



**EU Plastics Strategy Update**



**European Plastics Industry Voluntary Commitments**



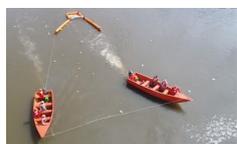
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## EU Plastics Strategy



The long awaited Communication on the Plastics Strategy has been published by the European Commission on January 16th. The document and its Annexes (available [here](#)) focuses on five major objectives, to reach which different actions can be shaped:

- (i) making recycling profitable for business, by foreseeing new rules on packaging will be developed to improve the recyclability of plastics used on the market and increase the demand for recycled plastic content;

- (ii) curbing plastic waste, in particular the one caused by microplastics, bags and single use and developing harmonised rules and LCAs for compostable and biodegradable plastics;
- (iii) stopping littering at sea, with new rules on port reception facilities for sea-based marine litter;
- (iv) driving investment and innovation to minimise plastic waste at source with €100 million financing the development of smarter and more recyclable plastics materials;
- (v) spurring change across the world, as this must happen not only in Europe, but worldwide.

The communication is accompanied by a timeline of different measures that can be adopted to reach these objectives. It is early to say which legal shape actions will have. In particular, many decisions are postponed to the final adoption of the Waste directives that are at the final stage of their revision.

In particular, for single use packaging, decisions will also be depending on the currently open consultation in order to determine the scope of a legislative initiative on single-use plastics. [The public consultation](#) will be open until 12th February for all audiences.

The publication has been accompanied, among other documents, by the release of the Interface between chemical, product & waste legislation as well as a Staff Working Document on the options how to assess how the rules on waste, products and chemicals relate to each other. Available [here](#).

Initial hints on the following activities and priorities of this file by the Commission will be clearer during the next Circular Economy Stakeholder Conference in Brussels on 20-21 February, 2018. It is possible to register [at this link](#).

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## European Plastics Industry Voluntary Commitments



**EuPC** and five other European organisations from the plastics value chain have committed, in cooperation with the European Commission, to launch Circularity Platforms aiming to reach 50% plastics waste recycling by 2040. The platforms will drive the recycling of plastic products in Europe and considerably reduce littering volumes. Plastics Recyclers Europe (PRE), Petcore Europe, the European Carpet and Rug Association (ECRA), the Polyolefin Circularity Platform (PCEP Europe), **European Plastics Converters (EuPC)** and VinylPlus® have adopted a framework of voluntary commitments to continue and expand existing

plastics recycling activities and create additional circularity platforms inspired by the good example set by VinylPlus® and Petcore Europe.

The extremely ambitious goal to reach 50% recycling and reuse of plastics waste as well as 70% recycling and reuse of plastic packaging can only be reached through platforms involving the entire value chain: from raw material producers, designers, converters, collectors and recyclers to brand owners and specifiers.

Our targets are listed in the document “The European Plastics Industry Circular Economy Voluntary Commitments. Towards 50% Plastics Waste Recycling.”. Additional measures will be developed in the near future. To access the document, please visit the following link:

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## REACH - Lead Restriction



The European Chemicals Agency's Risk Assessment Committee has finalised its opinion on the Lead Restriction proposal, while the Socio-Economic Assessment Committee (SEAC) has adopted its draft opinion. The draft

SEAC opinion is currently up for [public consultation](#) until 20/02/2018. **EuPC** is undertaking targeted member consultations to prepare a response.

The current thinking included in the [draft opinion](#) is that the use of lead compounds in virgin material should be restricted to a 0.1% level, but that there should be specific exemptions for certain Rigid and Soft PVC applications. For recycled rigid PVC a 2% lead content should be allowed in applications such a window profiles and multi layer pipes, while for soft PVC certain multi-layer hoses, noise insulation sheets and mats for stables and greenhouses should be allowed as is and waterproofing, road furniture, and professional footwear only when fully encapsulated in virgin PVC. The exact wording can be reviewed [here](#) (p 2-4).REACH Update

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## EuPC launches 2nd survey on the use of recycled plastics materials (rPM)



The EU Plastics Strategy makes it imperative to gain more knowledge about the use of rPM in the European plastics converting industry to support the transition towards a more circular economy. **EuPC** has therefore conducted a survey about the use of rPM in the plastics converting industry in 2017.

Based on the findings and backed up by the success of the first survey, **EuPC** decided to conduct a second edition of the survey in cooperation with Polymer Comply Europe Sarl. (PCE). The survey has been launched on the 22nd January and will be open until May 2018 on the PCE website [www.polymercomplyeurope.eu](http://www.polymercomplyeurope.eu). The survey is accessible in seven languages: [English](#), [German](#), [French](#), [Italian](#), [Spanish](#), [Polish](#) and [Turkish](#).

