

German Environment Agency

Umwelt  
Bundesamt 

**EPA**   
Network

# The EU Plastics Strategy

Nina Maier

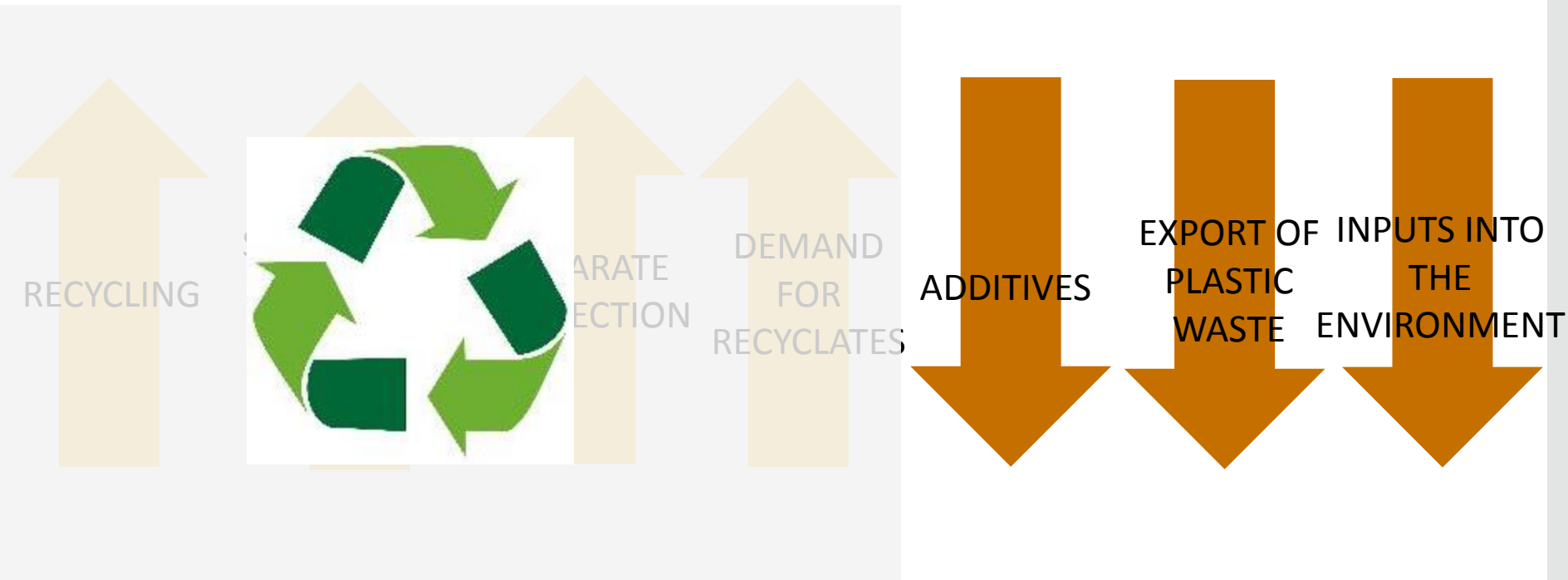
II 2.3 Protection of the marine environment

III 1.6 Product responsibility

Interest Group Plastics of the EPA Network

## Treatment of Plastics - Vision

### Scenario 2030



## From Vision to Reality

### WASTE



- Standards for separate collection
- Investment in recycling capacities
- Deposit systems (fisheries)
- PRF

### DEMAND FOR RECYCLING

- Quality standards
- Food packaging
- Sectoral measures

### PRODUCT



- Product design (colors, materias)
- Green public procurement

### Additional measures

- Drinking Water Directive
- Single-use packaging
- Outreach
- Biodegradable plastics
- Microplastics (REACH)

### CHEMISTRY



- Additives
- Labelling

## *Two Highlights*

- Biodegradable plastics
- Microplastics (REACH)

## Two Highlights

### Biodegradable plastics

#### *Status quo*

- Separate collection of biowaste
- Problem: recycling
- Problem: degradation

#### *Measures*

- Clear definitions and labelling
- LCA
- Ban of oxos



### Microplastics

#### *Status quo*

- Quantities relatively low
- ? Sources and impacts
- Existing voluntary commitments

#### *Measures*

- Regulation under REACH
- Better catchment in WWTP
- Fibres? Tires? Pellets?

