

WMF 2021: Key messages PS4

Smart, long lasting plastics are very convenient for a range of applications in Packaging for their specific properties. For this to stay true, plastic leakage in the environment needs to be stopped, and circularity, in particular for single use plastics, needs to make a step change to use less resources: today plastics are much less recycled than other materials (28% vs 70% in average).

As often for complex issues, in order to make a rapid turn-around, a combination of 3 set of actions will need to be put in place:

- Better cooperation between actors along the chain,
- Innovative processes and materials,
- Adequate policies and regulations.



A. There is a need for a better cooperation along the chain:

1. Between packaging designers, plastics producers, and recyclers to boost circular design
2. Including citizens, and regulators to ensure access to plastic waste volume

B. Innovation is on the way:

1. Chemical recycling (vs mechanical) will allow to produce Food grade materials
2. Pyrolysis will allow to process non sorted materials instead of burning them
3. Developing new materials, thinner using less input, mono-layers, will greatly help their recyclability
4. Renewables, materials produced from waste will open new avenues

C. Along with cooperation and innovation, adequate policies and regulations need to be more precise

1. Imposing a target for incorporation of recycled materials will help create a long term profitable market, as circular economy business model remains fragile
2. Education of citizens and proper sorting is key to have access to enough processable waste input
3. Traceability and proper labelling