

Mastering the use of plastics in a circular economy

Plastics are everywhere in our daily lives, bringing many economic and environmental benefits. Plastics are strong, durable and versatile materials. They enhance comfort, safety and hygiene. Using plastics packaging can increase the shelf life of products and reduce fuel costs in transportation of goods, helping to cut carbon emissions. All this has resulted in a huge surge in plastics production. Over the past fifty years, the global use of plastics has increased twentyfold and is still growing.

At the same time, plastic waste is increasingly becoming a global problem, as reuse and recycling of plastics have not kept pace. This is because many products and packaging types are not designed for reuse or effective recycling. Not all use of plastics is necessary for product functionality. In addition, collection, sorting and recycling are still underdeveloped. This means a significant proportion of our plastic waste is still being incinerated or goes to landfill, which negatively affect carbon emissions. Another part ends up as litter in our environment, where it may harm wildlife or degrade into potentially harmful microplastics. While all this valuable material is being wasted, the proportion of fossil fuel being used to produce new plastics continues to grow (from 6% of oil production now to an estimated 20% by 2050¹).

Action is underway

The problems associated with plastic wastage and pollution are increasingly attracting the attention of the public, governments and businesses around the world. Many have already taken action. At the national level, many countries have developed their own strategies. At the European level, the European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy provides the framework, alongside legislation², guidelines and collaborative platforms, like the Circular Plastics Alliance (CPA). Finally, key initiatives are undertaken at the global level, including the United Nations Global Partnership on Marine Litter, the Basel Convention, the Global Plastic Action Partnership, the Alliance to End Plastic Waste, the Platform for Accelerating the Circular Economy and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's New Plastics Economy Global Commitment.

Joining forces in the European Plastics Pact

The value of the European Plastics Pact is to supplement these initiatives with cross-border connection, harmonization and cooperation between stakeholders. The European Plastics Pact is a frontrunner initiative, bringing together leading countries and private organisations from the entire plastics value chain and from across the European Economic Area. Signatories (Participants and Supporting Organisations) will:

- **cooperate** across the value chain on a European scale to boost the development of smarter techniques and approaches, and cement an innovative community;
- **harmonize** guidelines, standards and national supporting frameworks. Countries will take on current legal barriers, creating a level playing field and building scale;
- **connect** to share their best practices and lessons learned across Europe in meetings, annual progress reports and on the website, in order to accelerate the shift to circularity by default.

¹ Source: New Plastics Economy, Ellen MacArthur Foundation

² I.e. the Single-Use Plastics Directive, the Waste Framework Directive, and the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive

All of these actions together will inspire others to follow suit and help accelerate the systemic shift to a circular plastics economy in Europe. This will contribute significantly towards achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals, specifically SDG 12 (sustainable consumption and production), SDG 13 (combat climate change and its impacts), SDG 14 (conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources) and SDG 17 (strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development).

The Pact will help Signatories comply with and go beyond European legislation, and strengthen European processes. It will respect European environmental standards and the integrity of the internal market.

The scope of the European Plastics Pact

The Pact aims at plastics used in packaging and single-use products, which account for roughly half the plastics production worldwide. Discarded packaging and single-use products mainly originate from households, as well as offices, 'food-on-the-go' shops, supermarkets, festivals, sporting events and cultural facilities. Although the Pact focuses on plastics in packaging and single-use products, post-consumer recycled plastics from these waste streams can be used in other sectors as well, e.g. building and construction, the automotive industry, clothing and textiles, and consumer electronics.

The European Plastics Pact is inspired by and works towards the vision laid down in the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's New Plastics Economy (see Annex 1). Therefore, we will work jointly towards four bold, quantifiable and aspirational goals for 2025 (see Paragraphs 6 - 9). Signatories support all parts of the European Plastics Pact, while acknowledging their different roles in the value chain and their different responsibilities as plastic-producing companies, plastic-using companies, recyclers, collection companies, sorting companies, national governments or Supporting Organisations (see Annex 2).

