

## **Abstract**

This thesis research how the global trade of plastic waste has been relocated in the aftermath of China's ban on plastic waste imports in 2017. In recent decades, the burgeoning demand for plastics has fostered a marked upsurge in the global trade of plastic waste. Researchers has established that developed nations are often the source of plastic waste exports, while developing and underdeveloped nations are the primary destinations, resulting in the imposition of significant environmental burdens upon these nations. This phenomenon has triggered an environmental justice discourse, highlighting the unequal distribution of social and environmental costs. The implementation of China's waste import restrictions has led to an altered trade landscape, with mainly South-Asian countries emerging as significant importers of large quantities of plastic waste.

This thesis looks at how this trade landscape has changed and finds that the new major importer of plastic waste is South-Asian developing countries. Moreover, the work undergone in this thesis aims at filling in the scholarly gap when it comes to the explanatory reasons behind new importers motivations towards plastic waste imports. By developing and running multiple regression analysis this thesis finds that there are some statistically significant variables that can be applied to explain the countries increased plastic waste imports. As a common result within the field of International Relations, also this thesis finds that the independent variables affecting countries levels of plastic waste imports are economic factors such as GDP, GDP per capita and GNI per capita. Thus, this thesis also finds evidence that variables representing countries levels of social justice also have some impact on the country's levels of plastic waste imports.