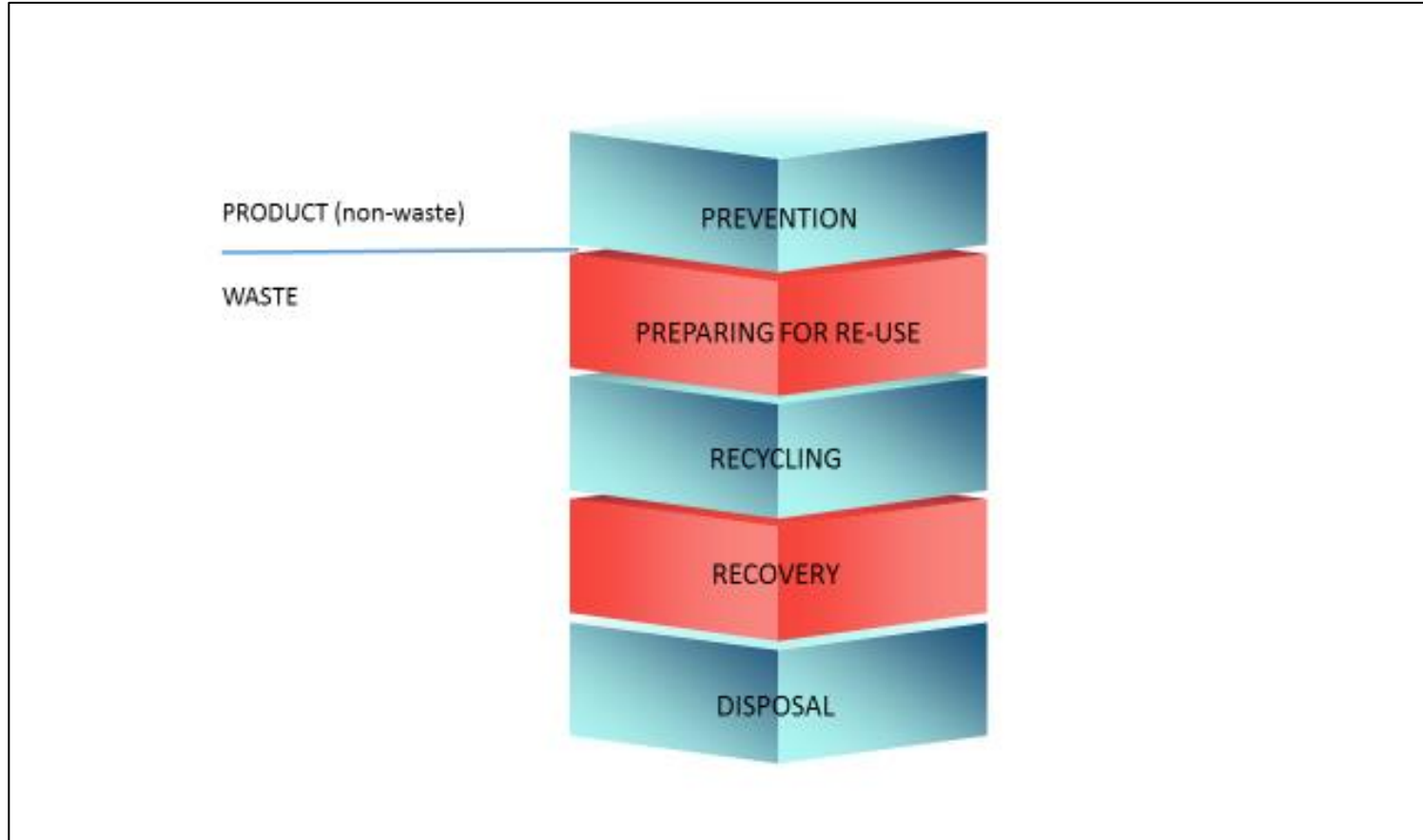


## Plastics Strategy – the Pros



**HOWEVER: QUANTITY & QUALITY**

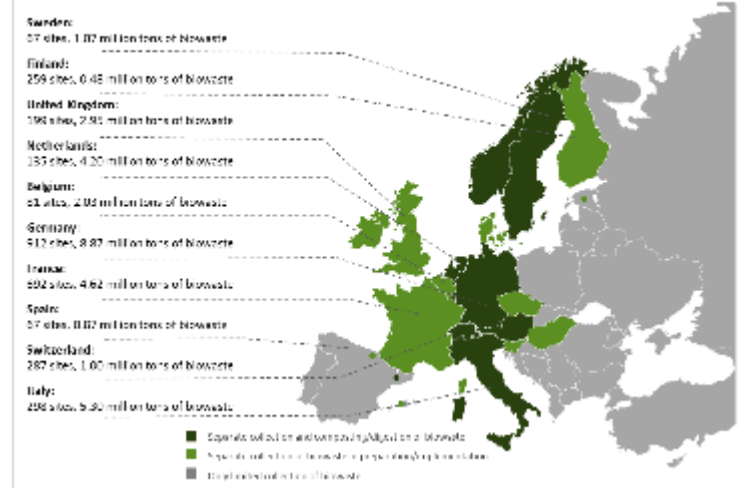
