



Urban Agenda Platform

The global platform for sharing progress, action and knowledge on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda to achieve sustainable urban development.

BUSINESS-LED INITIATIVES

Award Scheme

Themes

Sustainable Development Goals

Others

Waste Management

Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Summary

Industry plays a crucial role in the global production and use of plastics and thereby is a key player in the effort to reduce plastic pollution. **KEY CONSIDERATIONS:** Business-led initiatives have long differentiated leaders in an industry, and can often lead to new industry standards and benchmarks that raise the bar for all competing companies in an industry.

Background and Objective

With over 300 million tonnes of plastic produced globally every year, (projected to triple by 2050) sadly only a small fraction of this plastic actually gets recycled. Most plastic only sees one single use in its lifetime - according to the New Plastics Economy, Rethinking the Future of Plastics & Catalysing Action - this not only wastes 95% of its material value but also severely worsens pollution, affecting ecosystems, wildlife and human health. Nearly half of all plastic products ever produced were in fact produced after the year 2000. This issue is only decades old, yet over 75% of all plastic ever produced is already wasted. As businesses across the globe become more aware of the essential role they play in the global production and use of plastic, they must also be aware of their role in preventing this plastic from leaking into the environment. Leading businesses must come together to establish new benchmarks on a voluntary basis while leaning on the support of governments, NGOs and all relevant stakeholders through this essential transition.

Actions and Implementation

Tools Various measurement tools, guidelines and programs are available for businesses to discover their plastic footprint, implement circular business models and reimagine the way they use plastics. These initiatives are aimed at reducing plastic packaging, increasing the use of recycled and recyclable materials, and investing in waste recovery and recycling infrastructure. Circulytics® Circulytics is a comprehensive measurement tool for businesses, regardless of industry, complexity, and size. It supports a company's transition toward the circular economy by helping design-out waste and pollution and keep-in products and materials for longer. Circulytics reveals the extent to which a company has or can achieve circularity across its entire operations by: Measuring a company's entire circularity, not just products and material flows Supporting decision making and strategic development for circular economy adoption Demonstrating strengths and highlighting areas for improvement Providing optional transparency to investors and customers about a company's circular economy adoption Delivering clarity about circular economy performance and opening up new opportunities to generate brand value with key stakeholders The Circulytics indicators have been developed by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation in collaboration with 13 Strategic Partners and member companies, and have been tested by over 30 companies during 2019. For more information, please visit:

<https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/resources/apply/circulytics-measuring-circularity> Guidelines for Leadership in Corporate Plastic Accounting The Guidelines for Leadership in Corporate Plastic Accounting are being developed jointly by the 3R Initiative, EA, South Pole, and Quantis. The Guidelines allow businesses to assess their plastic footprint and identify actions to reduce plastic within their value chain (e.g. avoiding plastic or replacing it where environmentally sensible). Participating businesses report transparently and frequently on their efforts in order to justify making leadership claims such as "Net Zero Leakage" or "Net Circular Plastic". See <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Guidelines-for-Leadership-in-Corporate-Plastic-Accounting-DRAFT-7-Oct-2020.pdf> for more information. Multi-stakeholder Programs Collaboration between government and industry proves to be effective in the development of initiatives that lead toward the implementation of sustainable, plastic-free business practices. New Plastics Economy The New Plastics Economy is an initiative fuelled by more than 1,000 organisations united behind the common vision of a circular economy for plastic. The vision has six key points: Elimination of problematic or unnecessary plastic packaging through redesign, innovation, and new delivery models Reuse models applied where relevant, reducing the need for single-use packaging All plastic packaging is 100% reusable, recyclable, or compostable All plastic packaging is reused, recycled, or composted in practice The use of plastic is fully decoupled from the consumption of finite resources All plastic packaging is free of hazardous chemicals, and the health, safety, and rights of all people involved are respected. Run in collaboration with a broad group of companies, cities, philanthropists, policymakers, academics, NGOs, and citizens, the initiative has brought together key stakeholders to rethink and redesign the future of plastics, starting with packaging. See <https://www.newplasticseconomy.org/> for more information. European Plastics Pact The European Plastics Pact aims to shift toward the reuse and recycling of single-use plastic products and packaging by bringing governments and businesses from across the whole value chain together. The Pact works toward four goals aimed at: design, responsible use, recycling



