

2030

PLASTICS AGENDA FOR BUSINESS

**A BUSINESS-BACKED
BLUEPRINT TO MAKE THE
ECONOMICS WORK FOR
A CIRCULAR ECONOMY**

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WHAT NOW?

This is a question I've been asked time and again by business leaders over the past 18 months. We are at a crossroads. In tackling global challenges, early optimism of what's possible is increasingly colliding with the complex realities of scaling solutions in a shifting and uncertain world.

During this time, much has been written about the role of business in addressing these challenges and the question of how, and how far, business should lead has grown more urgent. Many businesses are now asking what comes next, how to build on the progress made so far, and how to navigate the complexities of implementation at scale.

This publication aims to answer these questions. By applying what we've learned from 10 years of action, it offers an evidence-based, practical 2030 agenda for business to tackle plastic waste and pollution. It looks beyond companies' efforts on their own footprints, to how they can collectively shape wider market conditions.

Many stakeholders, in particular governments, will be key to success, and we engage all of them in our work. This agenda specifically hones in on the role of business. While it is focused

on plastic packaging, it speaks to broader questions about the role of business in transforming markets.

We know the destination. A circular economy, where we eliminate the plastics we don't need, innovate towards reuse models and new materials, and circulate the plastics we still use. This offers a root cause solution to plastic pollution with profound benefits for the economy and for nature, as well as for people and societies. Don't just take my word for it — take that of the 1,200 organisations around the world backing this shared vision.

And we know it's business-critical to get this right. People care about plastic pollution. Governments across the political spectrum and across all continents are responding with increasingly stringent regulation. Companies who lean in will be well positioned to co-shape the future, stay ahead of regulation, and ensure continued market access, while those who don't risk being disrupted.

This agenda represents the next chapter in our collective journey tackling one of the great challenges of our time. I invite you to join the many industry leaders already rallying behind it.

Rob Opsomer
Executive Lead, Plastics



IN SUPPORT OF THIS AGENDA

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“Danone has been a signatory of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation’s Global Commitment since its launch in 2018. By joining the next chapter of the Global Commitment, we’re renewing our commitment to keeping plastic out of nature. We acknowledge the ongoing challenges, especially due to slow technological and infrastructure developments, combined with a lack of harmonized regulatory frameworks worldwide to level the playing field. To achieve systemic change, voluntary business action must be matched by robust infrastructure and policy. Only through collective action from governments and the industry can we accelerate the transformation needed.”

Nathalie Alquier - Chief Sustainability Officer
DANONE

“Nestlé will continue to contribute towards the common vision of a circular economy for packaging. Building on years of effort to evolve our packaging, we look forward to collective action on the 2030 Plastics Agenda for Business, working with the Foundation and value chain partners. Together we aim to overcome systemic barriers by building broader systems and a policy landscape for the circular economy.”

Antonia Wanner - Chief Sustainability Officer
NESTLÉ

“As a Global Commitment signatory, SC Johnson has met its 2025 goals by cutting virgin plastic use by 33% and increasing post-consumer recycled (PCR) content to 25% across plastic packaging. By 2030, we’re targeting 55% PCR and a 55% reduction in virgin plastic from 2018 levels. Just as importantly, we’re advocating for strong Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws — because real progress demands united action from companies, governments, and the public.”

Fisk Johnson - Chairman and CEO
SC JOHNSON

“Unilever is proud to build on its longstanding partnership with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and support this next chapter of the Global Commitment. Ending plastic pollution and keeping plastic in circulation requires innovation, infrastructure, and enabling policy, combined with focused, collective action and advocacy right across the plastics value chain as identified in this 2030 Plastics Agenda.”

Pablo Costa - Global Head of Packaging, Digital and Transformation
UNILEVER

“Amcor became a founding signatory of the Global Commitment in 2018 to drive and inspire positive change. We’ve seen that bold ambitions and consistent action do make a difference. As a Global Commitment 2030 signatory, we will continue to deliver more sustainable packaging solutions while advocating for regulation that enables packaging circularity possible sooner and at scale.”

Peter Konieczny - CEO
AMCOR

“At L’Oréal, we know that lasting solutions are built through collaboration. This is why we have partnered with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation since 2018 to help accelerate the transition to a circular economy. L’Oréal is determined to support the newly launched Global Commitment 2030, setting its own ambition to reduce by 50% in absolute terms the use of virgin plastic for product packaging by 2030 versus 2019, and to continue to encourage consumers to embrace refills as the latest beauty ritual for a more sustainable future.”

Ezgi Barcenaz - Chief Corporate Responsibility Officer
L’ORÉAL

“We support the Ellen MacArthur Foundation’s vision of collaborative action and collective advocacy in this 2030 Business Agenda as a vital roadmap for change. Systemic transformation requires collective action: we aim to enable collaborative efforts to unlock design and infrastructure improvements while advocating for supportive policies as a member of the Business Coalition for a Global Plastics Treaty.”

PEPSICO

“TOMRA has worked with circular value chains for more than fifty years and has seen the underlying drivers for change strengthen over the past decade. While regional and national legislation partially addresses the challenge, effective and holistic international frameworks are still lacking. Despite this, the business community increasingly invests in circularity as a priority climate action, positioning themselves for competitive advantage, reduced risk, and new business opportunities in the near future. Together with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and member organizations, we look forward to continuing the enablement of a global circular shift for plastic and plastic waste as a 2030 Global Commitment signatory.”

Tove Andersen - CEO
TOMRA

“Carrefour is proud to step up its ambition with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, reinforcing its vision for a circular economy. Building on Carrefour’s core 2025 goals for 100% reusable, recyclable, or compostable packaging, we are making a bold new commitment: to reduce the use of virgin plastic; a critical step in leading the transition and engaging the entire value chain. Through the 2030 Global Commitment we aim to reduce virgin plastic in our own-brand single-use packaging by 10% — equivalent to 15,000 tons — by 2030. This is critical to our Group’s mission and our Act for Food program.”

Carine Kraus - Engagement Director
CARREFOUR

IN SUPPORT OF THIS AGENDA

“Henkel supports the Ellen MacArthur Foundation’s 2030 Plastics Agenda as part of our long-standing partnership. We see circular transformation as essential — not just for sustainability, but as a driver of innovation and business value. Achieving this requires collective action and systemic change.”

Ulrike Sapiro - Chief Sustainability Officer
HENKEL

“Over the past decade, Indorama Ventures has proven that meaningful change is possible when we act together. As a Global Commitment Signatory, we have recycled more than 150 billion post-consumer PET bottles, keeping them from landfill. Today, as one of the world’s largest PET recyclers, we are scaling post-consumer recycling, designing for recyclability, and advancing innovations beyond mechanical recycling.

As Chair of the UNESCAP Circular Economy Taskforce and Co-Chair of the Circularity and Materials working group of SBCOP30, I invite customers, partners, and regulators to stand behind the Ellen MacArthur Foundation’s 2030 Plastics Agenda and collaborate to realise the vision for a circular economy.”

Anthony M. Watanabe - Chief Sustainability Officer
INDORAMA VENTURES

“For us, a functioning circular economy is a strategic necessity and the key to global resource sovereignty. Thanks to the successes of the companies of Schwarz Group in the Global Commitment 2025 and our new holistic circular economy strategy REset Resources, we are securing valuable resources in the long term and keeping them consistently in circulation. The Ellen MacArthur Foundation’s 2030 Plastics Agenda continues to provide the necessary clarity and determination to join forces globally and ambitiously drive forward a comprehensive transformation.”

