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European Parliament Gives “Green Light” to Recycled Content in Plastic Bottles

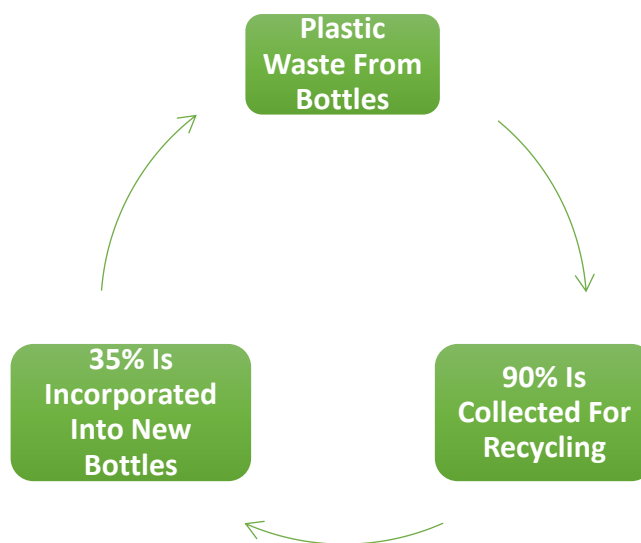
Wednesday, October 24, 2018 - The European Parliament has approved the report which would make it mandatory to produce beverage containers composed of at least 35% recycled plastic by 2025. FEAD, the representatives of the private waste management sector, fully embraces this positive vote and hopes that recycled content will be met with an equally favorable outcome at the end of the year, during the negotiations between the European Parliament and the Council of the European Parliament.

Indeed, the positive vote comes at a crucial time in the European Union as we find ourselves in a “plastic” state of affairs as the figures below can confirm:



Source: The European Commission’s “A European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy” (2018), <https://bit.ly/2LwXygw>

The Single Use Plastics Directive, as amended by the European Parliament, not only stipulates a minimum target of 35% for recycled plastic in beverage bottles, but also a 90% collection target for recycling. These two notions go hand in hand as they would close the loop for single use plastics and reduce littering as illustrated below:



Source: The European Commission’s “A European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy” (2018), <https://bit.ly/2LwXygw>



European Federation of Waste Management and Environmental Services
Fédération Européenne des Activités de la Dépollution et de l'Environnement
Europäische Föderation der Entsorgungswirtschaft

Indeed, the minimum target of 35% for recycled plastic in beverage bottles voted by the European Parliament will be a key contributor, as acknowledged in the report, towards the creation of a steady market for recyclates, and will ensure a more circular use of plastics.

There is a need to design fully recyclable packaging items and to incentivise ambitious collection rates, whereas one can observe the trend towards a growing production of single-use ones, in particular, beverage bottles, even in countries with high collection rates. A mandatory recycled content target will send, through the waste and material value chain, a strong signal to boost the offer of, and the demand for recycled plastics, as well as provide operators with the necessary certainty they need to make significant investments in plastics recycling from packaging products. Indeed, up to € 10 billion worth of investments will be required in the waste management and recycling sector to innovate and expand the separate collection, sorting and recycling capacity for all plastics at EU level. The private waste management sector will play a key role in transforming the European Union's economy into a circular one.

FEAD's president, Jean-Marc Boursier said:

“We welcome today's vote. It is an important first step in the upcoming negotiations between the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. I am confident that EU negotiators will succeed in deciding by December 2018 on a level of mandatory recycled content, to be transposed into EU law by 2025, which will trigger the uptake of plastic recyclates in beverage bottles. By doing so, the EU will finally experience a circular shift that is long overdue.”

For further information please contact the FEAD Secretariat at info@fead.be.

Note to the editor:

FEAD is the European Federation representing the European waste management industry. FEAD's members are national waste management associations covering 19 Member States, Norway and Serbia. They have an approximate 60% share in the household waste market and handle more than 75% of industrial and commercial waste in Europe. Their combined annual turnover is approximately € 75 billion. FEAD represents about 3000 companies with activities in all forms of waste management. These companies employ over 320000 people who operate around 2400 recycling and sorting centres, 1100 composting sites, 260 waste-to-energy plants and 900 controlled landfills. They play an important role in the determination of the best environmental option for waste management problems.

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