Participants in the European Plastics Pact are frontrunners in their field, committed to a circular approach and to cooperating across the value chain. As such, most Participants have already drawn up ambitious strategies, action plans, national pacts and pledges. The Pact does not aim to duplicate or replace existing commitments or ongoing initiatives. Instead, it accelerates and supports existing national and company initiatives by adding cross-border exchange and collaboration on a pan-European scale.

The European Plastics Pact can also be signed by Supporting Organisations, which play no direct role in the plastics value chain, but can support the Pact's implementation. Supporting Organisations can include trade associations, environmental NGOs, innovative technology providers and packaging recovery organisations. The Pact welcomes the European Commission as an Observer.

The European Plastics Pact is linked to a global network of Plastics Pacts (including South Africa, Malaysia and Chile), led by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation in collaboration with WRAP. By exchanging insights and results of the European Plastics Pact with governments and businesses across the world we can help advance global efforts to tackle plastic pollution.

Paragraph 1. Scope and definitions

1. The scope of this European Plastics Pact is all plastics used in packaging and in single-use products placed on the market in the European Economic Area.
2. The definitions used in this Pact can be found in Annex 3.

Paragraph 2. Cooperation in the value chain

Participants decide to:

1. Actively set up cooperation with value chain partners on a cross-border, European scale, e.g. in pilots, actual processes and operations.
2. Report on the results and upcoming plans in Annual Progress Reports under this Pact.
3. Take action to help deliver the goals of the European Plastics Pact at a national level.

Paragraph 3. Harmonisation

Participants decide to:

1. Help create and harmonise ambitious guidelines, national standards, collection and recycling infrastructure, and national supporting frameworks, while complying to and building upon European legislation and its objectives.
2. Adopt the results of this harmonization work where possible and propagate these in their own network.
3. Provide valuable input to the relevant ongoing revision and decision-making process at EU level.

Paragraph 4. Connecting the network

Participants decide to:

1. Share their best practices, standards, guidelines and learning experiences with the other Participants and spread this collective learning in their own network.
2. Participate in the Annual Meeting of the European Plastics Pact.
3. Actively participate in Working Groups under the European Plastics Pact.
4. Describe in their Annual Progress Report what relevant actions they are taking and have taken individually and collectively, the results of their actions and the degree in which the goals have been achieved.
5. Report in a separate European paragraph in a national or global annual report in lieu of an Annual Progress Report to avoid unnecessary administrative burden. The national or global report must then be made available as described above.
6. Actively make available their Annual Progress Reports relating to this Pact and other reports relating to national and international plastics commitments (such as the CPA) to the other Signatories and the broader public.

Paragraph 5. Supporting Organisations

Supporting Organisations decide to:

1. Support Participants in implementing the European Plastics Pact.
2. Engage frontrunners within their own networks to participate in the European Plastics Pact.
3. Actively share knowledge with the Signatories, within their own networks and with the broad public.
4. Participate in the Annual Meeting and Working Groups organized under the European Plastics Pact.

Paragraph 6. Reusability and recyclability by design

Our goal: To design all plastic packaging and single-use plastic products brought to the market by participants to be reusable where possible, and in all cases to be recyclable³ by 2025.

Participants will work towards this goal – individually and through cooperation within the value chain – by, in any case:

1. Ensuring that design choices, product requirements and business models promote reuse and/or recyclability without raising the total lifecycle environmental impact.
2. Developing products, materials and technologies that reduce the complexity of sorting and recycling.
3. Excluding substances inhibiting recycling, among which substances of high concern for the environment and human health.

Paragraph 7. Responsible use of plastics

Our goal: To shift towards a more responsible⁴ use of plastic packaging and single-use plastic products, aiming for a reduction in virgin plastic products and packaging of at least 20%⁵ (by weight) by 2025, with half of this reduction coming from an absolute reduction of plastics.