Florian Schütze - Member of the Executive Board Corporate Responsibility at Schwarz Corporate Affairs
SCHWARZ GROUP

“We are proud to remain part of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation’s Network and are delighted to support this collective 2030 Plastics Agenda for Business. As the consumer goods brand with the highest level of PCR and highest ambition for virgin plastics reduction in the Global Commitment, we will continue to set an example for ambition and drive the uptake of climate friendly mechanically recycled plastics for our branded packaging. We call on all companies to raise their ambition and pursue credible solutions to accelerate the transition to a circular economy.”

Timothy Glaz - Head of Corporate Affairs
WERNER & MERTZ GMBH

“The Ellen MacArthur Foundation’s Plastics Agenda is a vital call to action. It makes a compelling case for pre-competitive business collaboration to tackle systemic barriers and shape the markets and infrastructure needed to unlock circularity at scale. At CISL, we believe strategic business action is essential to transform markets so that innovation and investment in a sustainable future are not only commercially viable but core drivers of resilience, competitiveness, and long-term success.”

Lindsay Hooper - CEO
CAMBRIDGE INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP

“In Canada, vision of a circular solutions for packaging are gaining momentum, but production and waste levels remain high. As we move into the next chapter, the Canada Plastics Pact will continue to drive progress towards the common vision of a circular economy, in support of the 2030 Plastics Agenda. By uniting leading brands, retailers, and innovators, we’re proving that collaboration drives progress — scaling the circular solutions needed to transform Canada’s plastics system.”

Cher Mereweather - Managing Director
CANADA PLASTICS PACT

“Transforming the global plastics system is both an environmental and economic imperative, it’s also entirely possible. The 2030 Plastics Agenda shows how business leadership can turn today’s innovations into a better tomorrow for everyone — one in which circularity is not just an option, but the norm. This is not just about redesigning materials, it’s about redesigning our collective intent for a better future for all. Bold leadership on plastics is necessary now so we can break through the barriers in the way and start aligning markets with the regeneration of our planet.”

Co-host of Outrage & Optimism, co-founder of Global Optimism, and former Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC
CHRISTIANA FIGUERES

“Players of People’s Postcode Lottery first started raising funds for the Ellen MacArthur Foundation in 2016, supporting its core work as well as key initiatives. In the same year, they also received an additional £500,000 to support its first systemic project on plastic packaging, which led to the launch of the New Plastics Economy. The impact of this effort on the plastics system cannot be underestimated. A decade later, the Foundation’s 2030 Plastics Agenda for Business builds on lessons learned and presents a definitive roadmap for businesses to accelerate the transition to a circular economy.”

Laura Chow - Head of Charities,
PEOPLE’S POSTCODE LOTTERY

“Plastic pollution seems intractable, but the advances of the past few years — from reductions in virgin plastic production to the successful deployment of sustainable plastic substitutes — are reason for hope. As an early partner of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation’s circular economy work, we’ve seen what a difference a decade can make when businesses commit and collaborate to move us toward a resilient future.”

Wendy Schmidt - Co-founder and President
SCHMIDT FAMILY FOUNDATION

IN SUPPORT OF THIS AGENDA

“While progress has been made in tackling the global plastic challenge, the scale of the problem continues to outpace current solutions. Policy action is essential — but it’s not enough. Leading businesses have a vital role to play to drive market transformation and rally their industries behind regulations. Pew’s Breaking the Plastic Wave report shows system-wide change at all stages of the plastics lifecycle can significantly reduce the leakage of plastic into the environment whilst delivering social, economic, and environmental benefits. Only through urgent, ambitious collaboration — across government, industry, and investors — can we meet the moment and achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda.”

Simon Reddy - Director, International Environment
THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS

“Ending plastic pollution is clearly a human, planetary, economic, and business imperative. And ending plastic pollution is possible. By tackling pollution across the full life cycle, which includes using circular economy approaches, a rethink of how we design, make, use and reuse plastic products can make economic and business sense. Building on the last seven years, we look forward to advancing on this vision with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and the signatories of the Global Commitment.”

Sheila Aggarwal Khan - Director, Industry and Economy Division
UN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

“WRAP urges businesses to get behind this collective 2030 market transformation agenda and accelerate action towards a circular packaging system. With the outcome of the Global Plastics Treaty negotiations still uncertain, collaborative action and advocacy from businesses remains vital.

WRAP’s work through the Plastics Pact Network, united behind the common circular economy vision, has delivered significant progress in tackling plastic pollution worldwide. The upcoming launch of the new UK Packaging Pact is fully aligned with the 2030 Plastics Agenda, supporting businesses to drive further change towards our shared goal of a truly circular system. We call on more businesses to join this collective effort and champion action at both national and global levels.”

Catherine David - CEO
WRAP

“We are entering a profound industrial and economic transition, driven by planetary boundaries and social pressures that can’t be negotiated with. The problem is outpacing the solutions, and incremental steps won’t shift the system. In the face of growing political and economic uncertainty, successful businesses need to look beyond individual short-term responses and join forces to drive system-wide change through coordinated action and collective advocacy as recognised in this Agenda.”

John Duncan - Global Initiative Lead, No Plastic in Nature
WWF INTERNATIONAL

01

Leaders have demonstrated progress, but current economics and policy gaps prevent scale up

Since its launch in 2018, signatories of the Global Commitment have shown progress is possible. As the largest voluntary effort to tackle plastic waste and pollution in the world, the Global Commitment's business signatories collectively represent 20% of the plastic packaging market. Together, they avoided the use of 14 million tonnes of virgin plastics — keeping one barrel of oil in the ground every second. They tripled their use of recycled content and eliminated billions of problematic items. Circular economy advances such as these can contribute to cleaner cities, cleaner oceans, and the creation of new jobs in, for example, the recycling sector.

This progress is, however, not enough by itself, for two reasons. First, while pioneers have proven what's possible, the remaining 80% of the market has performed, on average, much worse. Second, even the most ambitious leaders face systemic barriers no company can overcome alone: scaling reuse, tackling flexible plastic packaging waste, and developing collection and recycling infrastructure. These challenges are systemic because the solutions currently cost more, rely on wide-spread behaviour change, and/or require substantial coordinated action and collective investment.

02

Recognising lasting change requires government policy, businesses have an opportunity to catalyse market transformation by shifting focus beyond internal change

Government policy is essential to mobilise the 80% of the market that remains largely inactive and to overcome the systemic barriers that halt the progress of leaders.

Yet businesses need not wait on the sidelines. They have an opportunity to inform and stay ahead of regulation. To do so effectively, they need to focus beyond just driving change within their own companies and contribute towards changing the wider market. This requires a combination of new types of collaboration to drive innovation, create demand for solutions, and demonstrate what's possible, along with being vocally supportive of ambitious, effective policy, as over 300 businesses already do in the Business Coalition for a Global Plastics Treaty.

03

New types of collaboration in three targeted areas can accelerate effective policy and lower the cost of transition

Through collective advocacy, businesses can proactively and positively engage governments to accelerate the development of ambitious and effective policy. Early movers can co-shape the policy landscape, stay ahead of regulation, and turn potential disruption into opportunity. Additionally, they can collaborate in new ways to lower the cost and risk of the transition, while producing the practical proof points policymakers need to create the most effective policy solutions. In parallel, they can continue driving action on areas that are within their control.