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capacity and the use of recycled content. The Pact offers a unique platform to exchange ideas, display good practices and discuss challenges, needed to build a new circular default for all to follow. See <https://europeanplasticspact.org/> for more information. Milano Plastic Free The Milano Plastic Free network brings together various Milanese stakeholders to support the reduction of consumer plastic in Milan. These include: Confcommercio, Confesercenti and Worldrise, an environmental association that, with its “No Plastic More Fun” campaign, works to involve entertainment venues and public establishments in a mission to protect the marine environment from plastic. The network also includes various neighbourhood associations that are spreading awareness to businesses and citizens of the environmental impact of plastic and the importance of waste reduction in Milan’s public spaces. See <https://www.plasticfree.milano.it/> for more information. Operation Clean Sweep Operation Clean Sweep is a product stewardship program of the American Chemistry Council’s Plastics Division and Plastics Industry Association. The campaign’s goal is “to help every plastic resin handling operation implement good housekeeping and pellet, flake, and powder containment practises to work towards achieving zero pellet, flake, and powder loss.” Operation Clean Sweep has partnered with businesses around the world to keep plastic pellets, flakes, and powder are out of the natural environment, including waterways and oceans. See <https://www.opcleansweep.org/> for more information. Plastic ACTION (PACT) Started by WWF-Singapore, Plastic ACTION (PACT) is a business initiative that aims to eliminate plastic pollution in nature and move towards a circular economy on plastics. It recognises the integral role that businesses play to solve the issues of unnecessary use of plastics and plastic pollution. PACT provides businesses with guidance, life cycle assessments, resources and best practices, enabling them to make science-based decisions to reduce their plastic footprint. PACT’s on boarded companies fall under 5 sectors: e-commerce, food and beverage, hospitality, manufacturing and retail property management. Businesses can join via two main approaches – sectorial collaboration and individual company commitments. Sectorial Collaboration: through invitations to PACT roundtables, companies can participate in peer discussions and identify easily attainable goals within the industry. These roundtables bring entire industries together in agreement on a focused action plan to reduce plastics use and increase efficiency on resource management. Sectorial collaboration also involves sectorial pledges, involving removal of straws, plastic bag charges and opting out of cutlery for food deliveries. Individual Company Commitments: Under PACT, businesses across various industries are committed to drastically reducing plastic usage and production, increasing their collection of plastics, and switching to alternative materials. PACT works with businesses to set specific goals and deadlines that they can work toward achieving and provides iterative feedback to businesses on their individual progress and challenges.

Outcomes and Impacts

PACT Case Study Examples: Accor Group Following the WWF PACT signature in early 2019, all Accor hotels have committed to ban plastic straws and provide alternative solutions. The group is now also tackling other amenities such as plastic stirrers and cotton buds to be eradicated from all properties by 2020 and to progressively replace other disposable plastics (such as plastic bottles, plastic laundry bags, disposable plastic glasses, individually plastic packaged items, etc.) with more ecological options. Annam As supporters of WWF’s PACT and No Plastic Straws Pledge, Annam is committed to eliminate single-use plastics in its restaurants. Initiatives in its restaurants include discouraging the use of straws or otherwise offering bio-degradable ones made of polylactide from renewable biomass, as well as switching out the table-side plastic sauce bottles to glass bottles. Kraftwich A brand under the Commonwealth Capital group, Kraftwich has signed the WWF PACT committing to being single-use plastics free by 2030. Some of the first steps taken include eliminating plastic straws, charging for plastic bags and offering a discount for using reusable coffee cups. Lo & Behold Group Upon signing the WWF PACT, the Lo & Behold hospitality company will do away with plastic straws across all venues, substituting the majority of delivery and takeaway packaging with eco-friendly, recyclable and biodegradable options, as well as sourcing more sustainably packaged and produced products such as beverages in the glass over plastic bottles. See <https://plastic-action.asia/> for more information.