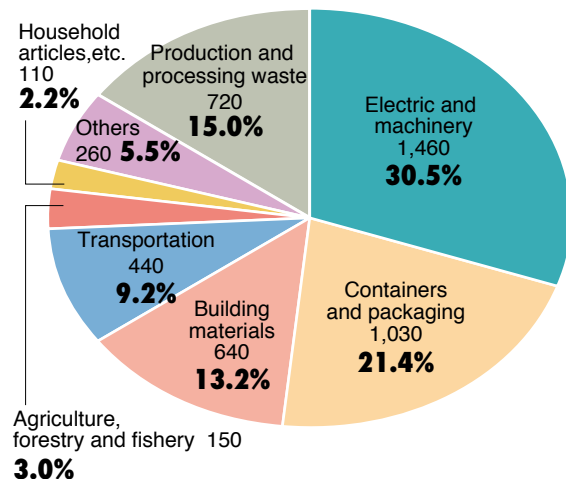
③ Breakdown of total plastic waste by field and resin type (9,150 kt)



④ Breakdown of domestic(general) waste by field (4,350 kt)

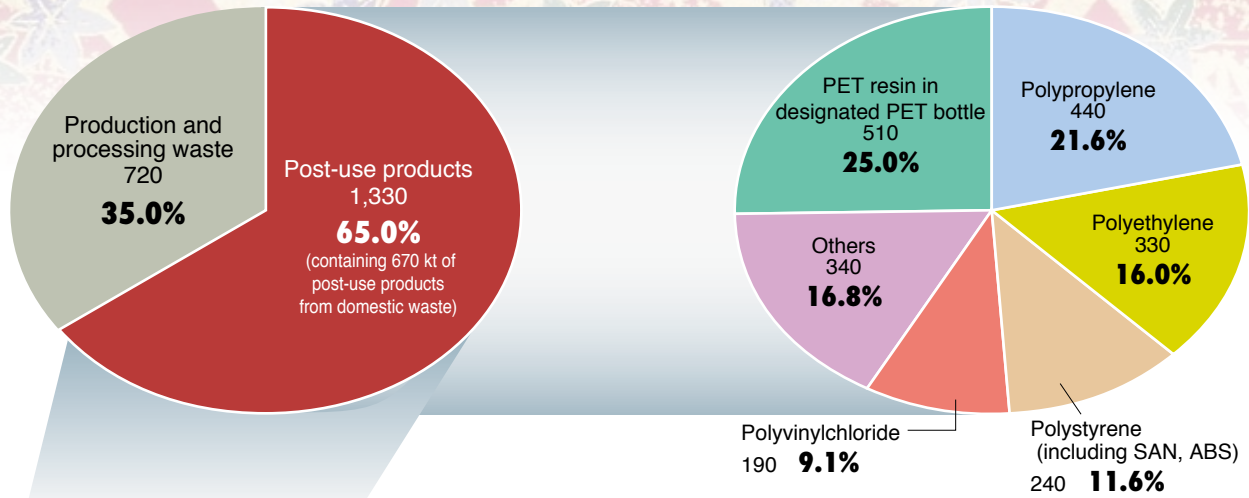


⑤ Breakdown of industrial waste by field (4,800 kt)