This report, drawing on lessons from a decade of action, sets out an agenda for businesses for the next five years to contribute to market transformation by combining collective advocacy, collaborative action, and individual action, targeting the most critical systemic barriers, with specific priority actions for each. In this way, it aims to concentrate collective industry efforts for faster and deeper progress towards a circular economy.

A note on scope:

This agenda focuses on plastic packaging. Packaging is the largest application of plastics, representing about 40% of total volumes, and is almost exclusively short lived and single use. It is therefore a critical place to drive progress. At the same time, if we are to end plastic pollution, it is as critical that the 60% of plastic that is not packaging receives sufficient attention and is addressed by other efforts.

04

Industry leaders back a shared 2030 agenda — we call on others to join

Many of the world's largest businesses back the market transformation agenda laid out in this report, signalling intent to tackle systemic barriers and create conditions for wider scale up. Leading companies representing about 20% of the global plastic packaging market have (re)committed to drive aligned individual progress as part of the Global Commitment 2030, even as the context in which companies set public targets has become more complex. More than 300 businesses are already calling for ambitious, effective policy as part of the Business Coalition for a Global Plastics Treaty.

Meanwhile, the Plastics Pact Network engages over 700 businesses in national-level collaboration. Collectively, a group of more than 1,200 organisations remains united behind a shared circular economy vision, as set out by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation. We call on all businesses to join, collaborate, collectively advocate, and transparently report on progress. We also call on governments to do their part — because market transformation will only be achieved through a combination of government and business efforts.

THE ROLE OF BUSINESS IN CREATING A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Main focus to date

INDIVIDUAL ACTION

INDIVIDUAL ACTION

Focus on industry leaders voluntarily driving change within their business

This agenda focuses on the role of business. Other stakeholders, in particular governments, also have a crucial role in establishing a circular economy.

What is needed

MARKET TRANSFORMATION

INDIVIDUAL ACTION

to keep driving progress within each company's control

COLLABORATIVE ACTION

tackling barriers no business can solve alone

COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY

for effective regulation to make the economics work

**ELLEN MACARTHUR
FOUNDATION KEY
PLASTICS INITIATIVES**

**THE
GLOBAL
COMMITMENT
2030**

**COLLABORATIVE
PROJECTS ON
REUSE, FLEXIBLES,
& INFRASTRUCTURE**

**BUSINESS COALITION
FOR A GLOBAL
PLASTICS TREATY**
+ OTHER ADVOCACY

**AND COORDINATION
WITH OTHER INITIATIVES
AROUND THE WORLD**

A high-angle photograph of a red running track with white lane markings. Several runners are visible, mostly in silhouette, moving from left to right. A large, white, bold number '01' is superimposed over the center of the image. The background is a solid red color, matching the track.

01

**LEADERS HAVE
DEMONSTRATED
PROGRESS, BUT
CURRENT ECONOMICS
AND POLICY GAPS
PREVENT SCALE UP**

LEADERS HAVE PROVEN PROGRESS IS POSSIBLE, BUT TOO MANY OTHERS HAVE NOT STEPPED UP

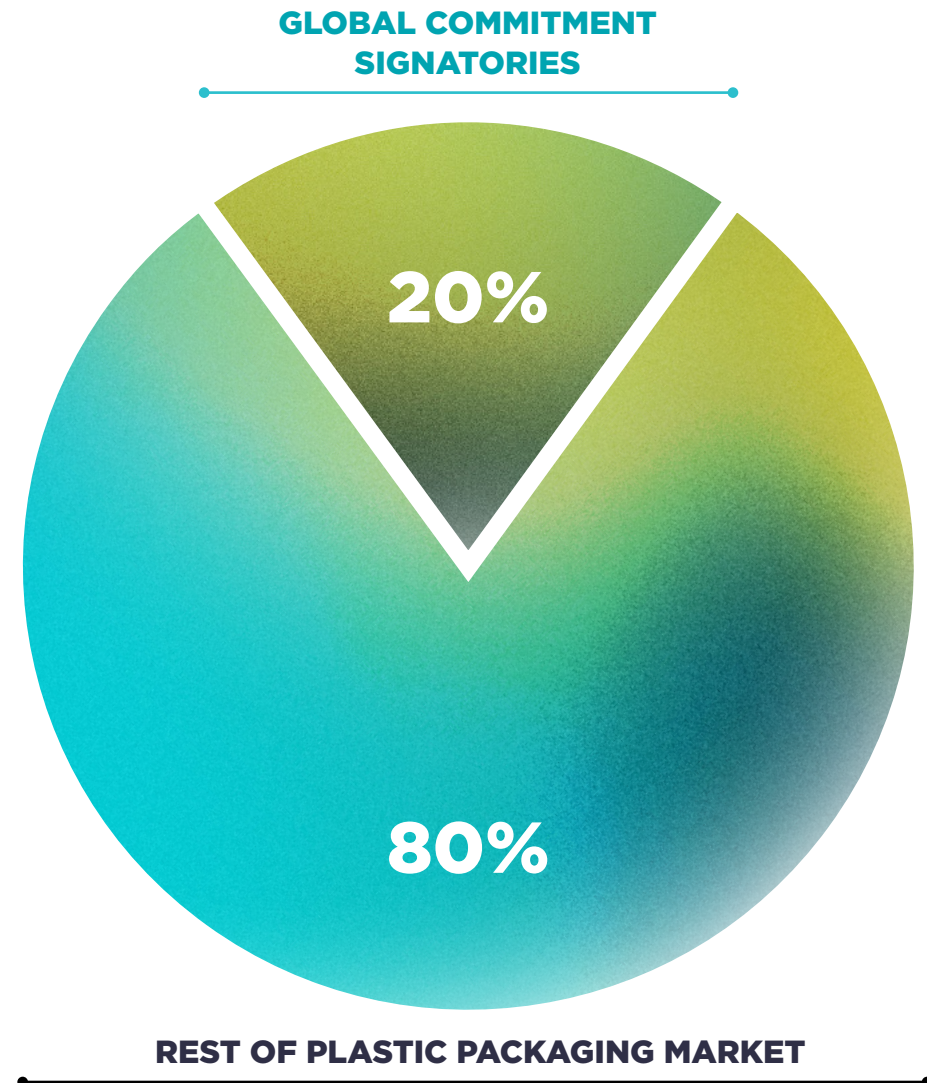
Over the past decade, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation has worked with businesses and policymakers to catalyse action on plastics and build a circular economy. In a circular economy, we eliminate the plastics we don't need, innovate towards reuse models and new materials, and circulate the plastics we still use.. As the world's largest voluntary effort on plastic pollution, developed by the Foundation and UN Environment Programme, the Global Commitment is a vital source of insight.

Global Commitment signatories representing 20% of all plastic packaging have shown progress is possible.

Spurred by ambitious targets and transparent reporting, they avoided the use of 14 million tonnes of virgin plastics, resulting in oil savings equivalent to keeping one barrel of oil in the ground every second.¹ In just a few years they tripled their use of recycled content, and eliminated billions of problematic items. They outperformed the rest of the market across all target areas where comparable data exists, while continuing to be competitive in the market and sell to billions of people across the world. Circular economy advances such as these can contribute to cleaner cities, cleaner oceans, and new jobs in, for example, the recycling sector. The signatories' leadership has allowed them to inform, and stay ahead of, rapidly strengthening policy around the world.