Participants will work towards this goal – individually and through cooperation within the value chain – by, in any case:

1. Identifying and implementing viable options of responsible plastics use in order of priority: (1) reduction of unnecessary use of plastics; (2) reuse systems; and (3) substituting virgin plastics with recycled plastics or with materials other than plastics proven to be more sustainable.
2. Motivating in the Annual Progress Report - if applicable - why the preferred options (under point 1) of eliminating unnecessary use and reuse are not sufficient, and substituting virgin plastics with recycled plastics is required to achieve 20% reduction in plastics use.
3. Investigating the feasibility and scalability of refill, deposit & return and other reuse models, including new business models and bringing these models into practice.
4. Raising awareness and educating people about plastics reduction and reuse, and other activities to achieve the desired changes in consumer behaviour.
5. Aiming to diminish the number of pieces of plastic waste found in the environment.
6. Building a robust model for assessing sustainability and preventing substitution of plastics by less sustainable materials, using a complete life cycle and overall systems perspective.

³ This goal focuses on the design phase only. Subject to the ongoing European Commission work to define recyclability as part of the revision of the essential requirements for packaging. It takes into account existing best practices in collection, sorting and recycling technologies.

⁴ Based on common standards and life-cycle analyses.

⁵ Relative to the total tonnage of plastics in single-use products and packaging placed on the market in 2017.

Paragraph 8. Collection, sorting and recycling

Our goal: To raise the collection, sorting and recycling capacity in the involved countries of all plastics used in packaging and single use products by at least 25 percentage points⁶ by 2025 and to reach a quality standard of the output of the collection, sorting, and recycling process that matches market demand for recycled plastics.

Participants will work towards this goal – individually and through cooperation within the value chain – by, in any case:

1. Providing members of the public with simple and transparent tools and information, such as through product marking, to help them correctly dispose of all their plastic waste, suitable for sorting and recycling.
2. Building an effective framework for separate collection and recycling of plastic waste in close collaboration with the CPA.
3. Developing optimum combinations of sorting, and mechanical and chemical recycling technologies with the lowest possible environmental footprint for delivering the high quality (mono)streams of materials required to be used in new products and packaging.
4. Developing quality standards for sorting facilities to allow for best recycling.
5. Developing clear output criteria for mechanical and chemical recycling.
6. Incentivising recycling by substantially reducing landfill and plastics waste export to countries outside Europe.

Paragraph 9. Use of recycled plastics

Our goal: To boost recycled plastics use in new products and packaging as much as possible by 2025, with plastics-using company achieving an average of at least 30% recycled plastics (in weight) in their range of products and packaging.

Participants will work towards this goal – individually and through cooperation within the value chain – by, in any case:

1. Setting up a system to ensure safe use of post-consumer recycled (PCR) plastics, in particular in food contact materials, including the regulatory framework concerning food safety and waste shipment.
2. Working together towards an average of at least 30% PCR plastics in new products and materials. Achieving this goal will be especially challenging in the first couple of years for companies using food-contact materials in packaging (except of the use of (r)PET), as enabling technologies are not yet broadly applied and available on the market, and regulation adjustment may be required.
3. Raising the capacity and quality of recycling to ensure adequate availability of high-quality PCR plastics (in line with the 10 million tonnes commitment of the CPA).
4. Investigating new incentives to promote the use of PCR plastics, e.g. by eco-modulation in EPR-schemes.
5. Developing demand-driven, credible quality standards for supply and demand of PCR plastics.
6. Promoting the use of sustainably produced and recyclable biobased plastics⁷ in addition to PCR, in order to reduce the use of virgin fossil-based plastics and CO₂ emissions.

⁶ So a current recycling rate of for instance 30% would be raised to 55%. In any case, the result of the investments in the collection, sorting and recycling capacity have to be more ambitious than the targets set in the EU regulatory framework. The baseline is calculated with the new method established by the European Waste Framework Directive and from the first year of reporting with the new method.