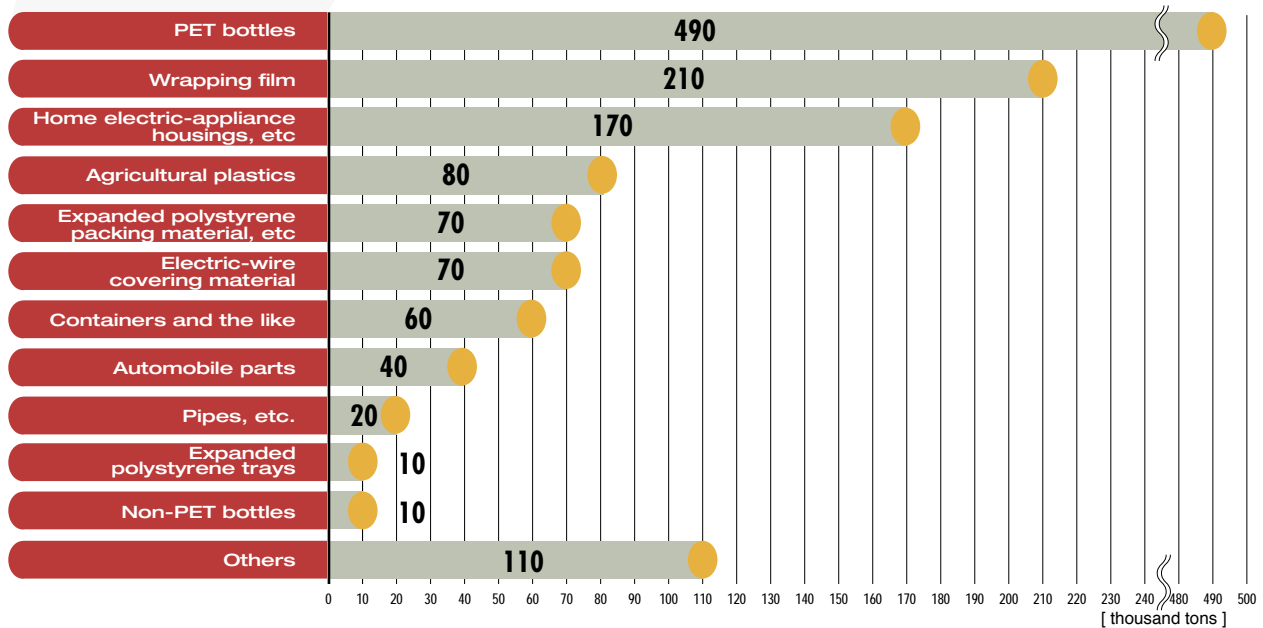


⑥ Breakdown of mechanical recycling (2,050 kt)

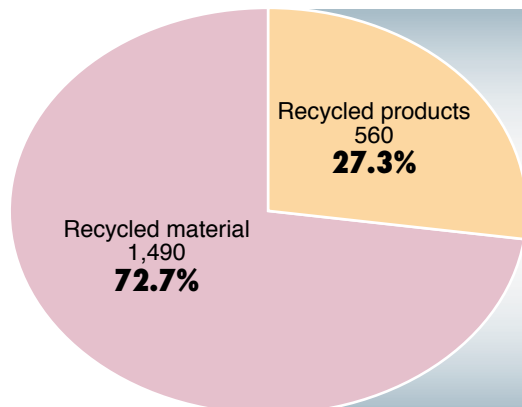
○ Breakdown of mechanical recycling resources and resin type



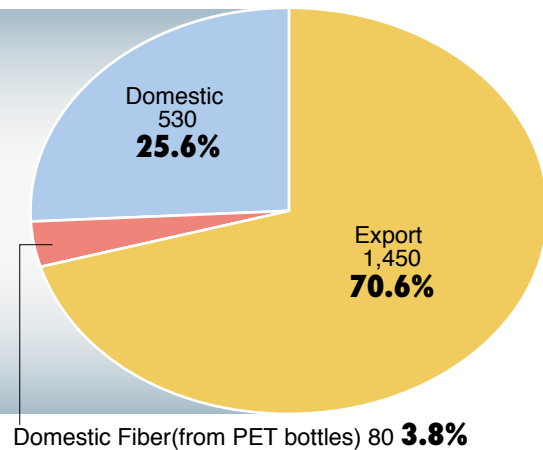
○ Breakdown of post-use products for mechanical recycling (1,330 kt)



(by type of reclaimed products)



(by destination of recycling use)

