

Packaging Supply Chain joins alliance to ensure necessary framework conditions for circular plastics

Brussels, 5 February 2019 – On the occasion of the first meeting of the European Commission’s high-level Circular Plastics Alliance, which aims to improve the economics and quality of plastics recycling in Europe, **EUROPEN calls on all stakeholders, including EU and national policymakers, to ensure that certain framework conditions are put in place.**

EUROPEN welcomes the establishment of this Circular Plastics Alliance and looks forward to constructively and actively contributing to the platform. EUROPEN has been supportive of the European Commission’s Pledging campaign as part of its EU Plastics Strategy, from the start. Many members of EUROPEN have individually responded to the call, submitting ambitious commitments on recycled content for plastic packaging where possible, showcasing continuous environmental improvement along the packaging supply chain.

Collaboration along the supply chain and policy coherence are key factors for the success of this Alliance, because the ability of companies to boost the uptake of recycled content in their products will be influenced by several necessary pre-conditions. In particular:

- **Secondary raw materials** need to be **available** in sufficient quantity and quality at competitive prices relative to primary materials in order to stimulate the uptake of recycled content.
- An appropriate **quality framework** also needs to be in place.
- The EU should strive for a **genuine internal market** for secondary raw materials with relevant infrastructure for sorting and reprocessing available where they are needed.
- The development of **end-of waste criteria** is a pre-requisite for such a market.
- **Packaging functionality** is particularly important to bear in mind in this context, especially for packaging in contact with food and beverages. Introducing recycled content in food contact materials is not legal or desirable in some cases currently because it can pose a contamination and food safety risk for consumers. Today, only a few plastic polymers can meet the necessary quality and food safety requirements, but these plastics are not applicable for all food and drink packaging needs. The EU should swiftly assess whether other recycled plastic materials can be safely used in contact with food and beverages. **Food safety and hygiene for consumers is the first priority** for the food and drink packaging supply chain.

Hans Van Bochove, Coca-Cola European Partners and EUROPEN Chairman, representing EUROPEN in the Alliance: *“The pledges by companies in the packaging supply chain show that we are ready to do our part. Now, it is essential that we have an open dialogue with all parties to clarify how the necessary conditions for these pledges to be achieved can be taken forward by all actors.”*

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EUROPEN - The European Organization for Packaging and the Environment - is a cross-industry organization presenting the opinion of the packaging supply chain (i.e. raw material producers, converters and brand owners plus national packaging organizations) in Europe on topics related to packaging, packaging waste and the environment, independent of specific packaging materials or systems. www.europen-packaging.eu