



# CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Closing the loop

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

**The European Strategy for Plastics: Will it help?  
Steptoe & Johnson LLP.**

# Circular Economy Action Plan



European  
Commission

## >80% of actions delivered

Actions	Timetable
<b>Production</b>	
Emphasis on circular economy aspects in future product requirements under the Eco-design directive	2016 onwards
Eco-design work plan 2015-2017 and request to European standardisation organisations to develop standards on material efficiency for setting future Eco-design requirements on durability, reparability and recyclability of products	December 2015
Proposal for an implementing regulation on televisions and displays	End 2015 or beginning 2016
Examine options and actions for a more coherent policy framework of the different strands of work of EU product policy in their contribution to the circular economy	2018
Include guidance on circular economy into Best Available Techniques reference documents (BREFs) for several industrial sectors	2016 onwards
Guidance and promotion of best practices in the mining waste management plans	2018
Establishing an open, pan-European network of technological infrastructures for SMEs to integrate advanced manufacturing technologies into their production processes	2016
Examine how to improve the efficiency and uptake of the EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) and the pilot programme on environmental technology verification (ETV)	2017
Develop an improved knowledge base and support to SMEs for the substitution of hazardous substances of very high concern	2018

Consumption	Timetable
Better enforcement of existing guarantees on tangible products, accompanied by a reflection on improvements (upcoming Commission proposal for online sales of goods, and Fitness Check of consumer legislation)	2015-2017
Action on false green claims, including updated guidance on unfair commercial practices	2016
Analysis of the possibility to propose horizontal requirements on repair information provision in the context of Eco-design	2018
REFIT of Eco-label, to be followed by actions to enhance its effectiveness	2016
Assessment of the possibility of an independent testing programme on planned obsolescence	2018
Subject to evaluation of the current ongoing pilots, explore the possible uses of the Product Environmental Footprint to measure and communicate environmental information	2016 onwards
Action on Green Public Procurement: enhanced integration of circular economy requirements, support to higher uptake including through training schemes reinforcing its use in Commission procurement and EU funds	2016 onwards

Waste management	Timetable
Revised legislative proposal on waste	Dec 2015
Improved cooperation with Member States for better implementation of EU waste legislation, and combat illicit shipment of end of life vehicles	2015 onwards
Stepping up enforcement of revised Waste Shipment regulation	2016 onwards
Promotion of industry-led voluntary certification of treatment facilities for key waste/recyclate streams	2018 onwards
Initiative on waste to energy in the framework of the Energy Union	2016
Identification and dissemination of good practices in waste collection systems	2016 onwards

Market for secondary raw materials	Timetable
Development of quality standards for secondary raw materials (in particular for plastics)	2016 onwards
Proposal for a revised fertilisers regulation	Early 2018
Proposed legislation setting minimum requirements for reused water for irrigation and groundwater recharge	2017
Promotion of safe and cost-effective water reuse, including guidance on the integration of water reuse in water planning and management, inclusion of best practices in relevant BREFs, and support to innovation (through the European Innovation Partnership and Horizon 2020) and investments	2016-2017

Analysis and policy options to address the interface between chemicals, products and waste legislation, including how to reduce the presence and improve the tracing of chemicals of concern in products	2017
Measures to facilitate waste shipment across the EU, including electronic data exchange (and possibly other measures)	2016 onwards
Further development of the EU raw materials information system	2016 onwards

Sectorial action	
Plastics	
Strategy on plastics in the circular economy	2017
Specific action to reduce marine litter implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals	2015 onwards

Food waste	
Development of a common methodology and indicators to measure food waste	2016
Stakeholders platform to examine how to achieve SDGs goals on food waste, share best practices and evaluate progress	2016
Clarify relevant EU legislation related to waste, food and feed in order to facilitate food donation and utilisation of former foodstuffs for animal feed	2016
Explore options for more effective use and understanding of date marking on food	2017

Critical raw materials	
Report on critical raw materials and the circular economy	2017
Improve exchange of information between manufacturers and recyclers on electronic products	2016 onwards
European standards for material-efficient recycling of electronic waste, waste batteries and other relevant complex end-of-life products	2016 onwards
Sharing of best practice for the recovery of critical raw materials from mining waste and landfills	2017

Construction and demolition	
Pre-demolition assessment guidelines for the construction sector	2017
Voluntary industry-wide recycling protocol for construction and demolition waste	2016
Core indicators for the assessment of the lifecycle environmental performance of a building, and incentives for their use	2017 onwards

