



Brussels, 17 January 2023

## Waste Shipment Regulation – Removing EU waste entries will negatively impact the EU plastics recycling industry

We, the undersigned industry associations, representing the plastic recycling, waste management, and manufacturing value chains, are writing to you concerning the ENVI report on the Revision of the Waste Shipment Regulation (WSR)<sup>1</sup>, scheduled to be voted in Plenary on January 17<sup>th</sup> 2023.

### Amendments 5, 135 and 139

First, the proposal to remove the references to the EU waste entries EU3011 and EU48 in Amendments 135 and 139 and the related Amendment 5 which deletes the EU notification under Art 11 of the Basel Convention would have serious negative consequences on the EU plastics recycling industry. These entries only apply to intra-EU shipments as agreed by the EU Council in 2019 based on the following justification: *“[to align the Basel Convention new codes to the intra-EU shipments] could have undesired and problematic effects on intra-EU and intra-EEA shipments of plastic waste destined for recycling, as it would subject them to new notification procedures. These shipments are already subject to environmental protection requirements in Union legislation on waste and the introduction of new administrative procedures could make plastic recycling in the EU more complicated and costly while bringing only limited benefits from an environment perspective.”*<sup>2</sup>

Improving and harmonising waste management across the EU while maximising the recycling capacity of the EU Member States (MS) and ensuring that waste is treated according to the best environmental option, should be key drivers of the WSR revision. Waste entries EU3011 and EU48 were introduced in the WSR to take into account two EU particularities: the Single Market and the cross-border nature of EU waste management which addresses the varying levels of recycling capacities and infrastructure between EU MS.

Removing references to the EU waste entries would result in plastic wastes such as PVC waste, for which there is an established recycling capacity at the EU level but not uniformly distributed, would no longer be classified under ‘green-listed waste’ in Annex III and thereby, shipments of plastic waste including PVC waste within the EU MS would be subject to the prior-informed consent procedure (PIC). The administrative burden, excessive costs for players in the waste management industry, and the costs for competent authorities to enforce and monitor such a system will likely result in suboptimal treatment of waste, as waste always follows the most economical route. For instance, if there is a specific type of plastics waste for which a specific recycling facility is located just across a country border requiring notification, and a cement kiln on the other side of the country for which no notification is required, the easiest solution may become the shipment of the plastics waste to the cement kiln instead of to the recycling facility, leading to undesirable and avoidable emissions to the environment. In some countries the waste could even end up in landfill.

### Amendment 32

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<sup>1</sup> [OJ L 190, 12.7.2006, p. 1–98.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [COM/2019/11 final.](#)



Second, the proposal to amend Article 4 paragraph 2 (Amendment 32) to include shipments of waste containing substances listed in Annex IV of the POPs Regulation to become subject to the PIC procedure, will significantly impact the EU plastic recycling industry. The POPs Regulation Annex IV defines substances' thresholds above which a waste will be considered a POP waste and thus, will need to follow a specific waste management procedure whereby the substances are separated from the waste, to be sent for disposal. Waste containing POPs Annex IV substances below the thresholds are not considered as POP waste, and therefore follow the usual waste management procedure. Introducing a requirement to subject to the PIC procedure all (plastic) waste containing a substance listed in Annex IV without mentioning the relevant thresholds is too strict. It also contradicts with Annex IV which is meant to differentiate between waste and POP waste, by applying the POP waste rules to non-POP waste. While understanding the desire to control the shipments of POP waste, we are strongly against this amendment as it is formulated.

Considering the reasons listed above, Amendments 5, 32, 135 and 139 clearly hinder the goal of the WSR revision to facilitate intra-EU shipments of waste destined for recycling. In fact, these amendments will subject an increased amount of plastics waste to the PIC procedure and thereby generate an undue administrative burden associated with this procedure for plastics waste that should not be placed under this regime. They are contrary to the objectives of the EU Green Deal and hinder circularity of plastics applications.

With the ENVI report already banning exports of plastics waste to non-OECD countries and requiring a gradual phasing out of the exports of plastics waste to OECD countries in four years, it is imperative to promote intra-EU shipments of plastics waste destined for recycling, to ensure that such waste is treated following the highest environmental standards while being in line with the objectives of the EU Green Deal and new Circular Economy Action Plan.