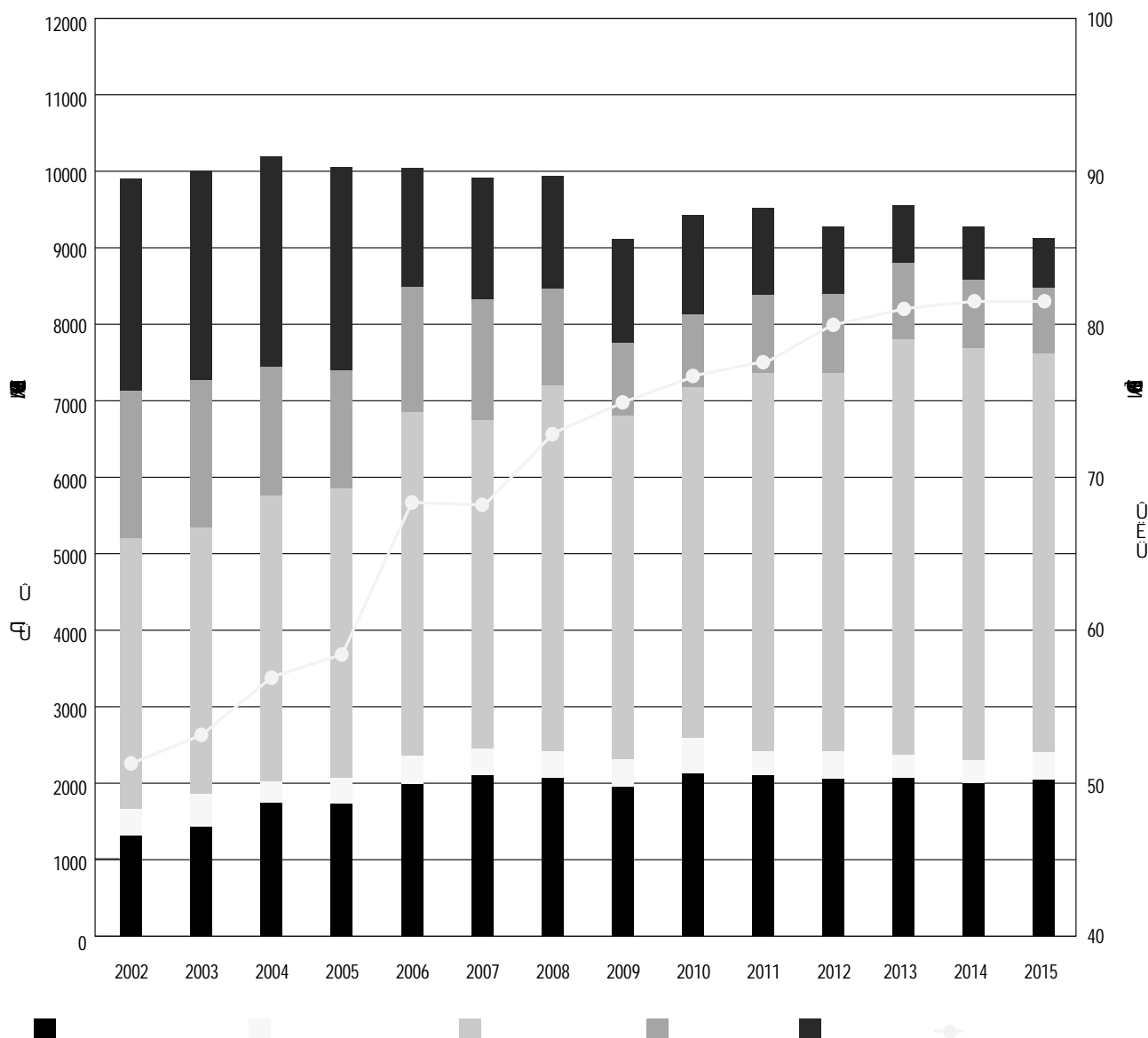






# Change in Utilized Plastic Waste by Amount and Rate Over Time

| Year                               | 2002  | 2003   | 2004   | 2005   | 2006   | 2007  | 2008  | 2009  | 2010  | 2011  | 2012  | 2013  | 2014  | 2015  |
|------------------------------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Total Plastic waste discharge (kt) | 9,900 | 10,010 | 10,130 | 10,060 | 10,050 | 9,940 | 9,980 | 9,120 | 9,450 | 9,520 | 9,290 | 9,400 | 9,260 | 9,150 |
| Utilization amount (kt)            | 5,160 | 5,410  | 5,750  | 5,820  | 6,880  | 6,920 | 7,330 | 6,890 | 7,230 | 7,440 | 7,440 | 7,670 | 7,680 | 7,630 |
| Utilization rate(%)                | 52    | 54     | 57     | 58     | 69     | 69    | 73    | 75    | 77    | 78    | 80    | 82    | 83    | 83    |



# Business Overview

## History

Originally founded in December 1971 as the Plastic Management Research Association, the Plastic Waste Management Institute (PWMI) received its current name in July of the following year as operations expanded. For the last 40 years or so, PWMI has endeavored to research and develop technology for the optimal processing and effective use of plastic waste and to publicize its findings. In addition, PWMI has changed into a general incorporated association as a result of Laws Related to the Reform of the Public-Interest Corporations System (enacted in December 2008). As a result of this change, PWMI's objectives were newly established in April 2013 as "surveying and researching the recycling of plastic waste and contributing to a reduction in environmental load by the total recycling of plastic, and helping plastic-related industries to expand their business soundly and contributing to the creation of a society capable of sustainable growth."

