

Press Release

Brussels, 26 October 2023

Press Contact

Plastics Europe

Camelia Vasile

Media Relations Manager

Phone: +32 2 792 30 21

camelia.vasile@plasticseurope.org

Plastics manufacturers unite around a common vision to redesign the European plastics system.

- **Circular and net zero emissions ‘Plastics Transition’ roadmap highlights urgent need for policy framework that stimulates circular markets and investments.**
- **Plastics Europe encourages value chain to challenge roadmap thinking and identify areas for greater collaboration and calls on the European Commission for “Clean Transition Dialogue” with the plastics industry.**

European plastics manufacturers have agreed a ‘Plastics Transition’ roadmap to accelerate the transition to make plastics circular, drive lifecycle emissions to net zero, and foster the sustainable use of plastics.

Plastics Europe and its members share societal concerns about the European plastics system’s contribution to climate change and the challenge of plastics waste, and the need to foster the sustainable use of plastics. Plastics remain irreplaceable for many applications and have a vital role to play in enabling the sustainability transitions and supporting the competitiveness of many sectors in Europe. Our vision is to create a sustainable plastics system that continues to meet consumer and societal demands, whilst supporting the transitions of many downstream industries, and remains a strategic asset for the European economy.

Virginia Janssens, Managing Director of Plastics Europe, said: *“For the first time our industry is united around a hugely ambitious but realistic plan to redesign the European plastics system - the ‘Plastics Transition’ roadmap. It will be our North Star for the years to come and reflects a profound cultural shift that has taken place in our industry.”*

The roadmap establishes a pathway to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the overall plastics system by 28% by 2030 and towards net-zero by 2050. In parallel, it predicts the gradual substitution of fossil-based plastics, and that circular plastics could meet 25% of European demand in 2030 and 65% by 2050. Cumulated additional investments and operational costs to reach these ambitions are projected to be €235 billion.

It identifies key levers and enablers, and details immediate, short, and medium-term milestones and actions for plastics manufacturers. Whilst acknowledging that our industry must do more to deliver

faster systemic change, the roadmap highlights that circularity intrinsically requires a whole value chain approach and includes recommended actions for policymakers and value chain stakeholders, between now and 2030.

Virginia Janssens, Managing Director of Plastics Europe, said: *“To be successful, critical action, real collaboration and explicit political will is needed. Decisions taken in the next few years will determine whether and how quickly we can fulfil the ambitions set-out in the roadmap. We urgently need an enabling policy and regulatory framework that stimulates circular markets and industry investments in Europe, rather than hinders the industry’s transition. The window of opportunity to make these accountable decisions is rapidly closing.”*

The roadmap underlines the need to establish a European waste management system fit for a net-zero emissions and circular economy; develop minimum circular plastic content targets for key plastics applications to create a market pull for circular plastics; and unlock industry investments in, for example, much needed chemical recycling infrastructure. Policymakers must also ensure the European plastics system remains internationally competitive during the transition.

Marco ten Bruggencate, President of Plastics Europe, and Dow EMEA Commercial Vice President Packaging and Specialty Plastics said: *“We are excited about the opportunity the Green Deal provides to create a thriving and competitive European plastics industry that allows us to increase investment and innovation in circularity and decarbonisation. However, to enable the transition we will need measures to safeguard the competitiveness of our industry if we are to prevent industrial activity and investments migrating out of Europe to other regions, and to avoid becoming increasingly dependent on imports of plastics which do not necessarily meet EU sustainability standards.”*

Plastics Europe believes the roadmap will make a very important contribution to informing and promoting dialogue and collaboration with policy makers and our value chain. It is a dynamic process which means the document will be progressively updated based on new insights and changes to our industry environment, the policy framework and input from our value chain.

Rob Ingram, Plastics Europe Steering Board Roadmap Task Force Lead and CEO, INEOS Olefins & Polymers Europe said: *“The wider European plastics system is too big, complex, and interconnected for any part of it to successfully deliver a circular and net zero system alone. We need to find better ways of listening, talking and deepening our collaboration. The roadmap should be viewed as an invitation to challenge our thinking and identify the areas where we can join forces and progress faster together. To promote this collaboration Plastics Europe is calling on the European Commission to develop a Clean Transition Dialogue for the European plastics system.”*

- End -

More info about the ‘Plastics Transition’ net zero and circularity roadmap:

Please find a link to the ‘Plastics Transition’ content hub here [The Plastics Transition • Plastics Europe](#)

The ‘Plastics Transition’ roadmap provides a framework, milestones for 2030, and indicators to monitor progress, identify bottlenecks and find solutions to keep moving forward.

Based on aggregated results from a survey of Plastics Europe’s members, the industry’s progress against these indicators for circularity and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions will be assessed and transparently reported to monitor progress, alongside any identified bottlenecks or accelerators, every two years.

The roadmap is a response to an independent report called ‘ReShaping Plastics: Pathways to a Circular, Climate Neutral Plastics System in Europe’, that was commissioned by Plastics Europe in 2021. It established an evidence base for different potential pathways towards net zero and circularity goals by 2050.

In her State of the Union address on October 10, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen talked about the need to support European industry through the transition. She stated that the Commission was looking at the risks and needs of each ecosystem in this transition and would need to develop an approach for each industrial ecosystem. As part of this process the Commission will be holding a series of “Clean Transition Dialogues” with industry, the core aim of which is to support every sector in building its business model for the decarbonisation of industry.

Plastics Europe calls on the European Commission to urgently initiate a Clean Transition Dialogue with the plastics industry which looks at the enablers, investments and roadblocks to reaching a circular, net zero and sustainable plastics system in Europe, recognising the plastics industry’s strategic role in achieving Europe’s green transition goals.

Notes for Editors

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.