⁷ The announced framework in the European Green Deal will help clarify the conditions around biobased plastics use.

Paragraph 10. Governance and monitoring

The European Plastics Pact will be governed and monitored as follows.

1. Signatories will meet each other once a year at an Annual Meeting to exchange knowledge, experiences, results and progress information.
2. At the first Annual Meeting Participants will elect a Steering Committee, in which all roles described in Annex 1 are represented, and an independent Chair. One member representing the environmental NGOs will be elected for the Steering Committee. Participants will determine how the Steering Committee membership will rotate in a way that ensures continuity and good representation.
3. The Steering Committee will be responsible for day-to-day management and decision-making.
4. Non-signatories of the Pact may be invited to the Annual Meeting by the Steering Committee as observers, which means they can fully join all discussions and knowledge sharing, but do not participate in the decision-making. The European Commission will always be invited to attend the Annual Meetings and any other relevant meetings of this Pact in its capacity as observer.
5. The Annual Meetings, the Steering Committee and Working Groups will be supported by a Secretariat.
6. Working Groups will be established only where they are additional to existing groups, such as those under the CPA, and building upon work done within national pacts. They may be established on subjects such as harmonization of standards and guidelines, on reduction and reuse, or on tackling specific hurdles, such as issues involving food contact, waste shipment or problematic additives.
7. The Secretariat will be responsible for sharing results, learning experiences and best practices with Signatories and with the wider public, e.g. through www.europeanplasticspact.org.
8. Participants will submit their Annual Progress Reports as mentioned in paragraph 4 to the Secretariat using the format provided. The monitoring and reporting will be designed to draw on existing reporting with minimal additional demands placed on signatories. The Secretariat will publish an overall progress report based on the Annual Progress Reports and other relevant data it collects, subject to approval by the Steering Committee.

Paragraph 11. Legal status of the Pact

1. This Pact does not create any rights or obligations under national, European and international law.
2. The European Plastics Pact does not create any private or public body.
3. All information shared between Signatories and by the Secretariat as part of the European Plastics Pact is considered in the public domain. Any necessity for confidentiality should be covered by non-disclosure agreements between the relevant parties setup outside of the Pact's activities.

Paragraph 12. Entry into effect and duration of the Pact

1. This Pact will come into effect on the date of signing and will be terminated on June, 1st 2026.
2. The duration of this Pact may be extended by the written consent of the Participants if sufficient Participants agree to join the extended Pact.

Paragraph 13. Implementation of the Pact

1. The Participants will begin implementation of the European Plastics Pact as soon as possible after its entry into effect.
2. The goals and actions set out in this Pact will be implemented in accordance with national, European and international law, in particular legislation on procurement, competition, state aid and technical standards and regulations.

Paragraph 14. Amendment of the Pact

1. Any Participant can request the other Participants in writing to amend the Pact.
2. Amendments require the consent of 75% of Participants present at the Annual Meeting.

Paragraph 15. Termination

1. Any Signatory can terminate its participation in the European Plastics Pact at any time. The Secretariat will publish the written notice of termination on the website.
2. A Signatory's participation in the Pact may be terminated if the Steering Committee has reasonable grounds to attribute to the Signatory a lack of integrity or effort which could negatively affect the implementation of the Pact, and only after hearing the Signatory.

Paragraph 16. Resolution of disputes

1. Signatories will seek to resolve any disputes relating to this Pact in mutual consultation. Failing this, they may present their dispute to the Steering Committee.
2. In seeking to resolve the dispute, the Steering Committee will give the Signatories involved an opportunity to present their views.
3. If after six months the dispute has not been resolved, the Steering Committee will issue its recommendations to the Signatories involved.
4. In so far as the dispute relates to a Signatory's failure to implement its goals and actions in the Pact, the Steering Committee may recommend the Signatory concerned to follow-up on its implementation within three months or terminate its participation.

