

Press Release

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PlasticsEurope reacts on Directive on single use plastics

Industry urges Commission to avoid shortcuts and to focus on improving waste management

PlasticsEurope supports the overarching objective of the “Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment” presented today by the European Commission, namely to reduce marine litter in our seas.

Marine litter is a result of a combination of factors, the most important of which being the lack of implementation of waste-related legislation at national/regional level, the lack of proper waste management in some parts of the world and inappropriate littering behaviour.

PlasticsEurope has been at the forefront of the fight against marine litter and is fully committed to helping put an end to the leakage of plastics into the environment. We carry out concrete actions (see annex).

To reduce littering, we call for:

- Appropriate waste management infrastructure.
Governments should integrate the issue of marine litter in their national waste management strategies: waste management infrastructure needs to be improved so that all plastic waste is collected and then used as a resource. Landfilling has to be avoided.
- Support for innovation and mindful product design.
- Awareness raising campaigns, which lead to responsible consumption and an understanding that waste is a resource.

We therefore urge the European Commission to avoid shortcuts – plastic product bans are not the solution and will not achieve the structural change needed to build the foundation for a sustainable and resource efficient economy; as alternative products may not be more sustainable.

Editor's note:

PlasticsEurope is one of the leading European trade associations with centres in Brussels, Frankfurt, London, Madrid, Milan and Paris. We are networking with European and national plastics associations and have more than 100 member companies, producing over 90% of all polymers across the EU28 member states plus Norway, Switzerland and Turkey.

The European plastics industry makes a significant contribution to the welfare in Europe by enabling innovation, creating quality of life to citizens and facilitating resource efficiency and climate protection. More than 1.5 million people are working in approximately 60,000 companies (mainly small and medium sized companies in the converting sector) to create a turnover above 350 bn EUR per year. The plastics industry includes polymer producers - represented by PlasticsEurope, converters - represented by EuPC and machine manufacturers - represented by EUROMAP.

For further info see the web links: www.plasticseurope.org, www.plasticsconverters.eu, www.euromap.org.

Annex:

- **Global plastics industry initiatives**

In 2011, plastics organisations from around the world set up a 'Global Action Plan for Solutions to Marine Litter'. Until today the 74 signatories, including the World Plastics Council (WPC) set up in 2014, have supported over 355 initiatives in 40 countries – from improving waste management, raising awareness and education campaigns, to funding global research and carrying out beach clean-ups. Plastics organisations around the world are working in collaboration with civil society and other public sector actors to tackle this global issue. See: www.marinelittersolutions.eu

- **Our Vision: No waste entering the oceans**

Plastics are too valuable a resource to be thrown away. Any waste entering the oceans is unacceptable! PlasticsEurope prioritises actions that prevent plastics ending up in rivers, lakes, seas, oceans, and land, by sharing knowledge on better waste management practices through conferences such as PolyTalk and IdentiPlast, for example, by promoting responsible consumer behaviour through projects like Recykling Rejs, or by being a direct collaborator as observer at the Regional Seas conventions. Our Circular Economy ambitions play an important role in tackling marine litter at source by promoting full life cycle thinking and resource-efficiency. See: www.recykling-rejs.pl/content/paddling-our-environment#overlay-context

- **Preventing microplastics and pellets from entering our oceans**

Microplastics derive from a wide range of sources: mainly from larger plastics breaking down into smaller fragments, but also from other sources like consumer care products. We support the voluntary initiatives by personal care product companies to phase out the intentional addition of plastic microbeads from their products. We also promote proper pellet containment along the plastics value chain as host of the global Operation Clean Sweep® initiative, thus supporting its member companies in preventing industry pellet losses into the environment. See: www.opcleansweep.eu/

- **Plastics 2030 Voluntary Commitment**

In its Voluntary Commitment, Plastics 2030, PlasticsEurope committed to accelerate the implementation by the plastics value chain of prevention measures to stop plastics raw materials leaking into the environment.

See <http://www.plasticseurope.org/strategy.aspx>.

As the issue of marine litter is a global one, PlasticsEurope works with the World Plastics Council which supports initiatives to drive waste minimisation and environmentally sound solid waste management in areas most affected by marine litter.

See: <https://www.worldplasticscouncil.org/about/>

See: <https://oceanconservancy.org/>

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