



# Reducing Single-Use Plastic Products in Air Cargo Operations

The air cargo industry is taking the initiative to reduce the volume of single-use plastic products (SUPP) used in daily operations. With many airlines accepting the challenge to reduce plastic pollution, air cargo stakeholders also receive requests from shippers to minimize waste.

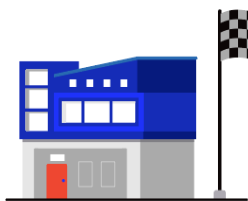
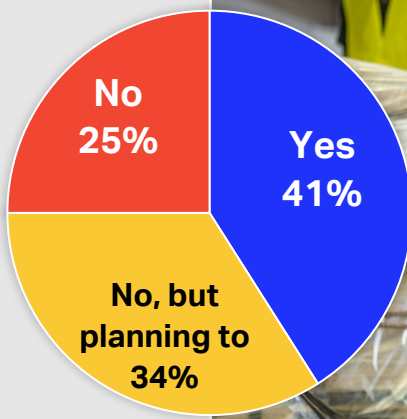


IATA Survey

In Q3 2023, IATA surveyed air cargo stakeholders, including airlines, ground handlers, shippers, and freight forwarders, on their strategy to reduce SUPP in their operations. With 90+ responses from a diverse group of stakeholders from every continent, the survey offers insights into how critical waste reduction has become for the air cargo industry. A big share of the participants indicated that not only do they have a strategy in place or are planning to, but they also have set ambitious targets to achieve reductions in the next decade.

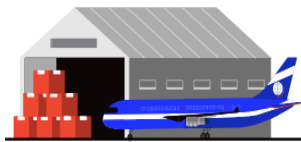
75%

have a strategy in place or plan to create a strategy for single-use plastic



## Packaging and preparation

Cable ties to secure crates and boxes. Plastic stretch wrap to secure boxes. Plastic straps to secure loads to pallets.



## Handling & ULD Build Up

Wrapping of pallets & containers  
Perishable Goods Packing  
Polythene sheets to wrap up the cargo ULDs



## Ground Operations

Water Ingress Prevention (to prevent damage to aircraft), and those placed underneath the shipment to prevent waste/liquid contamination

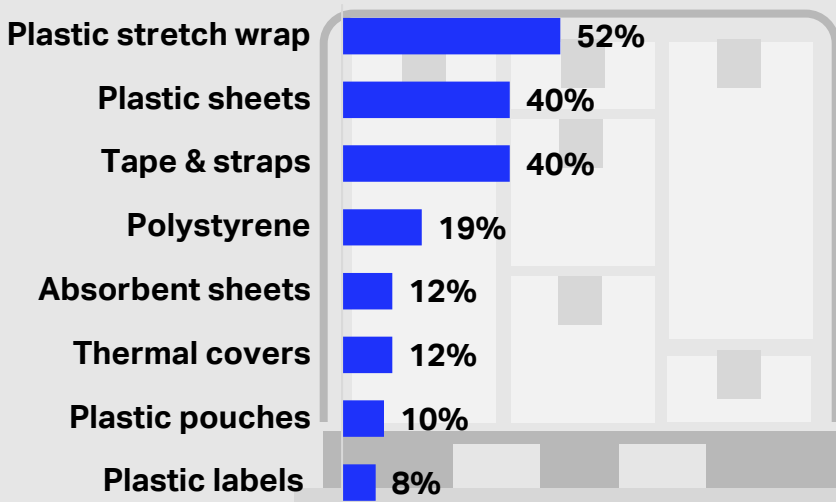
## Commodities requiring SUPP the most

General cargo (68%)  
Electronics (44%)  
Perishables (42%)  
Pharma products (30%)  
Time-sensitive items (15%)

When asked about their challenges, they indicated that cost, availability, and quality are the main issues when sourcing SUPP alternatives.

In some cases, they said that there are simply no alternatives in the market to the SUPP used in operations.

## Items most considered as irreplaceable



## Steps in the right direction



35%

Reuse SUPP when feasible

26%

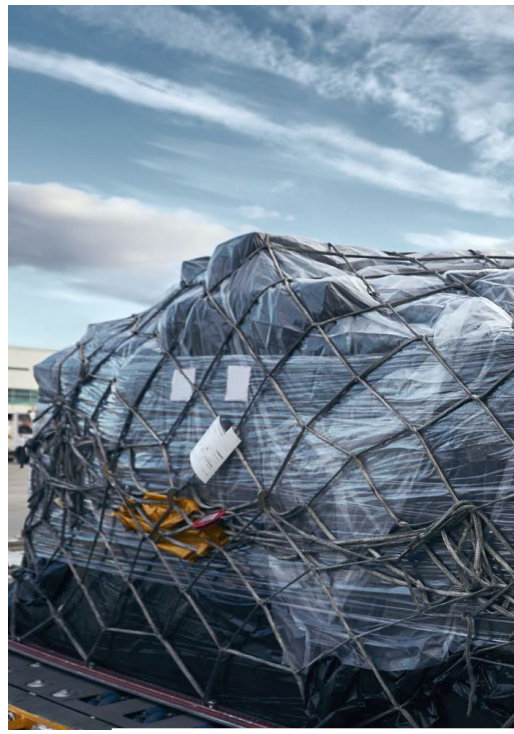
Use items made of recycled plastic

11%

Use items made of biodegradable plastic

42%

Use reusable alternatives to SUPP



## Survey participation

91

responses

36% Freight Fwd  
34% Airlines  
12% Handlers  
17% Other