Paragraph 17. New Signatories

1. New Signatories may sign the European Plastics Pact by sending a written application to the Secretariat. Information on how to apply will be made available on the website.
2. The Steering Committee may approve the participation of new Signatories within one month of receipt of the request, based on the following criteria:
 - a. the new Signatory endorses the objectives and actions of the Pact;
 - b. the new Signatory can demonstrably contribute to the objectives of the Pact;
 - c. there are no grounds for doubting the Signatory's integrity.
3. The Secretariat will publish the names of the new Signatories on the website.

Signed,

Organisation	
Name	
Title	
Date	
Signature	

Annex 1 - Our common vision

To tackle plastics waste and pollution at the source, we need to fundamentally rethink the way we produce, use and reuse plastics. No single organisation or individual can do this on its own. It requires a systemic shift, involving collective action by businesses from across the plastics value chain, governments, and civil society. A common vision aligns all actors on a joint understanding of what good looks like. It guides the search for solutions and aligns actions taken in the European Plastics Pact on a common sense of direction.

For plastics, the European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy has set out a vision for a plastics circular economy in the EU. For plastic packaging, the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment, led by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation in collaboration with the UN Environment Programme, has united more than 400 organisations from across the global plastics packaging value chain behind a common vision of a circular economy for plastics. These include plastic packaging producers, consumer goods companies, retailers, companies involved in the collection, sorting and recycling of plastics, as well as national, regional and city governments, NGOs, financial institutions, industry associations, universities and other international organisations such as the World Economic Forum and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). National plastics pacts, such as The French National Pact on Plastic Packaging, the Plastics Pact NL and the UK Plastics Pact have taken action towards the same common vision for a circular economy for plastics. The European Plastics Pact adopts this vision, as this provides a global framework for our actions.

The vision on and the characteristics of a circular economy for plastics is stated in the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment⁸:

Elimination of problematic or unnecessary plastic packaging through redesign, innovation, and new delivery models is a priority.

- Plastic brings many benefits. At the same time, there are some problematic items on the market that need to be eliminated to achieve a circular economy, and sometimes, plastic packaging can be avoided altogether while maintaining utility.

Reuse models are applied where relevant, reducing the need for plastic packaging and single-use plastic products.

- While improving recycling is crucial, we cannot recycle our way out of the plastics issues we currently face.
- Wherever relevant, reuse business models should be explored as a preferred 'inner loop', reducing the need for plastic packaging and single-use plastic products.

All plastic packaging is 100% reusable, recyclable, or compostable.

- This requires a combination of redesign and innovation in business models, materials, packaging design, and reprocessing technologies.
- Compostable plastic packaging is not a blanket solution, but rather one for specific, targeted applications.

All plastic packaging is reused, recycled, or composted in practice.

- No plastic should end up in the environment. Landfill, incineration, and waste-to-energy are not part of the circular economy target state.

⁸ www.newplasticseconomy.org/assets/doc/npec-vision.pdf

- Businesses producing and/or selling packaging have a responsibility beyond the design and use of their packaging, which includes contributing towards it being collected and reused, recycled, or composted in practice.
- Governments are essential in setting up effective collection infrastructure, facilitating the establishment of related self-sustaining funding mechanisms, and providing an enabling regulatory and policy landscape.

The use of plastic is fully decoupled from the consumption of finite resources.

- This decoupling should happen first and foremost through reducing the use of virgin plastic (by way of dematerialisation, reuse, and recycling).
- Using recycled content is essential (where legally and technically possible) both to decouple from finite feedstocks and to stimulate demand for collection and recycling.
- Over time, remaining virgin inputs (if any) should switch to renewable feedstocks where proven to be environmentally beneficial and to come from responsibly managed sources.
- Over time, the production and recycling of plastic should be powered entirely by renewable energy.