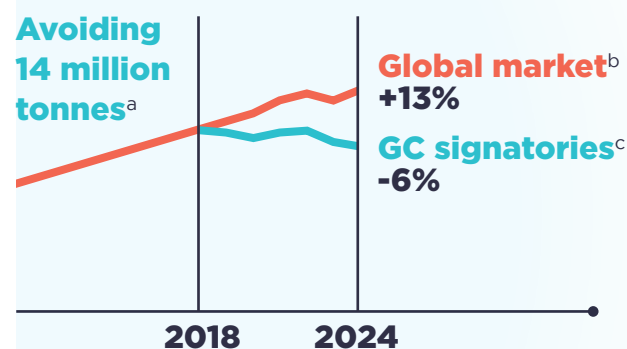
We need to talk about the other 80% and how to get the entire market to change.

Over the past seven years, the businesses that stepped up and shared transparent updates on their progress faced the closest scrutiny. The 80% that did not step up however, even the many large players in that group, remained largely out of the public eye, despite, on average, lagging significantly behind those that did.

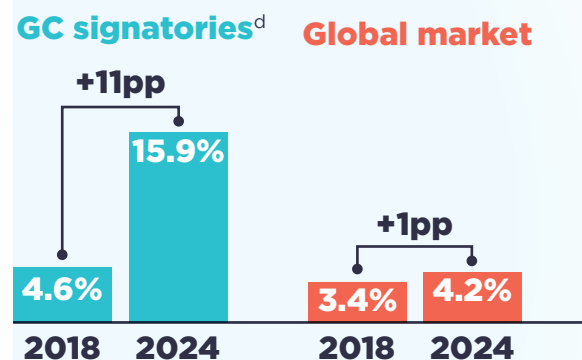


GLOBAL COMMITMENT SIGNATORIES HAVE...

Reduced virgin plastic use



Tripled share of recycled content



Eliminated
775,000
tonnes
of problematic^e
packaging



Resulting in keeping 1 barrel
of oil in the ground every second^f

^a Brands, retailers, and packaging producers who are Global Commitment signatories

^b Source: Wood Mackenzie plastic packaging market data

^c Brands and retailers signatories

^d Brands and retailers signatories

^e Items and materials that a significant number of Global Commitment signatories have identified as problematic or unnecessary

^f Calculation based on the virgin plastic reduction of Global Commitment signatories compared to a business as usual scenario, quantified through the barrels of oil equivalent avoided over seven years

BUSINESSES FACE SYSTEMIC BARRIERS THEY CAN'T OVERCOME ALONE

Even the most ambitious actors currently face systemic barriers no business can overcome alone: scaling reuse, tackling flexible plastic packaging waste, and developing collection and recycling infrastructure.

These are barriers because, despite many efforts, progress on them has been very limited over the last decade. They are systemic because the solutions currently cost more, rely on wide-spread behaviour change, and/or require substantial collective investment. This means individual businesses cannot overcome them alone. Policy and/or collaborative action are required. While these barriers are not the only obstacles to tackling plastic waste and building a circular economy, they are among the most persistent and, if they can be overcome, the most impactful.



Scaling reuse:

Many studies suggest reusable packaging has the potential to be one of the biggest drivers to reduce plastic pollution. But the economics of reuse often only work at scale, requiring, for example, shared collection and cleaning infrastructure and widespread consumer uptake. Uncertainty about how this scale can be achieved, when it will become cost-competitive vs single-use packaging, and what policy mechanisms would enable this, are holding back the critical mass needed to move forward.



Tackling flexible plastic packaging waste:

Flexible packaging is the fastest-growing plastic packaging type, with strong functional properties and low weight, but also the most challenging from a circular economy perspective, with low recycling and high leakage rates. Compounding this problem is a lack of alignment on solutions — particularly where and under what conditions alternative materials could play a role.² This is paralysing the significant R&D investments and scale up of production needed to increase the viability of alternatives.



Developing collection and recycling infrastructure:

In shifting to a circular economy, it is critical to reduce the amount of plastic packaging waste that is generated in the first place. Yet with over 140 million tonnes of plastic packaging being produced each year, of which globally only around 15% is recycled and 40% mismanaged,³ it is also vital to invest in the infrastructure to collect and recycle the plastic packaging that is used. While individual companies' actions — such as designing recyclable packaging and increasing use of recycled materials — are essential enablers, they alone will not be sufficient to unlock the USD billions needed to build and sustain effective collection and recycling systems. A multi-stakeholder strategy is needed to attract investment and to bring about the enabling policy interventions to ensure dedicated, ongoing funding and demand for recycled materials, while ensuring a just transition for waste pickers and other workers in the plastics industry, including those in informal and cooperative settings.

The power, and limits of, individual business action

Where there is a business case for action today

Where the economics don't work or it's not feasible to scale alone

This calls for

COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY for supportive policy to make the economics work and level and raise the playing field

COLLABORATIVE ACTION to drive better economics and wider customer adoption



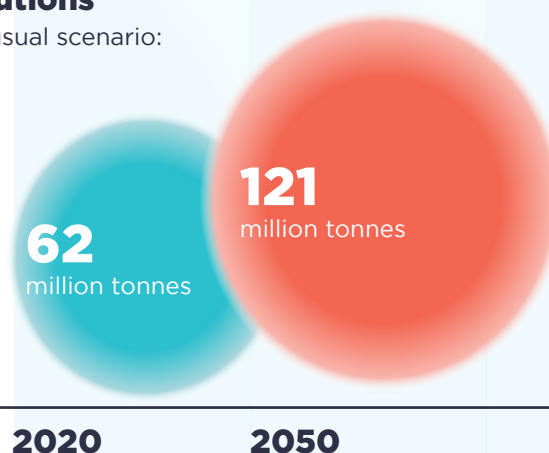
WITHOUT FURTHER ACTION, THE CHALLENGE CONTINUES TO OUTPACE THE SOLUTIONS

Despite the progress achieved by the leading 20%, as a result of 80% of the market not yet stepping up enough, and systemic barriers currently preventing progress, the challenge is still growing. Global levels of mismanaged plastic waste, plastic pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions related to the production and disposal of plastics are increasing, impacting nature, climate, and people. In parallel, evidence of the presence and potential health impacts of certain plastic chemicals and microplastics underscores the urgency to tackle plastic pollution.

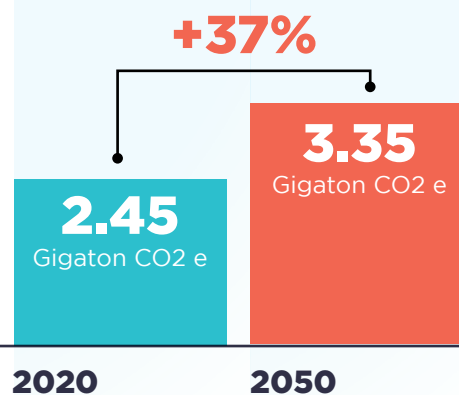
Without further action, the challenge continues to outpace the solutions

According to studies, in a business-as-usual scenario:

Mismanaged plastic waste is predicted to nearly double



Greenhouse gas emissions will continue to rise



Source: Pottinger, et al., Pathways to reduce global plastic waste mismanagement and greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, Science (2024)

02

**RECOGNISING LASTING
CHANGE REQUIRES
GOVERNMENT POLICY,
BUSINESSES HAVE
AN OPPORTUNITY TO
CATALYSE MARKET
TRANSFORMATION BY
SHIFTING FOCUS BEYOND
INTERNAL CHANGE**