## Plastics Strategy – the Cons



# Plastics Strategy – the Cons

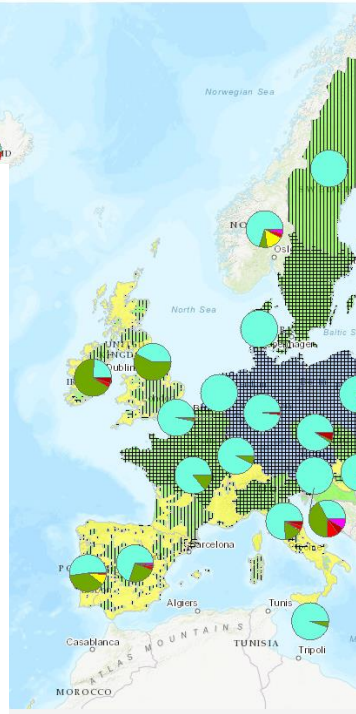
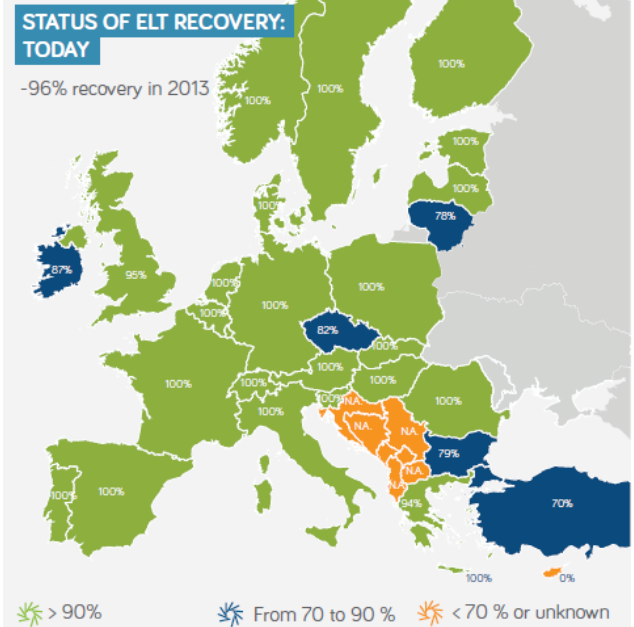
## Harmonized EU approach?