All plastic packaging is free of hazardous chemicals, and the health, safety, and rights of all people involved are respected.

- The use of hazardous chemicals in packaging and its manufacturing and recycling processes should be eliminated (if not done yet) .
- It is essential to respect the health, safety, and rights of all people involved in all parts of the plastics system, and particularly to improve worker conditions in informal (waste picker) sectors.

This vision is the target state we seek over time, acknowledging that realising it will require significant effort, collective creativity and investment; recognising the importance of taking a full life-cycle and systems perspective, aiming for better economic and environmental outcomes overall; and above all, recognising the time to act is now.

Annex 2 - Roles

The European Plastics Pact aims to connect Participants in the value chain on a European scale. Within this cooperation, each group of Participants has its own role to play in achieving the goals. This annex provides a short description of possible roles.

Plastic-producing companies

As producers in the fossil-based and biobased plastics industry, plastic-producing companies play a major role in developing new sustainable materials, products, packaging and technologies that make sorting and recycling easier and more effective. They cannot be accountable for a reduction of plastics use without a reduced market demand. They do have an interest in responsible use of plastics. They have a shared responsibility for phasing out substances that hinder recycling, such as substances of high concern and harmful additives, in close cooperation with plastic-using companies. They also take the initiative to use sustainably produced and recyclable biobased material and more PCR plastics in their plastics-blends, reducing the need for fossil fuels.

Recycling companies

Recycling companies play an important role in setting up effective recycling standards. They can help plastics using companies developing reusable and recyclable products and packaging. They can take part in robust demonstration projects and invest in recycling capacity in collaboration with sorting companies to establish optimal combinations of sorting and recycling. They can also work with plastic-using companies to supply adequate quantities of recycled content of sufficiently high quality.

Collection and sorting companies

Collection and sorting companies are key in keeping plastics in the loop. To ensure a steady stream of high quality and sustainable recycled material, they need to work with recycling and plastic-using companies and governments to invest in and develop sufficient and clean collection systems and effective sorting capacity and quality standards.

Plastic-using companies

Plastic-using companies comprise both producers of plastic packaging and products, and companies, which use those products and packaging, such as producers in the food and beverage industry, retailers, the hospitality industry, transport companies, caterers and event organisers. They are crucial in setting the demand for reusable and recyclable products and packaging, as well as for products with recycled content and for developing and funding the extended producer responsibility systems to make these ambitions sustainable. They lead the way to a circular plastics economy through their design choices, product requirements and business models, making sure these choices always result in a positive net environmental impact. They can inform consumers about reuse options and correct disposal with marking schemes.

National governments

All countries within the European Economic Area, which have the ambition to contribute actively in accelerating the transition towards a circular economy for plastics in their country, can participate in the European Plastics Pact. Countries play a vital role in supporting the transition to a circular economy for plastics by setting up enabling frameworks and the required collection, sorting and recycling infrastructure. At the national level they can initiate action and knowledge-sharing between partners, promote partnerships and support demonstration projects, raise awareness, support the use of

recycled material through public procurement, encourage extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes and eliminate potential legislative barriers on the national level. In addition, national governments can create favourable conditions for plastics recycling by substantially reducing landfill.

Supporting Organisations

Supporting Organisations include civil society organisations whose broad, critical view can help Participants focus on achieving the goals of the Pact, and can help to reduce the unnecessary use of plastics by showing in what products and packaging the unnecessary use of plastics can be tackled. Regional and local authorities can play a coordinating role in connecting regional and local activities. Trade associations can play a role in disseminating knowledge and lessons learned, with respect to, for example, innovations in technology and logistics. Technology suppliers can provide innovative technologies that can help achieve the goals. Knowledge institutions can gather relevant data, and develop and share knowledge and insights with the other Signatories. Packaging recovery organisations can play a key role as a catalyst, using their financial instruments to promote the development of circular plastics solutions.

