

## EUROPEN 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary- Closing remarks

Virginia Janssens, EUROPEN Managing Director

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Thank you, Alison. Thank you to our esteemed panelists for sharing their interesting perspectives as individual companies and supply chain partners. (Also, for quality questions from an attentive and informed audience)

I have to say it is great to see so many familiar faces, colleagues, friends, partners in the packaging value chain for our anniversary. We have come a **long way** together!

The CEP has not been a walk in the park for any of us. Nor will its implementation be. It is complex to ensure a right balance between its environmental and growth objectives, and creating a level playing field via a stable and clear policy framework in which public and private stakeholders can work, compete, incentivize, innovate, invest to achieve legal and corporate targets and objectives. A special thanks to the resilient policy-makers in the audience for their hard work on a complex file.

But it ain't over yet. More legislative proposals are coming our way, with the first one due end of May on single use plastics, which will require all of our very close attention. We will rely on you, the regulators, for clarity on the impact of all proposed measures and how they will fit together.

Keeping it all together going in one direction with harmonized, clear and fair incentives is a challenging task. We have various policy initiatives, at EU, national and international level. We also have the transposition of the CEP into national laws in a hopefully harmonised manner. It will be industry's job to translate these policies into company strategies which will drive new business models, supply chains, products, infrastructure, technologies and packaging design among many other things. We heard some of the related corporate commitments from our panelists and you can find more on our website.

As we experience with the voluntary commitments, we depend on other stakeholders to meet our common goals towards a Circular Economy. A popular concept used in this context is a **multi-stakeholder approach**, which should not be taken for granted. It means a willingness to see, understand and act upon the bigger picture beyond a company or organisation's sole interests. It means coordinated action across the value chain to find joint solutions for all packaging and packaging waste. It means a willingness to work together and identify pre-competitive elements in a highly competitive industry/ environment. This is what EUROPEN and its members are doing and are celebrating today. I never take this for granted.

Constant dialogue and effective understanding is challenging and takes time, which does not always fit the fast-paced environment we work in. We cannot afford short cuts or simplistic answers to complex issues. We rely and depend on other stakeholders to take a similar careful, systemic and responsible approach.

Our supply chain is translating policies into action, despite fierce competition, despite or in view of reputational risks or public perception, adapting to constant societal changes as Alison pointed out, but also adapting to regulatory and political changes as we experience first-hand. That is our working reality whilst moving towards a more sustainable environment and economy.

EUROPEN is certainly committed to packaging innovation for a circular economy and motivated to remain open, transparent, constructive, working with the membership, with policy-makers, with all of you, aiming for a societal win-win, fast forward now and into the next 25 years.

But for now, I suggest we move to the first floor and start the more festive part of our anniversary and have a drink. Thank you.