



JOINT PRESS RELEASE

Countering the packaging waste crisis: Broad political alliance calls for ambitious promotion of reusable packaging in the EU Packaging Regulation

- At the 9th European REUSE Conference, an alliance of environmental and business associations calls on the EU Council and Parliament to lay down ambitious reuse targets for beverage and takeaway packaging in the EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR)
- EU PPWR negotiations are a unique opportunity to prevent ever-growing mountains of packaging waste and to introduce reuse systems throughout the EU
- Organisations award initiatives from Germany and France for efficient management of reusable packaging system and innovative washing technology

Brussels/Berlin, 8.6.2023: A broad alliance of 80 civil society and business organisations is calling on the EU Parliament and Council to introduce ambitious waste prevention and reuse targets for packaging in the new EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR). The organisations have published a joint open letter against the backdrop of today's European REUSE Conference, which they are jointly hosting in Brussels. Already in its ninth edition, the conference is being organised by Environmental Action Germany (DUH), the European Association of Beverage Wholesalers (CEGROBB), the Association of Private Breweries Germany and the Reeloop Platform.

With the event, the organisations, together with Delara Burkhardt, Member of the European Parliament and Mattia Pellegrini, Head of Unit at the EU Commission, want to send a visible signal that reusable packaging solutions help to prevent mountains of packaging waste, conserve resources and protect the climate.

DUH, CEGROBB, the Association of Private Breweries and Reeloop commented: "According to the European waste hierarchy, waste prevention is the top priority. It is about time that the EU put this principle into practice. We therefore welcome the fact that targets for waste prevention and for the promotion of reusable packaging systems, both of which we have been calling for for many years, are to be made binding in the new EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation. However, companies like McDonald's, Coca-Cola and Pepsi are trying to derail such policies, in order to be able to stick to their path of disposability. Reuse targets for takeaway packaging have now been eliminated in the shadow rapporteur's report. This is a concerning development, since food and drink takeaway packaging is particularly likely to end up in the environment. In addition, the reuse targets for beverage bottles, at 25 percent by 2040, proposed by the Commission are far too low. The EU Council and the Parliament must not bow to the single-use lobby and must take the EU waste hierarchy seriously by promoting reusable packaging through ambitious targets."

According to the associations, the framework conditions for reuse systems must be designed in such a way that neither existing systems are jeopardized nor greenwashing is permitted through fake reusable packaging, which, for example, achieves only few rotations. To this end, among other things, the definition of reuse systems must include a mandatory incentive for the return of reusable packaging by consumers, usually a deposit, and an obligation for retailers to take back

refillable bottles through the structures of deposit return systems (DRS) for single-use beverage packaging.

The fact that single-use packaging can be replaced practically everywhere by climate-friendly reusable alternatives was demonstrated by numerous innovative reusable solutions presented at the conference. Reusable beverage bottles, takeaway food containers, coffee cups or shipping pallets are increasingly being used throughout Europe. Standard reusable packaging solutions are also available for dairy products and other foods such as sauces and spreads. For advancing and disseminating this approach, the German initiative "Mach Mehrweg Pool" received the European Refillable Award. The French company Uzaje received the European Reusable Award for its innovative and energy-efficient washing technology for a wide variety of reusable packaging, among other things facilitating the easy removal of labels.

Mattia Pellegrini, Head of Unit for From Waste to Resources at the EU Commission, responsible for the Packaging Regulation said, *"In order to transform the European packaging market into a true circular economy, we need an EU-wide reuse economy. That is why, for the first time, we want to introduce targets for waste prevention, reuse and the use of recycled materials in packaging in the new EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation. To combat the pollution of our environment, proven deposit return systems for plastic bottles and beverage cans should also become mandatory for Member States."*

Delara Burkhardt, S&D-MEP and shadow rapporteur for the EU Packaging Regulation said, *"The already enacted EU-wide bans on certain single-use plastic products do contribute to plastic reduction, but in some cases only lead to substitution by single-use alternatives made of other materials. They are thus not sufficient to address the dramatic waste crisis. Ambitious targets for waste prevention and reuse as the top levels of the European waste hierarchy must therefore form the core of the EU Packaging Regulation and protected against the jostling of the single-use packaging lobby to which some politicians are threatened to yield. European waste prevention and reuse targets must in any case be adopted in this legislative period. The growing mountains of packaging waste will not allow any further delay."*

Link:

The open letter on the EU Packaging Regulation, all information on the winners of the European Refillable and Reusable Awards as well as photos of the REUSE conference (from 5 p.m.) can be found here: <https://l.duh.de/p230608>

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