## Business Content

(1) Survey and research the generation, recycling, and disposal of plastic waste and promote the appropriate use of plastic waste through various means including techniques for evaluating environmental load

(2) Support the education and study of the recycling of plastic and plastic waste and engage in related public relations activities

(3) Interface and collaborate with domestic and foreign institutions in the plastic and plastic-waste industries

## Activities

The three core activities of PWMI are summarized below.

(1) Provision of life cycle assessment (LCA) base data and LCA evaluation of recycling & recovery (R&R) technologies  
PWMI provides scientific and high-reliability data for widespread use by related industries and general citizens for

application to carbon footprint systems, etc. It also works to solve technical issues so that the effective use of plastic waste can be evaluated by LCA.

(2) Preparation of the Flowchart of Plastic Products, Plastic Waste and Resource Recovery and ongoing improvements to its accuracy

PWMI strives to obtain a clear understanding of the entire lifecycle of plastic from its production stage to its disposal and R&R and to prepare and provide a highly accurate flowchart of this process.

(3) Support of environmental education

PWMI continues to hold instructor training courses and on-site classes and works to raise the level of consciousness in society regarding the usefulness of plastic. In addition to holding on-site classes on plastic R&R at primary and middle schools especially in Japan's Kanto region, PWMI will honor as much as possible requests for instructor training courses in line with new teaching guidelines and for lectures at universities specializing in environmental science.

## Members (as of January 2017)

Regular members: 17 corporations and 3 organizations

Supporting members: 3 organizations

### Regular members

Asahi Kasei Corp.

DuPont-Mitsui Polychemicals Co. Ltd.

Japan Polyethylene Corporation

Japan Polypropylene Corporation

JNC Corporation

Kaneka Corporation

Maruzen Petrochemical Co., Ltd.

NUC Corporation

Prime Polymer Co., Ltd.

Shin Dai-Ichi Vinyl Corporation

Shin-Etsu Chemical Co., Ltd.

Sumitomo Chemical Co., Ltd.

SunAllomer Ltd.

Taiyo Vinyl Corporation

Tokuyama Sekisui Co., Ltd.

Tosoh Corp.

Ube-Maruzen Polyethylene Co., Ltd.

### Trade organizations

Japan Petrochemical Industry Association

The Japan Plastics Industry Federation

Vinyl Environmental Council

### Supporting members

Japan PET Bottle Association

Japan Expanded Polystyrene Association

Japan PVC Environmental Affairs Council

### Directors

Chairman: Tsutomu Tannowa

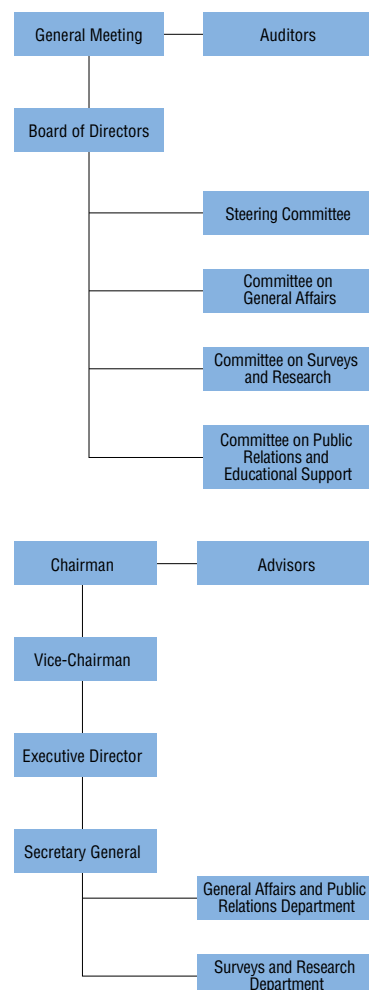
Vice-Chairman: Mamoru Kadokura

Executive Director: Hisao Ida

Directors: 10

Auditors: 2

## Organization



## Plastic Waste Management Institute

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