

# **Styrenics Circular Solutions: Statement in support of the EU Plastics Strategy pledging campaign**

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## **Introduction**

Styrenics Circular Solutions (SCS) is an industry-led initiative focused on creating a transformative, unified and comprehensive platform for styrenics' recycling. SCS aims to strengthen the sustainability of styrenic polymers, including polystyrene (PS) and expanded polystyrene (EPS), through innovative technologies and partner-driven solutions.

Styrenic plastics have been contributing to resource efficiency in a multitude of indispensable applications, such as packaging, electrical appliances, vehicles, building insulation and medical products. They have long been playing a positive role in addressing societal challenges, such as food waste and climate change, and have been appreciated as superior materials, yet their potential for recycling has remained largely untapped until today. To jump-start the recycling rates of post-consumer styrenics, SCS builds on PS' unmatched intrinsic capacity for circularity. PS is unique, as it can be recycled back into its original monomer and dissolved, producing a high yield of premium recycled PS.

## **Voluntary Pledge**

SCS will contribute to the objective of the pledging campaign by dramatically increasing and accelerating the commercial use of game-changing technologies that make PS-based products fully recyclable over and over again, thereby creating closed loops. Depolymerisation, dissolution and other technologies will enable recycled PS to be used again in its original applications, even in food contact.

SCS is an effective platform to engage with waste management partners to help unlock the intrinsic circularity of PS by collecting and sorting more waste for high-tech recycling processes. As a holistic initiative across and along multiple styrenics value chains (PS, EPS, XPS etc.), SCS will also closely cooperate with other stakeholders to accelerate the industry's efforts to maximise the circularity of styrenics.

SCS is confident to be able to roll out game-changing recycling technologies, based on the already advanced state of their development. SCS commits to the following key milestones to propel the Circular Economy forward:

### **Roadmap**

- 2018: Appointment of Secretary General and incorporation as independent organisation
- 2018: Completion and analysis of feasibility studies
- 2018: PS waste and recycling study
- 2018: Sorting study in Germany
- 2019: Pilot trials of sorting and cleaning technologies on industrial scale plants
- 2019: Selection of recycling technologies
- 2020: Demo plants in place & commercial trials
- 2021 - 2025: Scale-up implementation in line with the EU Plastics Strategy

SCS' members will bear their fair share of responsibility to promote the sustainable use and appropriate end-of-life management of their products. We are convinced that advancing economically viable recycling technologies and creating a market pull for waste to high-tech recycling is the most effective solution to the issue of plastic litter, while at the same time ensuring resource efficiency and circularity.

### **Requirements from regulatory environment**

This requires a stable and conducive regulatory and fiscal environment across investment cycles, which supports a level playing field and includes the right incentives for all materials to demonstrate and increase circularity. Fact-based policymaking should recognise the demonstrated environmental benefits of plastic products across their entire life cycle. By contrast, discriminatory bans and taxes are counterproductive as they jeopardise necessary investments in the Circular Economy.

SCS has made its first bold steps on the road to circularity. SCS will work with its partners along the entire value chain as well as EU and national policymakers to realise its vision of maximising the circularity of styrenics in the near future.

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