**In conclusion, the undersigned associations call for maintaining the application of the EU waste entries, and therefore call on the EP to vote against the abovementioned amendments during the voting session on the WSR in the next Plenary.**

Your sincerely,

#### **ABOUT PLASTICS RECYCLERS EUROPE**

Plastics Recyclers Europe is an organization representing the voice of the European plastics recyclers who reprocess plastic waste into high quality material destined for production of new articles. Recyclers are important facilitators of the circularity of plastics and the transition towards the circular economy.

Plastics recycling in Europe is a rapidly growing sector representing over €7.7 billion in turnover, 9.6 million tonnes of installed recycling capacity, more than 650 recycling facilities, and over 20.000 employees.

#### **EPPA**

*The European Trade Association of PVC Window System Suppliers EPPA represents the manufacturers of PVC window systems and related building products in Europe. About 25,000 employees process about 1, 4 million tons of PVC creating a turnover of €4 billion with profile systems and building products. Based in Brussels, EPPA provides a common platform for bundling national activities in the fields of PVC window technology, recycling, environment and public affairs.*

#### **EURIC**



*EuRIC represents the recycling industry at a European level. Gathering the vast majority of national recycling federations from EU/EEA Member States, the Confederation represents about 5,500+ recycling companies – from market leaders to SMEs – generating an aggregated annual turnover of about 95 billion € by treating various waste streams such as household or industrial & commercial waste including ferrous and non-ferrous metals, end-of-life vehicles (ELVs), electronic waste (WEEE), packaging (paper and plastics), end-of-life tyres or textiles.*

### **PlasticsEurope**

*Plastics Europe is the pan-European association of plastics manufacturers with offices across Europe. For over 100 years, science and innovation has been the DNA that cuts across our industry. With close to 100 members producing over 90% of all polymers across Europe, we are the catalyst for the industry with a responsibility to openly engage with stakeholders and deliver solutions which are safe, circular and sustainable. We are committed to implementing long-lasting positive change.*

### **About VinylPlus®**

*VinylPlus is the European PVC industry's commitment to sustainable development. Through VinylPlus, the European PVC industry is creating a long-term sustainability framework for the entire PVC value chain, improving PVC products' sustainability and circularity and their contribution to a sustainable society. It covers the EU-27, the UK, Norway and Switzerland. VinylPlus represents around 200 companies of PVC resin and additives producers and converters and coordinates a network of around 150 recyclers. Since 2000, VinylPlus has invested more than €120 million in sustainability in Europe.*

### **EuPC**

*EuPC is the leading EU-level Trade Association, based in Brussels, representing European Plastics Converters. EuPC now totals about 51 European Plastics Converting national and European industry associations, it represents close to 50,000 companies, producing over 45 million tonnes of plastic products every year. The European plastics industry makes a significant contribution to the welfare in Europe by enabling innovation, creating quality of life for citizens, and facilitating resource efficiency and climate protection. More than 1.6 million people are working in about 50,000 companies (mainly small and medium-sized companies in the converting sector) to create a turnover in excess of 280 billion € per year.*

### **About ERFMI**

*ERFMI, the European Resilient Flooring Manufacturers' Institute, represents 17 manufacturers of resilient flooring in Europe. ERFMI supports the preparation of international standards and specifications and works with its members to further the development of a circular economy for floorcoverings. Our members' products are used in both commercial and domestic applications and are made of PVC, rubber, linoleum, cork and as well as a range of other polymeric materials. Our members in total employ more than 11,000 people across Europe and place more than 360 million m<sup>2</sup> of resilient floor covering per year on the market in geographical Europe.*

*ERFMI is part of the European Floor Coverings Association, the umbrella association dealing with common topics concerning resilient, laminate, textile and multilayer modular floor coverings in Europe. As a European association representing the European resilient floor coverings industry, ERFMI has in depth technical, practical and scientific knowledge of the PVC flooring industry in the EU. Please see <https://erfmi.com/> for further details.*