Biomass and bio-based materials	
Guidance and dissemination of best practice on the cascading use of biomass and support to innovation in this domain through Horizon 2020	2016-2019
Ensuring coherence and synergies with the circular economy when examining the sustainability of bioenergy under the Energy Union	2016
Assessment of the contribution of the 2012 Bio-economy Strategy to the circular economy and possible review	2016

Innovation and investments	
Initiative 'Industry 2020 and the circular economy' under Horizon 2020	October 2015
Pilot project for 'innovation dead' to address possible regulatory obstacles for innovators	2016
Targeted outreach to encourage applications for funding under EPSI, and support the development of projects and investment platforms relevant to the circular economy	2016 onwards
Targeted outreach and communication activities to assist Member States and regions for the uptake of Cohesion Policy funds for the circular economy	2016 onwards
Support to Member States and regions to strengthen innovation for the circular economy through smart specialisation	2016 onwards
Assessment of the possibility of launching a platform together with the EIB and national banks to support the financing of the circular economy	2016
Engagement with stakeholders in the implementation of this action plan through existing fora in key sectors	2016 onwards
Support to a range of stakeholders through actions on public-private partnerships, cooperation platforms, support to voluntary business approaches, and exchanges of best practices	2016 onwards

Monitoring	
Development of a monitoring framework for the circular economy	2017

# 2018 Circular Economy Package

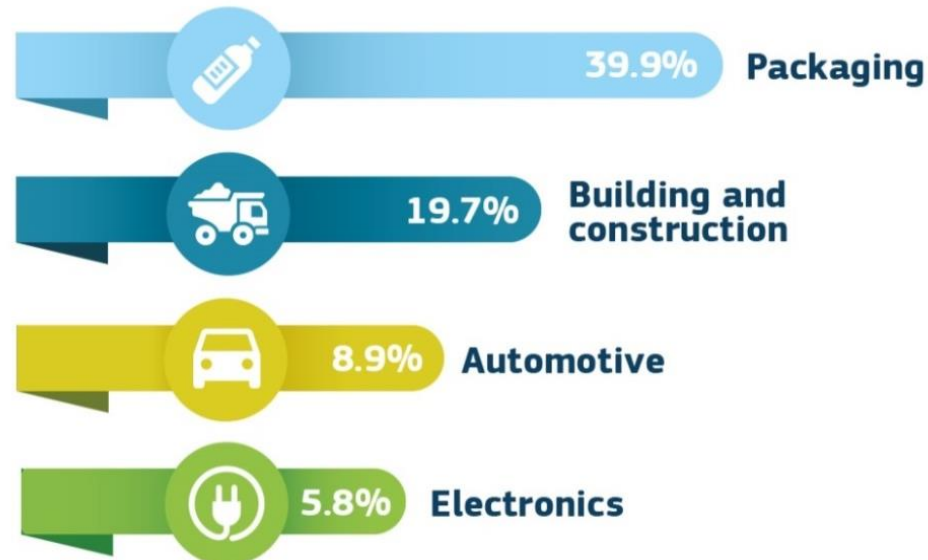




## EUROPEAN PLASTICS DEMAND IN 2015

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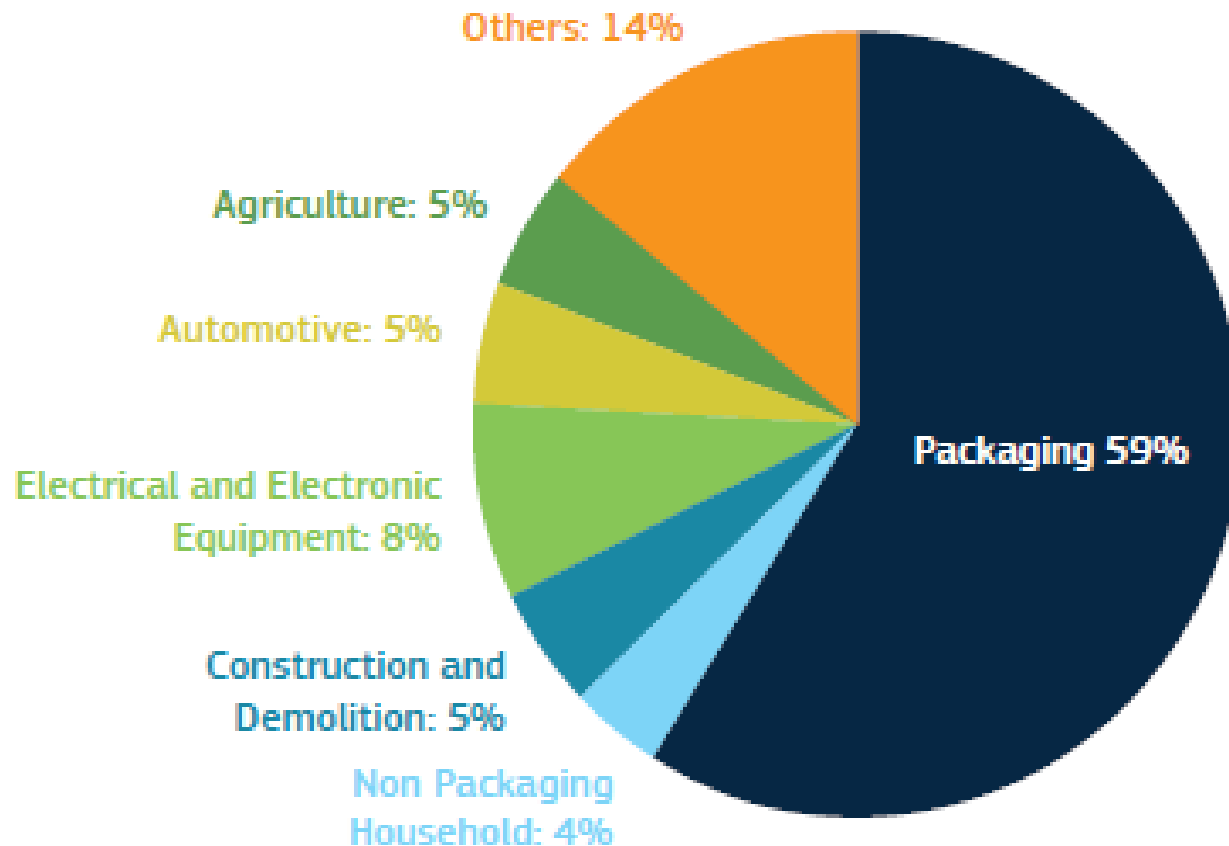
# 49 million tonnes





## EU PLASTIC WASTE GENERATION IN 2015

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## What do Europeans think about Plastics?

Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. (%-EU)



**74%**  
agree

**23%**  
disagree

You are worried about the impact on your health  
of everyday products made of plastics



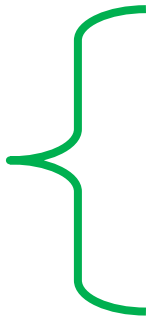
**87%**  
agree

**11%**  
disagree

You are worried about the impact on the environment  
of everyday products made of plastics



→ Plastics Strategy adopted **16<sup>th</sup> January 2018**



- **Communication & Staff Working Document**
  - **List of EU actions** (39) → most by 2018/2019
  - **Measures recommended** to Member States and industry
  - **Pledging Campaign on Recycled Content**
- + Waste Package**



## ***The Waste Package: The Way Forward***

- **Ambitious long-term targets** → recycling of municipal/packaging waste with specific targets for plastic packaging
- Forward-looking **calculation rules**
- **Landfilling restrictions** for separately collected and recyclable waste
- Measures on **prevention** & encouraging the **reuse** of packaging
- Minimum requirements for **producer responsibility schemes**: producers to bear the cost of waste management
- Continuously improving **separate collection**



## A VISION FOR THE CIRCULAR PLASTICS ECONOMY

*The Plastics Industry  
of the future*



*Smart  
Innovative  
Sustainable*

- **Economic incentives**
- Strategy for **jobs**
- Investment in **infrastructure and innovation**
- More **integrated value chain**
- **Growing market** for recycled content
- **Alternative feedstock** + innovative & sustainable materials
- Growth decoupled from **plastic waste generation**
- More **sustainable consumption** patterns

# A EUROPEAN STRATEGY FOR PLASTICS IN THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY



**Improve  
the economics  
and quality  
of plastics  
recycling**



**Curb plastic  
waste and  
littering**



**Drive  
investments  
and innovation  
towards circular  
solutions**



**Harness  
global  
action**



- **Stimulate design for circularity**
- **Better separate waste collection**
- **Boosting recycled content**



