

# #breakfreefromplastic

Graz, October 29<sup>th</sup> 2018

Dear Minister Köstinger,

we are writing on behalf of the undersigned organisations, representing hundreds of thousands of citizens across Europe. We are part of the Rethink Plastic alliance and the #BreakFreeFromPlastic movement, comprised of over 1,300 groups and civil society organisations around the world who have come together to end plastic pollution. You have a historic opportunity to lead in halting the tide of single-use plastics.

EU citizens are calling for action on plastic pollution – over 90 % of citizens highlighted this in a Eurobarometer poll<sup>1</sup> and last year, more than 700,000 people signed a petition calling for action from the EU on plastics.

Last week, an overwhelming majority in the European Parliament adopted ambitious measures that strengthen the European Commission's proposal on single-use plastics and fishing gear.


## We are writing to urge you and your counterparts in EU governments to support ambitious measures to halt the tide of single-use plastics.

The undersigned organisations are calling on the Council of the EU to:

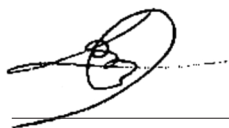
- Ensure the **scope** of the Directive remains what the Commission proposed, and the European Parliament supported, and **includes biodegradable and biobased plastics as well as plastic lined and/ composite materials**.
- **Support the items added to market restrictions** by the European Parliament, i.e. expanded polystyrene food containers and oxo-plastics, and further add to this list very lightweight carrier bags.
- Support an **EU-wide ambitious consumption reduction target** of at least 25 % by 2025 for food containers and beverage cups and lids, and allow Member States to adopt stringent measures to reduce the consumption of these items.
- Support a **strong Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme** for single-use plastics, including those that are packaging items, which include full coverage of clean-up, awareness-raising and waste management costs.
- Ensure that there are **no loopholes for packaging**, that the legal basis remains environment for the measures under this Directive, and that they supplement and are not restricted by those under the EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive.
- Support **collection and recycling targets and new EPR schemes for fishing gear**.
- Support the **90 % separate collection target for beverage bottles, the requirement to 'connect-the-cap'** and in addition the **35 % recycled content target** by 2025 proposed by the European Parliament.
- Ensure the use of **hazardous chemicals in sanitary items** is prevented.

If strong measures are adopted, this would contribute to reducing plastic pollution by more than 50 percent for the most littered single-use items, avoiding environmental damage which would otherwise cost € 22 billion by 2030, and avoid emitting 3.4 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> by 2030<sup>2</sup>. The only thing required to achieve, and indeed exceed this ambition is your and other EU Environment Ministers' support. We call you to seize the opportunity and to take the lead in tackling plastic-pollution.

Yours,



Leonore Gewessler  
Director of GLOBAL 2000



Delphine Lévi Alvarès  
European coordinator of the #BreakFreeFromPlastic movement