

Nestlé response on “EC Pledging campaign for the uptake of recycled plastics into products”

– *partial update of original pledge from September 2018*

Brussels, January 2021

Nestlé Plastics Packaging Commitment

Plastic packaging plays an important role in safely and conveniently delivering food and drinks to consumers. However, its increasing accumulation in the natural environment is today one of the most pressing global challenges we face. Nestlé recognizes this development and as a company, we share the vision that no plastic waste should end up in the environment.

We believe that with the right approach, plastic packaging can be collected or recycled without having a detrimental impact. For this reason, it is [Nestlé’s ambition that by 2025, 100% of our packaging is recyclable or reusable.](#)

We also pledge to play an active role in the development of well-functioning collection, sorting and recycling schemes across the countries where we operate, including to collect 90% by 2025 of our PET bottles and their caps in Europe. We are also committed to stimulate a market for recycled plastics by continuing to increase the proportion of recycled plastics in our packaging, including 50% recycled content by 2025 in our PET bottles (please see full text of Nestlé Plastics Packaging Commitment hereunder).

Building on our 2018 commitment to make 100% of our packaging recyclable or reusable by 2025, Nestlé will reduce its use of virgin plastics by one third in the same period. In early 2020 [Nestlé announced that it will invest up to CHF 2 billion](#) to lead the shift from virgin plastics to food-grade recycled plastics and to accelerate the development of innovative sustainable packaging solutions.

Our commitment on recycled plastics and circular economy can however only be achieved if certain parameters are fulfilled:

Nestlé and food grade recycled plastics

As the world’s largest food and beverage manufacturer, we recognize that we have an important role to play in helping to create a market for recycled plastics that can be used in food and beverage packaging. We will do this without compromising on the quality and safety of our products.

Unlike a lot of other plastic packaging, food and beverage packaging has very strict requirements on what materials (and their properties) can be used to protect the product, including recycled materials. In order to ensure that there is sufficient high-quality food grade recycled plastic available to be used by industry, collectively we need to help to create a market for it.

Required framework conditions

Nestlé has a strong commitment on the uptake of recycled plastics for which certain framework conditions need to be in place. Secondary raw materials (SRM) 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. In addition, the development of end-of waste criteria is a pre-requisite for such a market.

Functionality is particularly important to bear in mind for us as food and beverage producer. Currently, in some cases it is not legal or desirable to introduce recycled content in food contact materials because it may pose a contamination and food safety risk for consumers. Food safety for consumers is the first priority for Nestlé. In this context, we underline the crucial importance of polyolefines for the food industry and a clear regulatory guidance.

Functioning EU approval process for use of recycled plastic in food contact materials: EFSA had issued 140 positive scientific opinions on the safety of processes to recycle plastic for use in food contact materials. The European Commission still has to officially authorise those processes¹. Authorization would ensure harmonization across the EU and remove any legal uncertainty in trading SRMs in food contact applications. It would also allow ‘pull’ in terms of demand from the food and drinks sector.

Availability of SRMs of appropriate quality (as established by ‘end-of-waste’ criteria): Effective ‘end-of-waste’ criteria are a prerequisite to functioning markets for SRM. They are essential to provide the necessary reassurance to manufacturers, regulators and consumers in respect of recyclate use. This applies to health & safety considerations and also functionalities related to performance (i.e., strength etc.). ‘End-of-waste’ criteria also need to accommodate different uses/applications and this implies multiple criteria that exist in a hierarchy rather than a single set of criteria for any given material.

R&D support under framework programmes: Financial incentives that support close to market technologies for both materials and treatment technologies (such as chemical recycling) will be a key framework condition.

¹ Under Article 6 (‘Authorisation of recycling processes’) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 282/2008 of 27 March 2008 on recycled plastic materials and articles intended to come into contact with foods and amending Regulation (EC) No 2023/2006.



OUR GLOBAL VISION

OUR VISION IS THAT NONE OF OUR PACKAGING, INCLUDING PLASTICS, ENDS UP IN LANDFILL OR AS LITTER.

TRANSFORMING THE PLASTICS ECONOMY

Packaging plays an important role in safely delivering food and beverage products, and in reducing food waste. We have an existing target to **reduce the amount of packaging** we use by 140,000 tonnes by 2020 (on a 2015 baseline), and to continuously improve the environmental performance of our packaging. However, we recognize that much more needs to be done to develop a circular economy for plastics, and to prevent packaging ending up as litter. In order for us to address this, we need to work together with others. We are therefore committed to:

PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WELL-FUNCTIONING COLLECTION, SORTING AND RECYCLING SCHEMES ACROSS THE COUNTRIES WHERE WE OPERATE INCLUDING TO COLLECT 90% BY 2025 OF OUR PET BOTTLES & CAPS IN EUROPE

WORK WITH VALUE CHAIN PARTNERS AND INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS TO: EXPLORE DIFFERENT PACKAGING SOLUTIONS TO REDUCE PLASTIC USAGE; FACILITATE RECYCLING; AND DEVELOP NEW APPROACHES TO ELIMINATE PLASTIC WASTE

LABEL OUR PLASTIC PRODUCT PACKAGING WITH RECYCLING INFORMATION TO HELP CONSUMERS DISPOSE OF IT IN THE RIGHT WAY

PROMOTE A MARKET FOR RECYCLED PLASTICS BY CONTINUING TO INCREASE THE PROPORTION OF RECYCLED PLASTICS IN OUR PACKAGING INCLUDING 50% RECYCLED CONTENT BY 2025 IN PET BOTTLES GLOBALLY

RETHINKING OUR PLASTIC PACKAGING



100%

OF OUR PACKAGING IS RECYCLABLE OR REUSABLE BY 2025



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