### Status on Separate Collection of Biowaste in Europe



UWWTD

### Urban waste water treatment map



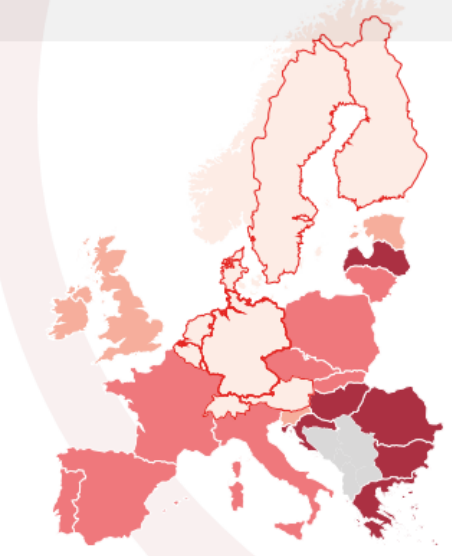
### Plastic waste recovery is still very uneven in Europe

Although the total EU situation is improving, in many countries, landfill is still the first or second option of treatment for plastic post-consumer waste.  
 Source: Conversio Market & Strategy GmbH

### Plastics post-consumer waste landfill rate across Europe

- 10% or less
- up to 30%
- up to 50%
- more than 50%
- Countries with landfill restrictions implemented

Plastics waste going to landfill in 2016





## Plastics Strategy – the Question Marks



- Limited degradability
- Confusion of consumers
- Not part of circular economy



- Focus on big quantities (degradation of macroplastics, tires, pellets, fibers)
- Pellet loss – certification scheme across the chain
- Include stakeholders
- Cosmetics just cosmetics?
- Approval process for new products?



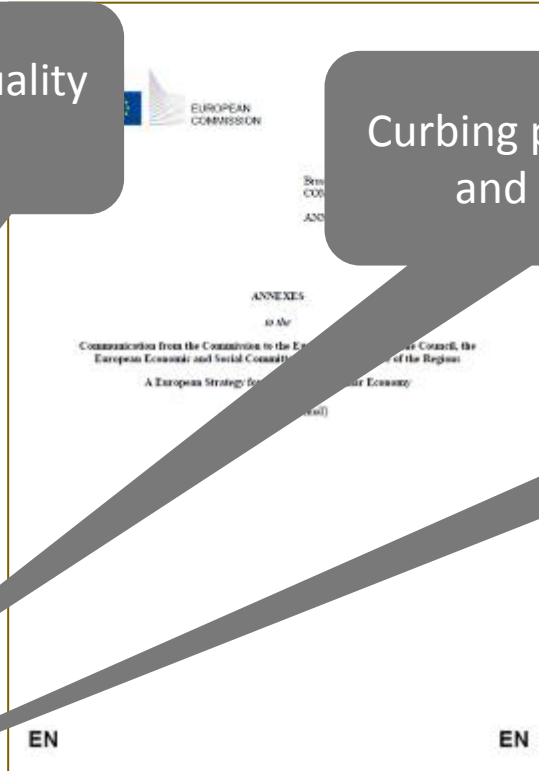
## Annex Plastics Strategy

Improving economics & quality of plastics recycling

Curbing plastic waste and littering

Driving investment and innovation towards circular solutions

Harnessing global action



# Single use plastics - link between findings and sources

## 10 most common plastic objects found on European beaches



Single-use plastic items represent **50%** of marine litter



## Links to EPA- Network / Interest Group Plastics

### EU Plastics Strategy

Curbing plastic waste

- Compostable and biodegradable plastics
- microplastics

### IG Plastics Focus of work 2018

4. meeting in Berlin (May 2018):  
Biodegradable plastics

5. meeting in Oslo (Fall2018):  
Tire abrasion

Microplastic inputs  
from WWTP and storm water overflows

# Thank you!

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