Unesda
Soft Drinks Europe

CIRCULAR PACKAGING

OUR 2030 VISION

REDUCE. REUSE. RECYCLE.

1. INTRODUCTION

LEADING THE LOOP - EU BEVERAGE PACKAGING AIMS TO BE FULLY CIRCULAR BY 2030

Beverage packaging can be fully circular and has a central role to play in a circular economy: it has value, is recyclable, is collected and used as recycled content.

The European soft drinks industry fully supports the EU ambition of making Europe the world's first climate-neutral continent by 2050 and building a European circular economy - including packaging circularity. The objective is to accelerate the transition to a green economy and through this Circular Packaging Vision 2030 the European non-alcoholic beverage industry is demonstrating its commitment to supporting and accompanying this transition.

Packaging is a resource that should never be wasted and we are now taking numerous actions to achieve full circularity.

Our vision is about UNESDA Soft Drinks Europe leading the loop: it means being at the forefront of creating closed loops and circular thinking. Our Circular Packaging Vision 2030 highlights our commitment: we want to be a part of the solution and demonstrate that our sector is ready to make long-term investments to secure a circular economy and ensure none of our packaging ends up as litter.

In contributing to the EU Circular Economy Action Plan we intend to surpass EU targets currently set out in legislation. We will also formally table our Vision 2030 as part of the EU Code of Conduct for responsible business and marketing practices developed in cooperation with the European Commission.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

by 2025:   **by 2030:**

50% recycled content for plastic packaging

100% recyclability for all packaging

100% rPET and/or renewable PET packaging

90% collection for all packaging

INCREASED use of refillable packaging

CIRCULARITY HAS THREE EQUAL PILLARS – COLLECT, RECYCLE, REDUCE & REUSE

1. **Collect** : Striving to **achieve closed-loop collection of beverage packaging** and supporting:
   - Creation of closed-loop beverage collection and recycling systems to accelerate the achievement of our target of collecting at least 90% of all our packaging by 2030
   - Wider introduction of well-designed Deposit Return Schemes (DRS) for PET, aluminium cans and other materials (depending on the local situation) when 90% collection through existing Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) systems is not achievable

2. **Recycle** : Using **only packaging that is circular by design and boosting the uptake of rPET** to deliver our vision that across the EU:
   - By 2025:
     - Our beverage packaging (plastic, metal, glass) will be 100% recyclable
     - All our PET bottles will contain a minimum average of 50% rPET
   - By 2030:
     - Our ambition is for PET bottles to be made from 100% recycled and/or renewable material if technically and economically feasible – thereby moving away from fossil fuel sources
   - We will continue investing in innovation in recycling technologies - including enhanced recycling – to improve their efficiency and environmental performance. By combining mechanically recycled PET, enhanced recycled PET and renewable PET it is possible to reduce the carbon footprint of packaging and also deliver products in a safe and sustainable packaging.

3. **Reduce and Reuse**: **Reducing our packaging footprint and increasing the use of refillable packaging**. We will:
   - Aim to use more refillable packaging by 2030 compared with 2020
   - Study the best environmental and economic pathway to increase the use of refillable models

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Our ambition: full circularity by meeting and surpassing EU goals.

2025 2030

3. POLICY FRAMEWORK

A POLICY-FRAMEWORK THAT SUPPORTS THE JOURNEY TOWARDS FULL CIRCULARITY

The European soft drinks industry will need from EU authorities and national governments coherent and long-term actions and support to help achieve the goals of the Circular Packaging Vision 2030.

Creating conditions that allow the transition to circularity to be achieved in an environmentally-sound and cost-efficient way includes:

- Long-term perspective and legal certainty as well as protecting the EU single market
- A well-functioning secondary raw materials market that gives the soft drinks sector priority access to sufficient high quality rPET in order to meet its obligations under EU law, without compromising on safety standards and avoiding downcycling
- Increased investment in waste management and recycling infrastructure
- An EU framework enabling innovative recycling technologies
- EU minimum requirements for new DRS across Europe
- Clear definitions of recyclability that foster innovation and investment

"Our **Circular Packaging Vision 2030** demonstrates that Europe's soft drinks industry wants to continue to be a part of the **solution**. Beverage packaging is a resource that should **never be wasted**. It has value and can be collected, sorted and re-used. We are making **long-term investments** to make our packaging fully circular and support the European Commission's agenda of **accelerating the transition** towards a green economy."

Ian Ellington | **President, UNESDA**
SVP and Chief Category Officer, PepsiCo Europe

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4. Q&A

👉 **What is the share of packaging in the overall circular economy debate?**

Our industry is committed to playing its full role in transitioning to a circular economy. To give context, according to a study of the European Parliamentary Research Service on treatment of packaging waste, packaging (measured by weight) accounts for over 3% of all waste generated in the EU in 2018. Packaging is made up of paper and cardboard (41 %), plastic (19 %), glass (19 %), wood (16 %) and metal (5 %). So it is within those boundaries and with that context in mind that our industry wants to contribute to making sure that our part of waste becomes a resource by default.

👉 **What percentage of the sector's products are packaged in the different formats covered by the Vision 2030?**

PET is about 68% of the total, metal/aluminium 17%, glass 7%.

👉 **Does UNESDA have a preferred collection system?**

Beverage producers are committed to partnering with the whole supply chain to make all their packaging circular. Well-designed EPR and DRS schemes can work in parallel, but our objective is to collect at least 90% of our packaging (as is also required for plastic beverage bottles under the SUP Directive). If an EPR scheme cannot deliver on that target, then it is important to introduce a well-designed DRS. We call upon the Commission to develop minimum requirements for new DRS so to accelerate their introduction.

👉 **What are currently the collection rates of your beverage packaging?**

Currently in Europe: On average, almost 60% of all PET bottles put on the European market are collected for recycling (2019 data), 76% of glass packaging is collected for recycling (2017 data) and 76.1% of aluminium beverage cans are recycled (2018 data).

In EU law, only PET beverage bottles have a 90% collection for recycling target. Aluminium (as a general material, not just cans) has a 60% recycling target by end 2030 and glass (as a general material, not just glass bottles) has a 75% recycling target by end 2030.

👉 **What are the conditions for reaching the rPET goals in your Vision?**

PET is already amongst the most used recycled plastic materials. Using it in our bottles not only increases demand for recycled material, thereby stimulating circularity, but also decreases the carbon footprint of our packaging. But rPET needs to be available so that we can use it.

While we are confident we will reach the 50% recycled content target, in order to go beyond this target, we call upon EU institutions to take action to secure priority access to recycled food-grade PET for food grade applications, and to secure adequate and affordable supply without compromising safety standards for the food and beverage sector.

For more information:
- visit our website **https://www.unesda.eu/**
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