



Position Statement

*Beyond the words...
Creating a Sustainable Future!*

Lisbon, 17th October 2022

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OVERVIEW

Achieving sustainable development¹ and circular economy goals² 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 organised 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:

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

² <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 safeguard 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 Development 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.

- > Optimize the mechanisms and processes through which the relevant stakeholders (including NGOs and civil society) can actively participate in the regulatory policy-making process, especially in the early phases. Involving stakeholders in all stages of the process will ensure effectively implementing the regulatory measures.

#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).

- > Ensure that the most updated and rigorous scientific evidence informs decision-making at all steps of the regulatory process, safeguarding effective sustainability;
- > Ensure that the best available techniques and standards are considered as scientific/technical references for supporting legislative, including innovations, initiatives;
- > Legislation initiatives and policies should remain technologically and material neutral to enable the development of current and future technologies necessary in achieving a sustainable future with essential circularity and emission reductions;
- > Ensure that regulatory proposals are adequately supported by the corresponding holistic impact assessments (economic, social and environment aspects).

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#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.

- > Ensure that all stakeholders along the entire value chain have enough time to adjust to new regulatory measures. This adjustment can include new investments, reconvert and implement new production processes, research & development of new materials and products, creating new markets;
- > Ensure that all stakeholders have the necessary legal certainty to allocate their investments in the development of the adequate technology;
- > Ensure that the conditions to effectively implement a new regulatory measure are in place, allowing existing equipment to be used until it's obsolete.

#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.

- > Ensure that results and objective performance indicators are in place – independently audited – to assess the regulatory measures deployment and promote continuously adjusting and optimizing the measures as 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.

According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the greatest sources of marine litter are land-based activities³. Therefore, land protection from pollution must be also at the core of policies aimed at reducing marine litter.

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

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

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#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.

- > Increase knowledge and objective identification and characterization of the main sources of marine litter, through scientific research;
- > Create standardised procedures, assessment tools and monitoring indicators through the international organisations for standardisation.

#6 Contribute to developing and implementing strategic actions to tackle current sources of marine litter, to mitigate current pollution and prevent new pollution sources.

- > Create programs and clear strategic action plans, to be implemented on local, regional and global levels (including the implementation of EPR – Extended Producer Responsibility principle) aiming to mitigate the impact and prevent new sources of marine pollution;
- > Develop scientific-based guidance and standards on the best technologies to use in monitoring waste cleaning activities and controlling marine pollution.

#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.

- > Increase awareness and knowledge about the sources, impacts and management of marine pollution across the entire value chain, in particular civil society;
- > Advocate strategic actions in controlling marine pollution, by adequately communicating and reaching out to all stakeholders with clear indications about how they can act;
- > Facilitate assessing the liability of companies, public authorities and citizens causing damage to identified third parties.

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#8 The international community's global cooperation in sharing knowledge, resources and good practices is needed to ensure catalytic action is taken to maximise monitoring and prevention of the main marine environment problems and pollution sources on local, regional and global levels.

- > Sharing knowledge and good practices by the international community, including industry, as agents acting as catalysts for maximising the control and prevention of the main problems, sources and impacts of pollution to the marine environment, on local, regional and global levels, contributing to:
 - Creating or improving waste separation, collection, sorting/classification and recovery schemes (e.g.: EPR – Extended Producer Responsibility schemes, DRS – Deposit Return Systems, etc.) and infrastructures, at the same time increasing of recycling rates;
 - Developing a funding mechanism to support innovations in the following areas: projects targeting marine pollution, productive processes and management of waste, as well as research and development and design new products for circularity, with end of life in mind, increasing durability, promoting reuse and repair and recycling;
 - Elaborating effective and progressive actions to improve environmental awareness and literacy which promote mobilization and involvement of the community towards a visible change in behaviour for the protection of the natural capital, ecosystems services and resource efficiency.
- > Despite existing global standards, it's necessary to work together at the international level to update and create a common purpose where certifications and processes are accepted worldwide to reflect the latest circular innovations.

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 harmonised claims and associated labels to provide transparent and clear information so consumers can 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 Development Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

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#9 Contribute to developing harmonised methods to measure, assess and communicate products' environmental footprint.

- > Develop reliable methods to measure the environmental life cycle impacts of products and common methodology in assessing and communicating (including harmonised sustainable product labels) their environmental footprint, based on international standards and recommendations.

#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.

- > Adopt methods, tools and international standards for a transparent scientific and holistic approach in a comparative assessment of the products environmental life cycle performance (e.g.: PEF – Product Environmental Footprint). This will allow to assess the merit and environmental impact of each option available in the market, preventing unintended consequences of one product being replaced by others if these later are not delivering improved environmental performance in all aspects analysed.

#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.

- > Develop tools and communication and awareness contents that lead to higher levels of literacy, knowledge, and awareness of the sustainability of products. Green Public Procurement (GPP) could also generate environmentally effective and economically efficient outcomes;
- > Ensure that the economic and infrastructure strategies developed incentivize the change the consumer behaviour.

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.

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To achieve the UN Sustainable Development 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.