The survey is open to all European companies active in the plastics converting industry and the results will be presented during the 2018 **EuPC** Annual Meeting “A circular Future with Plastics” on the 24th and 25th May in Milan (Italy) with the presence of the EU Commissioner E. Bienkowska and leading CEOs of the plastics industry. The full report on the results of the first edition of the rPM survey is still available free of charge on [the PCE website](#).

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## Best Polymer Producers Awards for Europe



The Polymers for Europe Alliance will launch the 3rd edition of its Best Polymer Producers Awards for Europe on the 15th of February 2018. All users of polymers in Europe will be invited to access this online customers' satisfaction survey - free of charge and in strict confidence - and rate their suppliers' performances from mid-2017 up to now. The voting tool will be open for three months until the 11th May 2018.

The rating tool is easy to understand, extremely user-friendly and provided in several languages in order to reach out to as many polymer users in Europe as possible. See it for yourself!

The winners will be exclusively announced at the Awards Ceremony that will take place during the Gala Dinner of the **EuPC** (European Plastics Converters) Annual Meeting in Milan on the 24th May 2018.

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## WFO takes next steps to fight plastics pollution



Rivers which flow from inland areas to the seas have increasingly been identified as major transporters of marine litter. The top ten rivers carrying the highest amounts accounted for 88 to 95 percent of the total global load of plastics in the oceans. This is also where WFO intends to focus its efforts in the coming two years.

At the end of last year, WFO launched the Operation Castor, together with the Ministry of Environment,

the Farach Foundation and the Navy of the Dominican Republic, to collect solid waste on the Ozama and Isabela rivers, aiming to free the rivers from contamination in 2018.

Now, WFO wishes to set up a regional plastics recycling centre in the Dominican Republic, to educate the local population, bring the best recycling technology in the world to this region and produce WFO emergency shelters to respond to the massive housing deficit and future hurricane threats.

Moreover, WFO currently prepares the installation of its trash catcher in a river channel in Mumbai (India). Setting up collecting nets to gather floating plastic in waste hotspots and combining it with the development of infrastructure to recycle and recover debris offers a long-term answer to the issue with relatively low set up barriers and costs.

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## ECRA becomes new associated member of EuPC



The European Carpet and Rug Association (ECRA), which is one of the signatories of the European Plastics Industry Circular Economy Voluntary Commitments, has also joined **EuPC** as associated member in 2018.

The fibre materials used in the carpet industry are mainly polymer based and the deep cooperation with

other sectors within **EuPC** will benefit all parties and stimulate the search for sustainable solutions for end of Life issues.

ECRA will join the **EuPC** Building and Construction Division, as its products fall under the EU Construction Products Regulation (CPR).

**EuPC** welcomes its new member and is looking forward to developing activities together with the carpet producers.

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## Petcore Europe Conference 2018 - Strategy for PET in the Circular Economy



Petcore Europe's annual conference will take place in Brussels, Belgium from 7-8 February 2018. Building up on the success of last year, it was decided to expand the 2018 conference edition to two days. The first half day is exclusively dedicated to PET Business & Strategy, followed by a Networking Event in the evening. The second day focuses on Trends in Collection, Recycling & Sustainability and features presentations from research, industry and EU decision makers.

[Discover the conference programme here.](#)

[Register here for the conference.](#)

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## Update on the Industry4Europe activities



The Industry4Europe position paper has been handed over on the 24th January to EU Commissioner Bienkowska. Following her meeting with an Industry4Europe delegation, she published the tweet that can be seen on the left.

The EU Commissioner was very positive about the work of the coalition and, as mentioned in her tweet, she said that she was willing to continue to work with the coalition to ensure the implementation of the EU industrial strategy that she proposed last September. Industry4Europe will therefore follow-up with her Cabinet and DG GROW will cooperate in practice to this end.

EuPC is one of the 126 associations that support Industry4Europe. The updated final position paper can be [downloaded](#) from the [EuPC](#) website.

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## Upcoming Meetings

EuPC Members Executive Forum	7 March <i>Brussels</i>
EuPC Packaging and Building & Construction Executive Committees	14 March <i>Brussels</i>
EuPC Senior Executives Forum	14 March <i>Brussels</i>
EuPC Steering Committee	15 March <i>Brussels</i>
EuPF Meeting	15 March <i>Brussels</i>
Automotive & Transport Executive Committee	19 March <i>Brussels</i>
Plasfuelsys Meeting	28 March <i>Tbd</i>
EuPC Raw Material Committee	5 April <i>Brussels</i>
EuPC Annual Meeting	24-25 May <i>Milan, Italy</i>