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Press Release

Delays by the European Commission in authorizing recycling processes for PET food contact applications, a legislative bottleneck for the circularity of plastics

PET value-chain Trade Associations concerned for the EU Green Deal and the transition to a Circular Economy to become missed opportunities.

Leading PET value chain Trade Associations, namely Committee of PET Manufacturers Europe (CPME), Natural Mineral Waters Europe (NMWE), PETCORE Europe, Plastics Recyclers Europe (PRE) and UNESDA Soft Drinks Europe, recently addressed Executive Vice-President Frans Timmermans expressing **concerns for the slow procedure on the authorisation of recycling processes for PET in food contact applications.**

Regulation 282/2008 requires these authorizations, provided a positive evaluation was first issued by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). To date, at least 150 recycling processes for food-grade PET have already received EFSA positive opinions but are long awaiting the European Commission's approval.

Considering the upcoming mandatory targets for recycled content in PET beverage bottles, under the Single Use Plastics and the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directives, the current delays in authorizations represent a serious bottleneck for the industry. This would impede the EU Green Deal ambitions, and thereby delay the shift from a policy proposal to a real Circular Economy for plastics.

Presently, more than 600,000 tonnes of installed capacity remain idle, which puts 35 European recycling plants in a perilous financial situation. Moreover, the Commission's vision on the circularity of plastics and the pledged target of 10 Mt of recycled plastics to be used annually in final products in the EU is put in jeopardy with this delay. The food contact PET industry, a major contributor to the pledge, must be supported by a fully functional regulatory environment that provides legal certainty and fosters investments.

The PET value chain is committed to its role in the pursuit of the Green Deal objectives and the Circular Economy. However, to achieve this goal, we urge the European Commission to accelerate and unlock the potential of circularity for PET food grade packaging.



About CPME

CPME is a European non-profit trade association based in Brussels. It represents the European polyethylene terephthalate (PET) resin producers who are collectively responsible for the totality of PET production in the European Union. The main European producers of Terephthalic Acid (PTA) - the major PET feedstock - are Associate Members of CPME. www.cpme-pet.org

About Natural Mineral Waters Europe (NMWE)

Natural Mineral Waters Europe represents almost 550 natural mineral and spring water producers in Europe, most of them small- and medium sized companies. NMWE is dedicated to promoting the unique qualities of natural mineral and spring waters as well as sustainable use of water resources and circular economy. www.naturalmineralwaterseurope.org

About PETCORE Europe

PETCORE Europe is the association representing the complete PET value chain in Europe since 1993. Its mission is to ensure that the entire PET industry is well aligned to enhance its value and sustainable growth, to represent the PET industry before the European institutions and other stakeholders, to ensure that PET is positioned as an outstanding packaging material and recognised as environmentally sound, to support and validate innovative packaging solutions from a recycling perspective, and to work with all interested parties to ensure a continuous increase of PET post-consumer collection and recycling. www.petcore-europe.org

About Plastics Recyclers Europe

Plastics Recyclers Europe (PRE) is an organization representing the voice of the European plastics recyclers who reprocess plastic waste into high quality material destined for production of new articles. Recyclers are important facilitators of the circularity of plastics and the transition towards the circular economy. Plastics recycling in Europe is a rapidly growing sector representing €3bn in turnover, 8.5 million tonnes of installed recycling capacity, 600 companies and over 20.000 employees. www.plasticsrecyclers.eu

About UNESDA

Established in 1958 UNESDA Soft Drinks Europe is a Brussels-based association representing the European soft drinks industry. Its membership includes both companies and national associations from across Europe producing drinks including still drinks, squashes, carbonates, powders, iced teas, iced coffees, syrups, energy drinks and sports drinks. www.unesda.eu