



European Federation of Waste Management and Environmental Services
Fédération Européenne des Activités de la Dépollution et de l'Environnement
Europäische Föderation der Entsorgungswirtschaft



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European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy: setting the right framework conditions?

FEAD members welcome the publication of the Plastics Strategy as a step forward for designing a new vision for plastics as part of the transition to a circular economy.

The provisionally agreed Circular Economy Package will certainly also contribute by setting legally binding targets for recycling and landfill diversion.

Turning the vision of a new plastics economy into reality will require joined efforts across the entire plastics value chain. Plastic products need to be designed for recycling, this will not only improve the economics but also the quality of plastics recycling. Moreover, investments need to be done so as to innovate and expand the collection, sorting and recycling capacity at EU level. Our industry is prepared to make the necessary investments if there are concrete measures ensuring a significant uptake of plastic recyclates. This has become even more urgent since the announced ban on imports of certain waste streams and standards restrictions by China.

A strong demand for recycled plastics can only be based on concrete binding actions, accompanied by economic measures to bridge the price gap detrimental to plastics from recyclates. Such concrete measures still need to be developed. If not, we run the risk that efficiently sorted waste is being disposed of. Voluntary industry agreements to contribute to a better uptake of recycled plastics are welcome but they are hardly the basis for a robust, long term European market, which is a pre-requisite for innovations and the required huge investments. While the focus on raising quality is of course important, much greater urgency and attention needs to be given to how the Commission intends to promote European secondary plastics markets with binding actions and economic incentives. Raising quality means raising prices to cover the additional processing.

FEAD members welcome the accelerated work on the interface aspects between chemicals, waste and product policies which will contribute to creating confidence in recycled plastics by manufacturers who need quality and supply certainty. Additionally, design for recycling and better information on the presence of substances of concern will optimise the work of waste operators and ensure safe recycling.

We strongly believe that the EU should take the lead on providing global solutions for a transition towards a low-carbon and circular economy. As professionals, FEAD members have the skills and the experience to work with partners across the entire value and to cooperate with product designers and other industry sectors so as to ensure an increased use of recycled materials.

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Note to the editor:

FEAD is the European Federation representing the European waste management industry. FEAD's members are national waste management associations covering 19 Member States, Norway and Serbia. They have an approximate 60% share in the household waste market and handle more than 75% of industrial and commercial waste in Europe. Their combined annual turnover is approximately € 75 billion. FEAD represents about 3000 companies with activities in all forms of waste management. These companies employ over 320000 people who operate around 2400 recycling and sorting centres, 1100 composting sites, 260 waste-to-energy plants and 900 controlled landfills. They play an important role in the determination of the best environmental option for waste management problems.

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