

PRESS RELEASE**Circular Economy: European Parliament urged to support strengthened EU legal framework for Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging**

Brussels, 23 April 2015 – In the context of the European Parliament’s forthcoming report on the Circular Economy, EUROPEN called today for a clearer EU legal framework for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging at a European Parliament (EP) event.

The European packaging supply chain made a strong plea for a clearer EU legal framework for EPR during an event organised by the EP Intergroup on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development on “*Circular Economy and Packaging: The role of EPR*” chaired by Sirpa Pietikäinen MEP, Rapporteur on “*Resource Efficiency: Moving towards a Circular Economy*”.

MEPs acknowledged that EPR is instrumental for a Circular Economy because it facilitates the provision of secondary raw materials for an environmentally and economically viable Circular Economy. There was a high degree of consensus among stakeholders (industry, municipalities and green NGO representatives), who all stressed the need for a clear definition of EPR and binding EPR minimum performance requirements in the Waste Framework Directive (WFD) and Packaging & Packaging Waste Directive (PPWD). EUROPEN also called on EU policymakers to develop EU guidance on the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in EPR implementation, so to increase its cost-effectiveness, resulting in higher and more quality materials for re-use in the economy.

Speaking at the event, Martin Reynolds from Crown Europe and EUROPEN Chairman stated, “*We are delighted that so many EU policymakers actively participated in the debate today. We hope they will give serious consideration to EUROPEN’s policy recommendations for EPR for packaging, which receives broad stakeholder support beyond industry. The packaging supply chain remains fully committed to a Circular Economy for used packaging that facilitates sustainable and efficient resource use from a life-cycle perspective. To accelerate our journey we will need to work together to make sure that the EU legal framework effectively addresses current market failures and regulatory gaps related to EPR.*”

Simon Webb from Procter & Gamble added that “*The packaging supply chain has made significant progress in packaging waste management. By 2012, EU-wide rates for packaging recycling reached 65% up from 55% in 2005. Over the past decade we have also effectively decoupled the volume of packaging placed on the market from economic growth. But to do better still we need a clear and predictable EU legal framework including harmonized EU rules on aspects such as net cost to ensure better EPR implementation in the Member States that use EPR. Just as importantly, we also need to ensure the continued free circulation of packaged goods within the internal market and avoid divergent or even conflicting rules in the 28 member states.*”

Dana Mosora from Dow declared that “*Innovations on the raw materials side can contribute to the collection and sorting of used packaging, and how recyclers turn these new raw materials into secondary raw materials. We want to be able to roll out these innovations across Europe, facilitating the transition to a Circular Economy. To do that, binding EU-wide minimum performance requirements are needed that level the playing field for different EPR scheme models, increase transparency about the types of packaging material collected, material flows, cost, tendering procedures and geographic scope, increase accountability and ensure better enforcement.*”

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Notes for Editors:

About EUROOPEN

EUROOPEN -- the European Organization for Packaging and the Environment -- is an EU industry association in Brussels presenting the opinion of the packaging supply chain in Europe, without favouring any specific material or system. EUROOPEN members are comprised of multinational corporate companies spanning the packaging value chain (raw material producers, converters and brand owners) plus national packaging organizations all committed to continuously improving the environmental performances of packaged products, in collaboration with their suppliers and customers. www.europen-packaging.eu

EUROOPEN's policy recommendations for a competitive, resource-efficient and growth-oriented Circular Economy can be downloaded at: <http://www.europen-packaging.eu/news/news/82-europen-policy-recommendations-for-the-eus-circular-economy-package-.html>

EUROOPEN's Factsheet on Extended Producer Responsibility for used packaging can be downloaded at: <http://www.europen-packaging.eu/news/news/80-factsheet-on-extended-producer-responsibility-epr-for-used-packaging.html>

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