

# Five ways European policymakers can accelerate the transition to a true circular economy

*The critical connection between public policy, advanced technologies, and recycling capacity*

Eastman believes that sustainable solutions to plastic waste are in reach, but we can't solve the global plastic waste problem alone. That's why we're connecting with customers, NGOs, policymakers, the waste management industry, and others to work toward a more sustainable future. Only together can we create innovative ways to preserve the world's limited natural resources by transforming plastic waste into new materials.

To accelerate advanced recycling solutions and help overcome hurdles, we need help and support from European policymakers to ensure a harmonized legislative landscape that aids the transition to a true circular economy and contributes to achieving the ambitious goals of the European Green Deal as well as the Circular Economy Action Plan. At Eastman, we believe the following are critical to enable a truly circular economy in Europe:

## 1 Acceptance of chemical recycling to effectively deal with the plastic waste crisis

It is essential that the definition of recycling remains "technology neutral" at the EU level.

We need all recycling technologies (mechanical and chemical) to ensure not only that the amount of plastic waste that is incinerated or ends up in landfills or as litter gets reduced but also as much waste material as possible is recovered and reprocessed into new materials or products (excluding material to fuel or energy that is not consistent with the move toward reliance on green energy). To avoid hampering of the free movement of goods within the internal market, it is important that all definitions of recycling are harmonized at the EU level.

## 2 Securing a constant flow of high-quality secondary raw materials; sufficient feedstock

In addition to improved infrastructure to increase collection, sorting, and processing so that waste in Europe can be recycled in a sustainable and economically viable way and to allow existing and new recycling technologies to scale up, it is essential that member states take a cooperative role when dealing with waste management, eliminating waste shipment barriers in the EU as well as to OECD countries when intended for recycling in an environmentally sound manner.

## 3 All "plastic waste" should be recycled and calculated toward the recycled content targets

Incorporating broader streams of plastic waste increases the efficiency and productivity of recycling programs and increases market demand for sustainable solutions, which will build a more robust recycling infrastructure quicker.

## 4 Chain-of-custody system to calculate recycled content

Mass balance is a chain-of-custody system that is essential to accelerate the transition to a circular economy. It enables innovative recycling of materials today with the manufacturing infrastructure we have today without the economic and environmental impact that would accompany the building of new assets.

## 5 Transparency

Eastman strives to ensure that we manufacture products that are safe for our employees to handle and for our customers to use. We support the European Commission's work on transparency and the idea of creating a digital product passport. However, to avoid any additional burden (like duplication of information requirements or different reporting mechanisms) on companies, interoperability with existing databases or information already present online will be crucial. It is also key that the confidentiality of certain data be protected and secured.

**We can't solve this issue alone. Working together, we can:**

- Take an active role in solving the global plastic waste issue
- Collectively advocate for smart policies that will drive increased recycling through a combination of incentives, mandates, and infrastructure investment
- Encourage partnerships with companies, nonprofits, and local/state governments to enact smart, effective models for aggregating and collecting plastic waste

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