- > All economic actors should define and implement effective roadmaps to achieve carbon neutrality;
- > These roadmaps should include advisory boards with experts in climate and environmental affairs;
- > These roadmaps should be innovative and adapted to the characteristics and technology development of each industrial sector and to the territories where they operate, minimising their impacts;
- > These roadmaps should also ensure the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals;
- > Promote the use of international agreed GHG emissions measurement and verification methods like international standards and indicators to ensure quality and comparability of reported data.

#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.

- > Introduce in the educational and awareness programs and public debates, with a transdisciplinary approach, the themes of sustainability (integration of the environmental, economic and social domains), climate citizenship (consciousness of all individuals to protect the climate equilibrium) and planetary health (awareness that sustainability and climate citizenship connected to our choices and actions have a direct effect in the environment, common goods and human health);
- > Promote clear and unambiguous integrated information, through different means to increasingly engage society in the climate transition, as a collective and individual action of adopting new behaviours striving to alter production, acquisition and use patterns of products and services, resulting in increased sustainability.

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#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.

- > Ensure that incentive instruments and strategic actions are in place to promote the adoption of sustainable actions towards a common good approach for planetary health, such as financial mechanisms that benefits natural capital and ecosystem services, reducing and cleaning carbon emissions;
- > Within this framework, consider the contribution in decarbonizing the economy from an holistic perspective, focusing both on the industrial processes and on the contribution of the final products on achieving a reduction in global emissions, including the role of carbon sink in soils.

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

INSTITUTIONAL		
ORGANISATION	STAKEHOLDER	COUNTRY
> ABIEF Associação Brasileira da Indústria de Embalagens Plásticas Flexíveis	Sectorial Association	Brazil
> ABIPLAST Associação Brasileira da Indústria do Plástico	Sectorial Association	Brazil
> AHRESP Associação da hotelaria, restauração e similares de Portugal	Sectorial Association	Portugal
> ANAIP Asociación Española de Industriales de Plásticos	Sectorial Association	Spain
> ANIPAC Asociación Nacional de Industrias del Plástico A. C.	Sectorial Association	Mexico
> APE Europe Agriculture, Plastics, Environment Europe	Sectorial Association	France
> APED Associação Portuguesa de Empresas de Distribuição	Sectorial Association	Portugal
> APIAM Águas Minerais e Naturais de Portugal	Sectorial Association	Portugal
> APIGRAF Associação Portuguesa das Indústrias Gráficas e Transformadoras do Papel	Sectorial Association	Portugal
> APIP Associação Portuguesa da Indústria de Plásticos	Sectorial Association	Portugal
> ASASE Foundation	NGO	Ghana
> BCSD Portugal Business Council for Sustainable Development	Association	Portugal
> BIORUMO Consultoria em Ambiente e Sustentabilidade, Lda	Environmental Consultancy	Portugal
> CIPA Comité International des Plastiques en Agriculture	Sectorial Association	France
> CPA Comité Français des Plastiques Agricoles	Sectorial Association	France
> DGAE Direção-Geral das Atividades Económicas	Public Authority	Portugal
> ECOSERVIÇOS Gestão de Sistemas Ecológicos, Lda	Environmental Consultancy	Portugal
> ESGRA Associação para a Gestão de Resíduos	Sectorial Association	Portugal
> EUPC European Plastics Converters	Sectorial Association	Belgium
> FIPA Federação das Indústrias Portuguesas Agro-Alimentares	Sectorial Association	Portugal
> NEW NORMAL CONSULTING Helping you navigate the new normal	Consultancy	Switzerland

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ORGANISATION	STAKEHOLDER	COUNTRY
> NOVO VERDE Sociedade Gestora de Resíduos de Embalagens	Waste Packaging (EPR) Management Body	Portugal
> PIEP Pólo de Inovação em Engenharia de Polímeros	Association	Portugal
> PLASTICS EUROPE The pan-European association of plastics manufacturers	Sectorial Association	Belgium
> PROPEB Associação Portuguesa das Bebidas Refrescantes Não Alcoólicas	Sectorial Association	Portugal
> QUERCUS Associação Nacional de Conservação da Natureza	NGO	Portugal
> SERDIAL Vending	Logistics	Portugal
> SIRPLASTE Sociedade Industrial de Recuperados de Plásticos, SA	Industry (Recycler)	Portugal
> WFO Waste Free Oceans Foundation	NGO	Belgium

INDIVIDUAL

(Speakers and Members of the Expert Committee of the PSGE 2022)

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> MARTA MOREIRA MARQUES Behavioral Scientist at Nova Medical School	Speaker	Portugal
> MERCÊS FERREIRA Coordinator of the North Regional Council at Order of Engineers - Environment College	Member of the Expert Committee	Portugal
> MILENA PARNIGONI Recycling Consultant at Logoplaste Innovation Lab	Member of the Expert Committee	Portugal
> PAUL HODGES Chairman at New Normal Consulting	Speaker	Portugal
> PEDRO PABLO DÍAZ Former VP of Latin America at the Coca-Cola Company and Former Ambassador of Chile in Portugal	Speaker	Chile
> THALIA BOFILIOU Senior Investment Analyst – Plastics Programme at Planet Tracker	Member of the Expert Committee	United Kingdom

Note: Subscriber Lists updated on 15/11/2022



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