EU Circular Economy Package

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Contributors

Name	Organisation
Francesca Poggiali	GS1 Public Policy Director for Europe

Log of Changes

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1   Background

The European Commission put forward an initial circular economy package in July 2014 that was withdrawn in February 2015, in order to make way for new proposals.

On 2 December 2015, the European Commission presented its new Circular Economy Package containing a communication (*Action Plan* for the circular economy, together with a list of measures in *Annex*) and four legislative proposals on EU waste policy, accompanied by two Staff Working Documents on waste management and on an implementation plan for the proposal.

The Action Plan for the circular economy aimed to 'close the loop' by complementing the measures contained in the legislative proposals and to contribute to meeting the *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals* adopted in 2015, in particular Goal 12 on sustainable consumption and production. The action plan proposed measures in several priority areas: plastics, food waste, critical raw materials, construction and demolition, biomass and bio-based products, in order to establish a concrete and ambitious programme of action, with measures covering the whole cycle - from production and consumption to waste management and the market for secondary raw materials.

The **Circular Economy Action Plan** is now **mostly completed**, with the Commission having finished its part of the work. Its *54 actions* have been delivered, even if the work on some of them continues beyond 2019.

2   Recent developments in the European Parliament and the Council

The following files have been adopted in the European Parliament and are now pending Council approval:

- On March 27, the European Parliament Plenary Session met in Strasbourg to discuss the proposal on making available on the market of CE marked fertilising products, which was prepared by rapporteur Mihai Turcanu (EPP, RO). The fourth trailagoue was finalised under the Austrian Presidency last year. Following the discussion, the file was adopted in the Plenary. The text adopted is available *here*.

- On March 27, the European Parliament Plenary held a debate on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the **reduction of the impact of certain**

plastic products on the environment. There was agreement amongst the MEPs on the importance and urgency of the measures under consideration. For a summary of the debate, please read below. The same day, the Plenary held a vote on the [provisional agreement,](#) which was adopted with 560 votes in favour and 35 votes against. The file is now pending a final endorsement in the Council.

The following files are pending interinstitutional negotiations within the new legislative framework:

- On March 27, the European Parliament Plenary session met for a debate on the **quality of water intended for human consumption**. It will be up to the next Parliament to discuss the initiative with the Council, and trialogues are expected to start under the Finnish Presidency. On March 28, the Plenary session [adopted](#) the recast file. On April 12, the European Parliament ENVI Committee Press has informed that the new rapporteur for the Drinking Water Directive is Christophe Hansen (EPP, LU), who is likely going to be re-elected as an MEP. He replaced Michel Dantin (EPP, FR) who is retiring.

- On February 12, the EP Plenary held a debate on the [report](#) on **minimum requirements for water reuse**, which was prepared by rapporteur Simona Bonafe (S&D, IT). She is now a candidate for the elections with a good chance of getting re- elected. The same day, the report was adopted by the Plenary. The file is now being considered as a Presidency compromise text, and intensive discussions are going at the Working Party level until June 26, when the Environment Council is expected to either take note of the progress report or adopt a general approach. Hence, the trialogues will be under the next European Parliament.

- The March 14, , the European Parliament plenary held a debate on the Parliament's Annual strategic report on the implementation and **delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals** prepared by Eleni Theocharous (EPP, CY) and Francesc Gambús (EPP, ES). The rapporteurs highlighted the importance of having SDGs integrated in all EU policies. All the MEPs that took the floor as well as Commissioner Timmermans strongly welcomed the report and underlined that it is important to achieve the SDGs in Europe, through multilevel governance and the participation of the EU institutions and the member states. The same day, the European Parliament adopted the report.

3   Going forward

On 4 March 2019, the European Commision adopted a comprehensive *report* on the implementation of the Circular Economy Action Plan. The report presents the main achievements under the Action Plan and sketches out future challenges to shaping our economy and paving the way towards a climate-neutral, circular economy where pressure on natural and freshwater resources as well as ecosystems is minimised.

Some open challenges that the future Commission will have to focus on are:

- Circularity in new areas and sectors
- Life-cycle assessments of products becoming a norm
- Broadening the eco-design framework
- 2020 recycling targets
- Research, innovation and investment in the priority sectors
- Implementing the updated Bioeconomy Strategy
- Supporting new circular business models
- Artificial intelligence and digitalization

4   Stakeholder position on Circular economy package

Stakeholders voiced diverging views on the Circular economy package. Please find below positions of the political groups and other relevant stakeholders on the Circular Economy Package.

Political groups on Circular economy package

- *EPP*

- *S&D*

- *ECR*

- *ALDE*

- *GUE/NGL*

- *The Greens/EFA*

Business Associations, waste sector, NGOs, etc.

- *EUROPEN*

- *EPURE*

- *EPSU*

- *FIEC*

- *EUROCITIES*

- *EUROFER*

- *FEAD*

- *AmCham EU*

- *EEB*

- *SMEunited*

- *ChemSec*

- *CEPI*

- *APPLiA*

- *CEWEP*

- *EBA*