- By 2030**
- All plastics packaging reusable or recyclable
  - >50% of plastic waste recycled
  - Sorting & recycling capacity X 4 (vs. 2015)



- **Eco-design: requirements** to support recyclability of plastics
- **Evaluation:** Construction Products & End-of-life Vehicles
- Revision of the **essential requirements** in the PPWD
- Working on **food-contact materials**
- Development of **quality standards** (sorted and recycled plastics)
- **Ecolabel and GPP: incentives** for recycled plastics
- **EPR / deposit:** Member States
- Industry **pledges / voluntary commitments**



- **Regulatory framework for biodegradable plastics**
- **Report on oxo-degradable plastics**
- **Revision of directive on port reception facilities**
- **Curb microplastics pollution:**
  - intentional added to products → REACH
  - unintentional release (tyres, textiles and plastics pellets)



- **Guidance on eco-modulation of EPR fees**
- **Strategic Research Innovation Agenda for Plastics (2018)**
- **H2020 additional €100 million investments (up until 2020)**
- **Support the development of alternative feedstocks**  
→ **lifecycle assessments** including biomass



- **Call for global action**
- **Support for multilateral initiatives on plastics**
- **Promote international industry standards development**
- **Development in cooperation funding**

# Implementation of the Plastics Strategy



European Commission

Measures	Timeline
<b>Improving the economics and quality of plastics recycling</b>	
<b>Actions to improve product design:</b>	
– Preparatory work for future revision of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive. Commission to initiate work on new harmonised rules to ensure that by 2030 all plastics packaging placed on the EU market can be reused or recycled in a cost-effective manner.	Q1 2018 onwards
– follow-up to COM (2018) 32 “Communication on the implementation of the circular economy package: options to address the interface between chemical, product and waste legislation”: improve the traceability of chemicals and address the issue of legacy substances in recycled streams	Q1 2018 onwards
– new eco-design measures: consider requirements to support the recyclability of plastics	ongoing
<b>Actions to boost recycled content:</b>	
– launching an EU-wide pledging campaign targeting industry and public authorities	Q1-Q3 2018
– assessment of regulatory or economic incentives for the uptake of recycled content, in particular in the context of the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Revision of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive (see above)</li> <li>– Evaluation/review of the Construction Products Regulation</li> <li>– Evaluation/review of End-of-life Vehicles Directive</li> </ul>	Q1 2018 onwards
– as regards food-contact materials: swift finalisation of pending authorisation procedures for plastics recycling processes, better characterisation of contaminants and introduction of monitoring system	ongoing
– development of quality standards for sorted plastics waste and recycled plastics in cooperation with the European Standardisation Committee	2018
– Ecolabel and Green Public Procurement: Further incentivise the use of recycled plastics, including by developing adequate verification means	2018 onwards
<b>Actions to improve separate collection of plastic waste:</b>	
– issue new guidelines on separate collection and sorting of waste	2019
– ensure better implementation of existing obligations on separate collection, including through ongoing review of waste legislation	ongoing
<b>Curbing plastic waste and littering</b>	
<b>Actions to reduce single-use plastics:</b>	
– analytical work, including the launch of a public consultation, to determine the scope of a legislative initiative on single-use plastics	ongoing
<b>Actions to tackle sea-based sources of marine litter:</b>	
– adoption of a legislative proposal on port reception facilities for the delivery of waste from ships	Q1 2018
– development of measures to reduce loss or abandonment at sea of fishing gear (e.g. including recycling targets, EPR schemes, recycling funds or deposit schemes)	2018 onwards
– development of measures to limit plastic loss from aquaculture (e.g. possible Best Available Techniques Reference Document)	
<b>Actions to monitor and curb marine litter more effectively:</b>	
– improved monitoring and mapping of marine litter, including microplastics, on the basis of EU harmonised methods	2018 onwards
– support to Member States on the implementation of their programmes of measures on marine litter under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, including the link with their waste/litter management plans under the Waste Framework Directive	
<b>Actions on compostable and biodegradable plastics:</b>	
– start work to develop harmonised rules on defining and labelling compostable and biodegradable plastics	Q1 2018 onwards
– conduct a lifecycle assessment to identify conditions where their use is beneficial and criteria for such application	Q1 2018 onwards
– start the process to restrict the use of oxo-plastics via REACH	ongoing