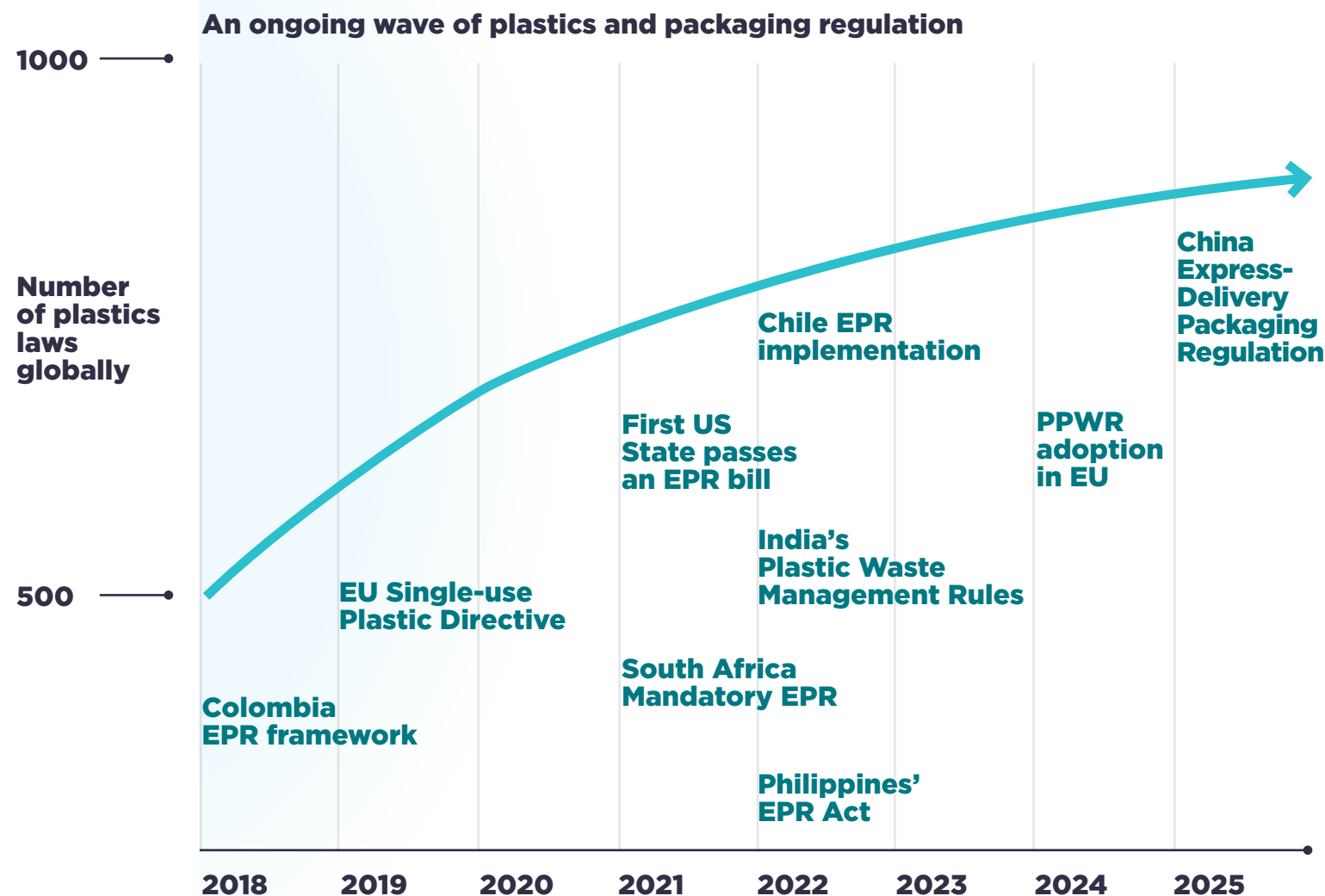
GOVERNMENT POLICY IS ESSENTIAL TO SUPPORT THE LEADERS AND ENSURE THE WHOLE MARKET ACTS

Effective, well-enforced policy is needed both to mobilise the 80% of the market that remains largely inactive, and to overcome the systemic barriers that halt the progress of leaders. This requires both targeted policy measures and broader cross-cutting fiscal and financial incentives. Without government action, business efforts alone will never be enough.

In recent years, a raft of new policies — such as India's Plastic Waste Management Rules, California's SB 54, and the EU's PPWR, to name just a few — have begun driving significant change and requiring substantial business investment. At the same time, in much of the world, the frameworks needed to deliver systemic transformation are still missing.

Businesses need not wait on the sidelines. Through collective advocacy, they can accelerate effective policy. Through collaborative action, they can lower the cost of transition.

Businesses who act early shape the policy landscape of tomorrow and stay ahead of regulation, rather than being disrupted by it.



