



**PLASTICS SUMMIT - GLOBAL EVENT 2022**  
**- POSITION STATEMENT -**  
**“Beyond the words... Creating a Sustainable Future!”**

Lisbon, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022

## **OVERVIEW**

Achieving sustainable development<sup>1</sup> and circular economy goals<sup>2</sup> is crucial to ensure a sustainable future and combat climate change. These goals can only be achieved through global cross-sector interdisciplinary action.

Tackling the impact of the continuously increasing human population on the environment requires us to rapidly adopt behaviours (integrating moral, economic, social and environmental aspects) that protect the planet and move towards a planetary health mindset.

In this regard, everyone must use resources efficiently and work towards higher-value material loops and waste prevention, increasing material circularity. The entire value chain, including Industry, should partake in this mindset, developing sustainable product circularity through process, innovation in materials and technologies, eco-design (that allows products to be repaired, reused and recycled), digital and green transition through a new industry 5.0. In addition, reducing consumption and waste per capita, improving waste management systems and new recycling processes will contribute decisively to mitigate environmental impacts. The approach “from waste to resource” will be fundamental for the transition to a real circular economy.

This position statement is aimed at all stakeholders involved in the value chain, from raw material producers to consumers, including services, industry - manufacturers, recyclers, end-users and logistics as well as other parties such as academia, government, regulators, NGOs and civil society.

This document is a blend of recommendations and commitments that will be made public and addressed to policy makers and international organisations.

The recommendations and commitments are expressed in the following 14 statements which are organized in 4 main areas:

- I. REGULATORY | LEGISLATIVE PROCESS**
- II. OCEAN POLLUTION**
- III. SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS | GREEN CLAIMS**
- IV. CARBON NEUTRALITY**

We, the undersigned, recognize and reinforce implementing necessary actions to achieve an economy that is climate neutral by promoting circular and efficient use of resources with less impact on the environment. This is the way to guarantee sustainable high standards of living, a healthy and safe environment for all, and a sustainable future for generations to come.

To this effect, we recognize and reinforce the need for taking the following measures and actions:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda>

<sup>2</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/environment/green-growth>



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## I. REGULATORY | LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

The active and responsible involvement of all stakeholders in the legislation process is a key factor in creating, adopting and implementing effective policies and regulatory measures, based on facts and subsidiarity principle.

It is relevant to ensure a harmonised and consistent regulatory framework and ensure that products adhere to the same standards on a global level.

The policy-making process also plays an important role in achieving **UN Sustainable Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)**.

- # 1** All relevant stakeholders' need to be consulted in all phases (especially in the early phases) of the policy-making process, allocating reasonable time for obtaining and integrating feedback.
- # 2** Legislative initiatives need to be based on the most updated and independent scientific evidence, standards and best available techniques – following technology and material neutral principle – and be supported by the corresponding holistic impact assessments (economic, social and environment aspects).
- # 3** Despite being necessary to have a sustainable vision, markets and businesses should have a reasonably adjusted timeframe as well as technical guidelines to ensure effectively implementing new legislative measures.
- # 4** Ensure that the implementation and effectiveness of the legislative measures are independently and objectively monitored and assessed, and that corrective measures are applied when needed.

## II. OCEAN POLLUTION

The "Lisbon Declaration", approved in June 2022 at the United Nations Oceans Conference in Portugal, emphasises the need to “act decisively and urgently to improve the health, productivity, sustainable use and resilience of the ocean and its ecosystems”. Ocean pollution, in particular marine litter, was already a core topic at the United Nations Assembly for the Environment (UNEA-5) that took place in March 2022 in Nairobi, where an international legally binding treaty was approved with the aim of reducing marine plastic litter. This treaty preconizes an integrated and circular approach to ensure that current and future actions are effective for all stages of the plastic life cycle. These and other global problems such as the global rise of the sea level, temperature increase, ocean acidification, overfishing and biodiversity loss, are core factors contributing to a crisis in ecosystems, and human survival on the planet.



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According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the greatest sources of marine litter are land-based activities<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, land protection from pollution must be also at the core of policies aimed at reducing marine litter.

To achieve the **UN Sustainable Goal 14 (Protect marine life)** it is crucial to ensure the effective protection of the ocean through pollution prevention and litter mitigation.

- # 5** A systematic and scientifically based information on and characterization of the main marine problems (e.g.: litter, other sources of pollution), with a focus on the solutions to prevent their origins must be continuously promoted.
- # 6** Contribute to developing and implementing strategic actions to tackle current sources of marine litter, to mitigate current pollution and prevent new pollution sources.
- # 7** Effective communication and strategic behaviour change should aim at addressing marine litter sources and ways to mitigate them as to improve individual and collective behaviours towards marine litter.
- # 8** The international community’s global cooperation in sharing knowledge, resources and good practices is needed to ensure catalytic action is taken to maximise monitorization and prevention of the main marine environment problems and pollution sources on local, regional and global levels.

### III. SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS | GREEN CLAIMS

At a time where sustainable-products claims and labels, from different raw materials, are growing in the market at an unprecedented rate, adopting policies that promote harmonized claims and associated labels to provide transparent and clear information to consumers to make conscious purchasing decisions is of the utmost importance. A real improvement of the global environmental performance of products across its life cycle will be a key factor to improve its circularity.

These lines of action will decisively contribute to achieving **UN Sustainable Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)**.

- # 9** Contribute to developing harmonized methods to measure, assess and communicate products’ environmental footprint.
- # 10** The actions, options or measures, namely legislative that promote the introduction or provision of alternative products or materials, or limit and ban others in the market, need to be based on scientific evidence regarding their environmental impact.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/oceans-seas/what-we-do/addressing-land-based-pollution/marine-litter-issue>



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- # 11** Promote developing and implementing strategic actions related with communication, education and empowerment of consumers and economic actors, with the aim of increasing uptake of more sustainable consumption habits, towards prevention, reduction of consumption and waste and increase circularity.

#### IV. CARBON NEUTRALITY

Climate stability is one of the major environmental and societal challenges we face. Minimizing environmental impact is the only way to approach a science-based carbon neutrality. Therefore, it should be a core priority and commitment by all stakeholders of all products and materials' value chains. Achieving climate neutrality will mitigate human contribution to climate changes, prevent biodiversity loss and resources scarcity, ensuring a healthy and liveable planet for present and future generations.

To achieve the **UN Sustainable Goal 13 (Climate Action)** ensuring effective effort from all sectors to the Climate Neutrality process is crucial.

- # 12** Create and adopt a carbon neutral roadmap for all economical actors contributing to reduce environmental impacts and aiming for climate stability.
- # 13** Promote strategic actions to increase awareness, knowledge and empowerment of consumers, economic operators and media, based on factual scientifically-based information, with the aim of promoting sustainable behaviours and a true climate citizenship, based on the pillars of planetary health and boundaries.
- # 14** Support developing and implementing incentive policies and strategic actions that recognize the climate system as a common good and boost sustainable behaviours adoption by organisations and citizens.

The signatories of this position statement are the following (in alphabetical order):