

Leading the loop to deliver full circularity for our beverage packaging by 2030

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Packaging is a resource that should never be wasted.

UNESDA's Circular Packaging Vision 2030 acknowledges the central role that beverage packaging can play in a circular economy. Europe's soft drinks sector is committing that its packaging will be fully circular by the end of the decade. To start with, it pledges that by 2025 all our plastic, metal and glass packaging will be 100% recyclable and all PET bottles will contain a minimum average 50% rPET. By 2030, beverage packaging will be 90% collected, there will be more refillable packaging and we will have moved towards 100% recycled and/or renewable PET bottles.

With this Vision 2030 our industry is standing up to be counted. We are declaring our intention and commitment to be part of the solution and to support the European Commission in accelerating the transition towards a green economy.

A policy framework is needed that supports the journey towards full circularity

To help us get there, we need coherence and clarity from both EU and national governments.

Firstly, long-term perspective and **legal certainty** within the single market that would allow us to make the investments needed to deliver our Vision 2030. Secondly, a well-functioning secondary raw materials market that gives our industry **priority access** to sufficient high-quality rPET without compromising on safety standards and avoiding downcycling. Beverage bottles have a 30% recycled content requirement under EU law so we can't be left to battle it out with other non-obliged sectors in order to secure the rPET that we need.

Next up, there will be a need for increased **investment in waste management and recycling infrastructure**. Our packaging has to be part of a complete system that allows it to be widely collected, recycled and/or reused. EU minimum requirements for new Deposit Return Schemes and clear definitions of recyclability are prerequisites. Finally, an EU framework that **enables innovative recycling** technologies such as enhanced recycling, is badly needed.

Circularity has three equal pillars – collect, recycle, reduce & reuse

Our Circular Packaging Vision 2030 will deliver on each of these three pillars:

Collection is key. We are striving for closed-loop collection and recycling systems for beverage packaging to accelerate the achievement of our 90% target for all packaging, not just plastic – which goes beyond the requirements of EU law. Well-designed extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes can achieve high collection rates and go a long way to reaching the targets set by the Single Use Plastics Directive. Ultimately though, I think Europe will need to use Deposit Return Systems more widely, and we favour their introduction for PET, aluminium cans and other materials when it's not possible to reach 90% by EPR alone.

Recycling is the next pillar. We pledge to use only packaging that is circular by design (=100% recyclable) and to also significantly boost our uptake of rPET. We commit to use a minimum average of 50% rPET in our plastic bottles by 2025, and then move towards 100% recycled and/or renewable material where technically and economically feasible. In doing so, we can move away from fossil fuel sources and go well beyond the requirements of the Single Use Plastics Directive.

Reducing and reusing packaging is also a key part of our strategy to lower our packaging footprint. We aim to use more refillable packaging by 2030 compared with today and will be studying the best environmental and economic pathways to increase the use of refillable models.

Circular Packaging Vision 2030 will help build a healthier and more sustainable food environment.

Our Vision 2030 supports EU policy initiatives focused on circularity right now - from implementation of the Single Use Plastics Directive and the review of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive through to the Circular Economy Action Plan – and also the multiple member state initiatives to set waste and circularity targets.

It is our intention to present this Circular Packaging Vision 2030 as the European soft drinks industry's contribution to the EU Code of Conduct on responsible business and marketing practices being drafted under the EU Farm-to-Fork Strategy. Sustainability doesn't stop at packaging, and it is our ambition to build a healthier and more sustainable food environment. We are confident that our Vision 2030 will help to create a sustainable food system that reduces our continent's environmental footprint and drives up circularity right across the bloc.