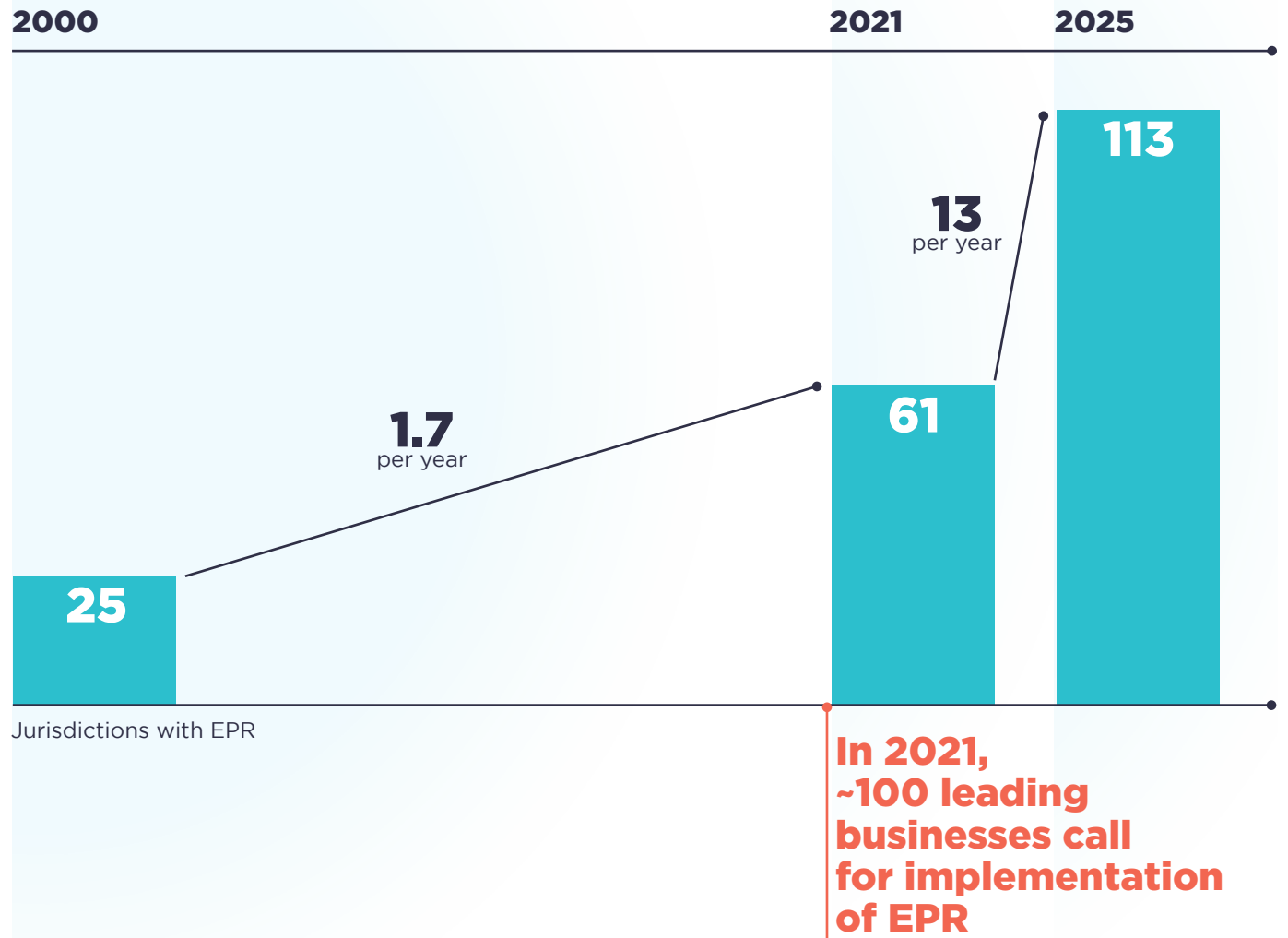
03

**NEW TYPES OF
COLLABORATION IN
THREE TARGETED
AREAS CAN ACCELERATE
EFFECTIVE POLICY
AND LOWER THE COST
OF TRANSITION**

COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY ACCELERATES EFFECTIVE POLICY

For example, the industry's support for well-designed Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) — including an explicit call for its implementation by ~100 businesses in 2021, spearheaded by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, along with work by the Consumer Goods Forum and others — has helped accelerate EPR policy development worldwide. At the global level, the Business Coalition for a Global Plastics Treaty provided confidence to governments and stakeholders, contributing to growing alignment on topics such as phase outs of problematic plastics and chemicals, product design, and EPR. While negotiations towards a legally-binding treaty have not yet concluded, they have already created broader awareness and alignment on effective policy measures. Many priority measures with broad support, such as well-designed EPR, can be advanced without waiting for the treaty. At both national and global levels, there are still significant opportunities for businesses to continue shaping and supporting ambitious legislation.

Business advocacy for EPR has accelerated its implementation



Source: expert interview

COLLABORATIVE ACTION IMPROVES THE BUSINESS CASE

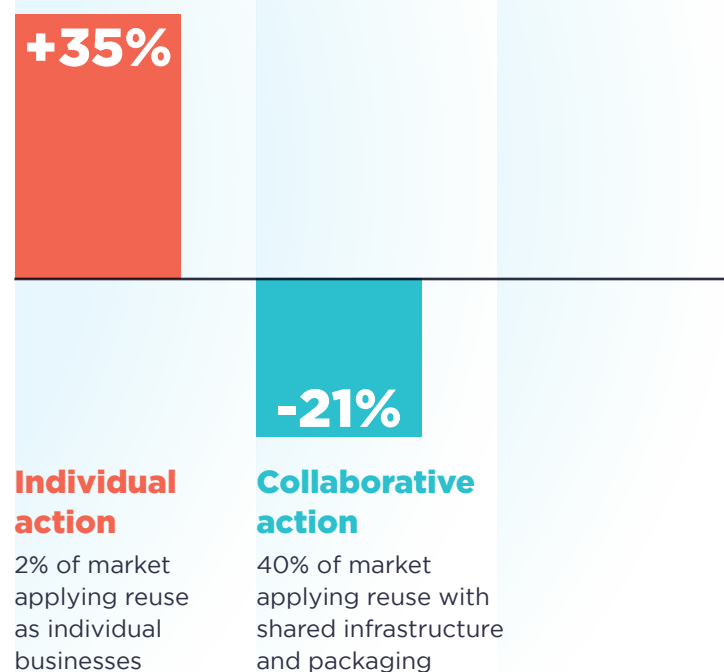
By pooling investments and demand, businesses can unlock economies of scale that strengthen commercial viability and build confidence to close policy gaps. Tackling systemic barriers isn't possible in isolation. Collaboration is often the only viable way to establish new consumer behaviours, infrastructure, or supply chains. Here, the call is not for small-scale pilots, but for larger-scale collaborations that involve a critical mass of businesses, are at a city/country scale, and have a clear route to further scaling. Crucially, these demonstrators not only prove what is possible, but also reveal where targeted policy interventions are needed to fully make the business case work.

It is vital that individual businesses continue to scale proven solutions and share their learnings.

While collaboration is needed to tackle systemic barriers, many businesses can do more on their own today. Improving design for recyclability, eliminating problematic items and chemicals, and increasing recycled content are all areas where industry leaders have already shown, in the current system, meaningful progress. Certain reuse models — such as refill at home, B2B, or reuse in closed environments — have also proven to be possible to effectively deploy by individual businesses. Continuing and accelerating action in these areas not only drives real impact, but also strengthens the credibility of businesses when advocating for broader policy and systems change.

Collaboration strengthens the business case — a reuse example

Modelled system cost of returnable packaging vs. single use for beverage bottles in France



Source: Unlocking a Reuse Revolution: Scaling Returnable Packaging. Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2023). Results shown compare total system costs (including revenues from unreturned deposits) for a single-use PET bottle versus a returnable PET bottle across two modelled scenarios.

A group of mountaineers are seen from behind, ascending a steep, snow-covered mountain slope. They are wearing dark gear with orange accents and carrying large backpacks. The terrain is rugged with patches of snow and exposed rocks. The sky is overcast with grey clouds. A large white number '04' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

04

**INDUSTRY LEADERS
BACK A SHARED 2030
AGENDA — WE CALL
ON OTHERS TO JOIN**

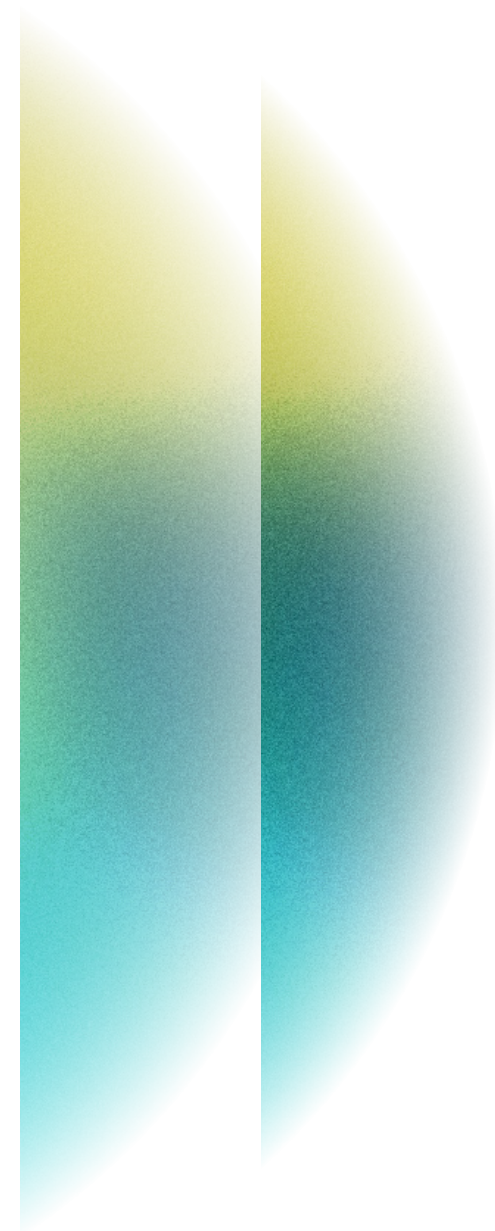
Based on the learnings and insights of a decade of work, described in the previous chapters, we present a shared, practical agenda for business to drive to 2030.