<b>Actions to curb microplastics pollution:</b>	
– start the process to restrict the intentional addition of microplastics to products via REACH	ongoing
– examination of policy options for reducing unintentional release of microplastics from tyres, textiles and paint (e.g. including minimum requirements for tyre design (tyre abrasion and durability (if appropriate) and/or information requirement (including labelling (if appropriate), methods to assess microplastic losses from textiles and tyres, combined with information (including possibly labelling)/minimum requirements, targeted research and development funding)	ongoing
– development of measures to reduce plastic pallet spillage (e.g. certification schemes along the plastic supply chain and/or Best Available Techniques reference document under the Industrial Emissions Directive)	Q1 2018 onwards
– evaluation of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive: assessing effectiveness as regards microplastics capture and removal	ongoing
<b>Driving investment and innovation towards circular solutions</b>	
<b>Actions to promote investment and innovation in the value chain:</b>	
– Commission guidance on the eco-modulation of EPR fees	2019
– Recommendations by the recently launched ‘Circular Economy Finance Support Platform’	in mid-2018
– examine the feasibility of a private-led investment fund to finance investments in innovative solutions and new technologies aimed at reducing the environmental impacts of primary plastic production	By mid-2019
– direct financial support for infrastructure and innovation through the European Fund for Strategic Investment and other EU funding instruments (e.g. structural funds and smart specialisation strategies, Horizon 2020)	ongoing
– pursue work on life-cycle impacts of alternative feedstocks for plastics production	2018 onwards
– development of a Strategic Research Innovation Agenda on plastics to guide future funding decisions	Q2 2018
<b>Harnessing global action</b>	
<b>Actions focusing on key regions:</b>	2018 onwards
– project to reduce plastic waste and marine litter in East and South-East Asia to support sustainable consumption and production, the promotion of the waste hierarchy and extended producer responsibility, and improve recovery of fishing gear	
– examining options for specific action to reduce plastic pollution in the Mediterranean, in support of the implementation of the Barcelona Convention	
– cooperation on plastic waste prevention in major world river basins	
<b>Actions in support of multilateral initiatives on plastic:</b>	2018 onwards
– renewed engagement on plastics and marine litter in fora such as the UN, G7, G20, the MARPOL convention and regional sea conventions, including the development of practical tools and specific action on fishing and aquaculture.	
– support to action under the Basel Convention, particularly for the implementation of the toolkit on environmentally sound waste management	
<b>Actions relating to bilateral cooperation with non-EU countries:</b>	2018 onwards
– promote a circular plastics economy in non-EU countries through policy dialogues on trade, industry and environment, as well as economic diplomacy	
– use bilateral, regional and thematic funding in EU development, neighbourhood and enlargement policies to support the plastics strategy by preventing and appropriately managing waste and supporting the circular economy: through programmes and instruments including ‘Switch to Green’ and the External Investment Plan	
<b>Actions relating to international trade:</b>	2018 onwards
– support the development of international industry standards on sorted plastic waste and recycled plastics	
– ensure that exported plastic waste is dealt with appropriately in line with the EU Waste Shipment Regulation	
– support the development of a certification scheme for recycling plants in the EU	





# **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLASTIC STRATEGY REDUCING MARINE LITTER**

## **ACTION ON SINGLE USE PLASTICS AND FISHING GEAR**

### ***Actions on:***

- ***intentionally added microplastics***
- ***oxo degradable plastics***

*Referred to the European Chemical Agency for possible restriction in the Framework of REACH*

### ***Proposal for the revision of the Port Reception Facilities Directive:***

*Includes measures to ensure that waste generated on ships or gathered at sea is returned to land and adequately managed.*

# ***IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLASTIC STRATEGY REDUCING MARINE LITTER***

## ***ACTION ON SINGLE USE PLASTICS AND FISHING GEAR***

- **Public consultation**  
(Dec 2017 – 12 Feb 2018)
- **Impact assessment ongoing**
- **Objective: Propose a legal instrument under the present mandate of the Commission**



European  
Commission

# REDUCING MARINE LITTER: ACTION ON SINGLE USE PLASTICS & FISHING GEAR

10 most common plastic objects  
found on European beaches



Source: Based on JRC report

Many of these items are packaging for food and drink and most were designed to be used only once ("single-use plastics"). That's a waste of valuable resources.



***Learn more about the plastics strategy and the circular economy***

***[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy/index_en.htm)***