Annex 3 - Definitions

In the European Plastics Pact, the following definitions are used:

1. **'Plastics'** means a material consisting of a polymer as defined in point 5 of Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006, to which additives or other substances may have been added, and which can function as a main structural component of final products, with the exception of natural polymers that have not been chemically modified;
Source: Directive 2019/904/EC of 5 June 2019 on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment
2. **'Single-use plastic product'** means a product that is made wholly or partly from plastic and that is not conceived, designed or placed on the market to accomplish, within its life span, multiple trips or rotations by being returned to a producer for refill or reused for the same purpose for which it was conceived;
Source: Directive 2019/904/EC of 5 June 2019 on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment
3. **'Packaging'** means all products made of any materials of any nature to be used for the containment, protection, handling, delivery and presentation of goods, from raw materials to processed goods, from the producer to the user or the consumer. 'Non-returnable' items used for the same purposes shall also be considered to constitute packaging. 'Packaging' consists only of:
 - a. sales packaging or primary packaging, i.e. packaging conceived so as to constitute a sales unit to the final user or consumer at the point of purchase;
 - b. grouped packaging or secondary packaging, i.e. packaging conceived so as to constitute at the point of purchase a grouping of a certain number of sales units whether the latter is sold as such to the final user or consumer or whether it serves only as a means to replenish the shelves at the point of sale; it can be removed from the product without affecting its characteristics;
 - c. transport packaging or tertiary packaging, i.e. packaging conceived in order to facilitate handling and transport of a number of sales units or grouped packaging in order to prevent physical handling and transport damage. Transport packaging does not include road, rail, ship and air containers;*Source: Directive 94/62/EC of 20 December 1994 on packaging and packaging waste*
4. **'Waste'** means any substance or object which the holder discards or intends or is required to discard;
Source: Directive 2008/98/EC of 19 November 2008 on waste
5. **'Reuse'** means any operation by which products or components that are not waste are used again for the same purpose for which they were conceived;
Source: Directive 2008/98/EC of 19 November 2008 on waste
6. **'Recycling'** means any recovery operation by which waste materials are reprocessed into products, materials or substances whether for the original or other purposes. It includes the reprocessing of organic material but does not include energy recovery and the reprocessing into materials that are to be used as fuels or for backfilling operations;
Source: Directive 2008/98/EC of 19 November 2008 on waste

7. **'Composting'** means the aerobic process designed to produce compost. Compost is a soil conditioner obtained by biodegradation of a mixture consisting principally of vegetable residues, occasionally with other organic material and having a limited mineral content.
Source: New Plastics Economy Global Commitment, based on ISO 472:2013, Plastics - Vocabulary.
8. **'Reusable'** means that a product or packaging has been conceived, designed and placed on the market to accomplish within its lifecycle multiple trips or rotations by being refilled or reused for the same purpose for which it was conceived;
Source: Directive 2018/852 of 30 May 2018 amending Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste
9. **'Recyclable'** means that a product's, packaging' or component's successful post-consumer collection, sorting and recycling is proven to work in practice and at scale.
Source: New Plastics Economy Global Commitment
10. **'Post-consumer recycled content'** means the proportion, by weight, of post-consumer recycled material in a plastics product or packaging.⁹
Source: New Plastics Economy Global Commitment, based on ISO 14021:2016 modified, Environmental labels and declarations – Self-declared environmental claims (Type II environmental labelling), Usage of terms, modified (focus on post-consumer recycled material)
11. **'Compostable'** means that a product, packaging or a component thereof has a successful post-consumer collection, sorting, and composting system, that is in compliance with relevant international compostability standards and that is proven to work in practice and at scale.
Source: New Plastics Economy Global Commitment, based on ISO, EN, ASTM, AS standards.

⁹ ISO14021 use of the term clarifies post-consumer material as material generated by households or by commercial, industrial and institutional facilities in their role as end users of a product that can no longer be used for its intended purpose. This includes returns of material from the distribution chain.