This agenda aims to accelerate the transition to a circular economy by concentrating collective industry efforts to tackle plastic waste. It turns the notion of market transformation into a practical agenda with three mutually reinforcing types of action: continued individual action, collaborative action, and collective advocacy. This action is focused on three systemic barriers identified over the last decade of work: scaling reuse, tackling flexible packaging waste, and developing collection and recycling infrastructure. This agenda offers specific priority actions for each.

This work must be combined with cross-cutting efforts to make the economics work, including by advocating for cross-cutting fiscal and economic measures, and work to ensure all plastic packaging is free of hazardous chemicals, and the health, safety, and rights of all people involved, including waste pickers, are respected.

Achieving these objectives would be a significant step towards the common goal of building a circular economy, by eliminating waste and pollution and reducing virgin material use, contributing to cleaner cities, cleaner oceans, and the creation of new jobs in, for example, the recycling sector.

This 2030 business agenda is, intentionally, not an exhaustive list of all actions required to tackle plastic waste and pollution. Mobilising large-scale collective action and advocacy demands focus. This 2030 business agenda provides that focus, setting out some of the highest-priority actions informed by a decade of mobilising the industry. Some areas have been less prominently highlighted not because they're not important but because more progress has already been achieved over the last decade, and they are therefore less of a priority in the next five years.



BRINGING IT TOGETHER: PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR BUSINESS TO TACKLE SYSTEMIC BARRIERS

Individual action

Collaborative action

Collective advocacy

Create conditions for reuse⁴ to scale



Scale 'individual' reuse models

where relevant, noting many reuse types require collaboration and/or policy, but others (e.g. refill at home) can be scaled by individual companies for relevant product types

Join at-scale demonstrators

that are multi-brand and multi-retailer, have shared reuse infrastructure/packaging, and are at a city/country scale — to learn, inform policy, and unlock financing for further scale up

Align and advocate

for effective policies that can improve the viability, feasibility, or desirability of at-scale reuse systems

Drive material innovation for flexible packaging⁵



Set company strategy

to address flexible packaging waste, considering and prioritising all levers in line with circular economy principles, and secure funding for delivery

Share R&D efforts

to reduce the cost, risk, and timeframe for bringing material innovations to market at scale, where relevant, and in line with a common vision

Align on a common vision

and clear boundary conditions for where and how alternative materials for flexible packaging are beneficial. Champion this vision and supportive policies

Demonstrate and scale collection and recycling infrastructure



Contribute to infrastructure and EPR development

Use design for recycling and recycled content

to create easily recyclable inputs for, and demand for the outputs of, the recycling system

Jointly fund global south city-scale transformations⁶

of collection and recycling infrastructure for plastic packaging, ensuring a just transition for waste pickers, unlocking co-investment from public and private finance, and demonstrating a pathway to national-scale system transformation

Advocate for effective EPR and other policies

that secures ongoing funding for collection and recycling infrastructure (including EPR), and that stimulates design for recycling and recycled content use, across the world

Deliver virgin plastic reduction⁷

through circular economy approaches

Ensure health, safety, and rights are respected

by ensuring all plastic packaging is free of hazardous chemicals, and the health, safety, and rights of all people involved, including waste pickers, are respected

LEADING BUSINESSES ARE BACKING THIS AGENDA

1,200+

organisations

from across the world have mobilised behind our common circular economy vision

700+

businesses

are also working towards the vision within local contexts, through the Plastics Pact — a network of independent initiatives led by local expert organisations

300+

businesses

and other organisations are collectively advocating for ambitious policy through the Business Coalition for a Global Plastics Treaty

Businesses representing 20% of the plastic packaging market

have (re)committed to the next phase of the Global Commitment, setting 2030 targets and publicly reporting on their progress, even as the context in which companies set public targets has become more complex.

The Global Commitment, established in collaboration with the UN Environment Programme, is the largest global voluntary effort on plastic waste and pollution, with signatories united behind a common vision.

With its first chapter ending in 2025, businesses are now recommitting to 2030. This is a powerful way for industry leaders to align on a common direction and report transparently on progress towards it.

Global Commitment signatories by value chain

At time of launch on 4 November 2025



We call on all businesses to get behind this agenda, by signing the Global Commitment and stepping up collaborative action and collective advocacy, guided by the priority actions.

Plastic waste remains an urgent, visible challenge, and the pressure to act is here to stay. Policymakers across political divides are working to address this challenge, making stronger regulation increasingly inevitable. Those businesses that act now can help shape the rules of tomorrow's market. Those who fail to act will be shaped by them. By driving this 2030 Agenda with others, businesses can turn this pressure into influence, contributing to a shared circular economy vision.

Apply here to sign up to the Global Commitment, get in touch to take part in our initiatives, or join one of the many global efforts already driving collaborative action and collective advocacy.

Leaders already signed up to the Global Commitment 2030

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The group will continue to expand during the 12-month sign-up window.



Signatories as of 4 November 2025. For the latest updates regarding signatories, please visit [our website](#).

These companies are part of a wider group of 1,200 organisations aligned behind a common circular economy vision, including SMEs, financial institutions, NGOs, and governments.

THE
GLOBAL
COMMITMENT
2030

THE ELLEN MACARTHUR FOUNDATION'S CONTRIBUTION TO ENABLING MARKET TRANSFORMATION

As the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, we remain committed to stimulating, challenging, and supporting leading businesses to drive market transformation.

We will continue to publish research, inform policymakers, and support increasingly ambitious collaborative action with our business network. We will continue to transparently report progress, and share lessons learnt from both successes and failures.

We aim to focus our efforts on the systemic barriers highlighted in this agenda, through our own projects and by supporting the work of others.

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation works with a wide range of stakeholders, including businesses, governments, waste pickers, philanthropists, NGOs, innovators, and scientists. This section focuses specifically on the Foundation's work with business.



ALIGNED INDIVIDUAL ACTION AND TRANSPARENT REPORTING

Through the Global Commitment, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation will continue to guide aligned business action, provide transparency on where progress is made and where it is lacking, and share the resulting learnings. The Foundation has designed the Global Commitment 2030 to fit an evolved context and integrate the learnings of the past years, in particular:

- It is now more explicitly embedded in a broader market transformation approach, recognising individual business action is a critical component, but not enough by itself. It is therefore complemented by a programme of collaborative action and collective advocacy to unlock systemic barriers and help signatories achieve their goals.
- It has a simplified set of targets and metrics, recognising the widespread call for simplifying non-financial reporting. For brand and retail signatories, the central target is virgin plastic reduction, as it captures the effects of most circular economy pathways (reduction, reuse, and the use of recycled content to stimulate the recycling system).
- It is focused on the areas where businesses can (up to a certain extent) drive progress individually.

COLLABORATIVE ACTION FOR REUSE, FLEXIBLES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation will focus on catalysing and supporting bold collaborative action to create the conditions for reuse to scale, drive material innovation for flexible plastic packaging, and demonstrate and scale collection and recycling infrastructure in the Global South.

These new types of collaboration will demand greater investment and long-term commitment, and not all will succeed. We will share lessons openly — both successes and setbacks. [Visit our website](#) for updates on new projects.

We will also proactively engage and coordinate with other leading organisations and initiatives to focus efforts, ensure they add up to more than the sum of the parts, and avoid duplication. An example of this coordination is our continued work with the [Plastics Pact](#), a network of independent national and regional initiatives driving collaborative action at a local level, including on these systemic barriers.

COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY FOR EFFECTIVE, HARMONISED PLASTICS POLICY

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation will continue to inform policy, both directly and through its business network. In the Business Coalition for a Global Plastics Treaty, the Foundation, together with WWF, has already brought together 300+ businesses to advocate for policy change through harmonised, legally-binding global rules. Since the negotiations toward a global treaty for plastics launched in 2022, the Business Coalition has helped build confidence and show the business case for restrictions and phase outs of problematic products and chemicals, product design, and EPR schemes. The Business Coalition has effectively elevated business calls for harmonised policy to create regulatory certainty, a critical element to direct and unlock investments from the private sector.

The Foundation will build on the progress and alignment built over the negotiating process to date, to continue to unite leading businesses advocating for effective regulatory frameworks, in the treaty and beyond.

“After a decade of action tackling plastic pollution, we know so much more about both the solutions and the blockers. This 2030 business agenda gives us a plan for implementation at pace and at scale towards the vision of a circular economy where the health, safety, and rights of people are respected, and where nature can thrive. We’re ready, and we know businesses are ready to collaborate in new ways to stimulate effective policy and lower the cost of the transition.”

Jonquil Hackenberg

CEO, Ellen MacArthur Foundation

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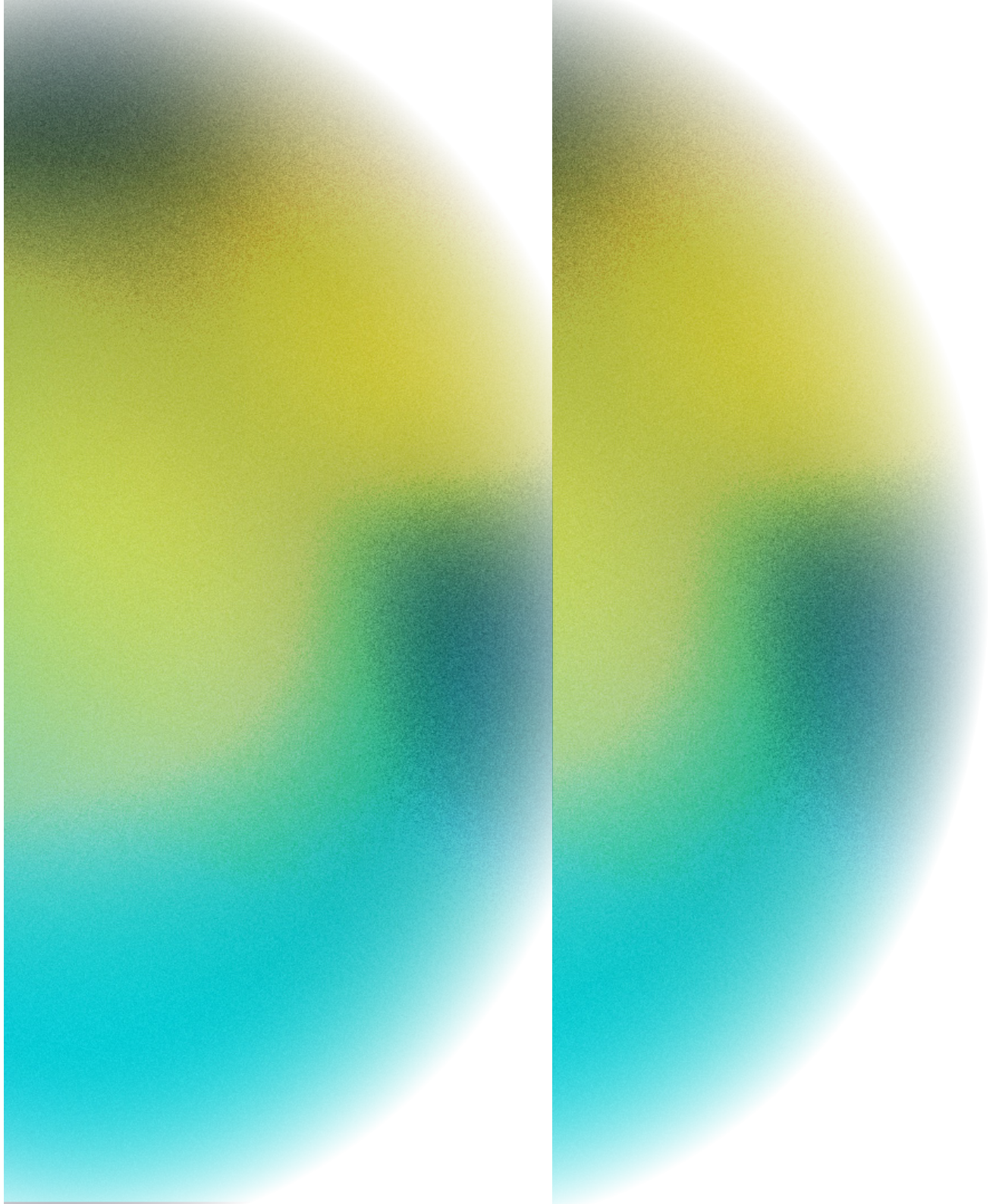
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ABOUT THE ELLEN MACARTHUR FOUNDATION

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation is an international charity that develops and promotes the circular economy in order to tackle some of the biggest challenges of our time, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, waste, and pollution. We work with our network of private- and public-sector decision makers, as well as academia, to build capacity, design and develop circular economy initiatives and solutions, and drive implementation at scale. Increasingly based on renewable energy, a circular economy is driven by design to eliminate waste and pollution, circulate products and materials, and regenerate nature, to create resilience and prosperity for business, the environment, and society.

Further information:
ellenmacarthurfoundation.org



- 1 Based on comparing the amount of fossil resources (in oil equivalent) for the production of virgin plastics (feedstock material and energy in production process) with the amount for producing recycled plastics (energy in collection, sorting, recycling processes)
- 2 To tackle flexible packaging waste and pollution, material innovation is just one of several solution pathways. It is not a silver bullet with alternative delivery models, such as reuse alternatives, and improving infrastructure also being crucial. These are represented within the other two systemic barriers.
- 3 The Pew Charitable Trust and Systemiq, [Breaking the Plastics Wave](#) (2020)
- 4 Reuse of packaging refers to delivery models in which a single package achieves multiple trips or uses. Reuse is considered here in its broadest form, including return and refill systems, both at home and on the go.
- 5 To tackle flexible packaging waste and pollution, material innovation is just one of several solution pathways. It is not a silver bullet with alternative delivery models, such as reuse alternatives, and improving infrastructure, also being crucial. These are represented within the other actions.
- 6 Effective demonstrators should be concentrated in a few countries to build strong evidence, should include all materials, be part of wider waste management systems and be designed for the local context, including with the informal waste sector.
- 7 While no single metric is perfect, virgin plastic reduction has the advantage of capturing in one metric the effects of various circular economy pathways to tackle plastic waste and pollution (reduction, reuse, and the use of recycled content to stimulate the recycling system)



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