

Principles for Eliminating Plastic Waste through a Circular Economy



The American Chemistry Council (ACC) recognizes that plastic waste is a global problem and must be addressed by creating a circular economy for plastics—by keeping plastic materials in use for as long as possible, getting the most from them during use and by recovering them to make new products.

Solving the challenge of plastic waste in the environment, including marine debris, cannot be successfully addressed by one segment of society. Plastic producers, product manufacturers, brands, retailers, recyclers and waste haulers, as well as communities, non-profits and federal, state and local government must come together to create the circular economic solutions and infrastructure this problem requires.

Our Commitment

ACC and its members set two U.S. goals to eliminate plastic packaging waste by 2040: **100% of plastic packaging will be recyclable or recoverable by 2030**, and **100% of plastics packaging will be reused, recycled or recovered by 2040**. In further support of these ambitious goals, ACC and its members support the following principles to accelerate the elimination of plastic waste through the creation of a circular economy:



1 Support Policy and Legislative Efforts Benefitting the Circular Economy

- **National Recycling Strategy** to support standardization around recycling programs and expanded residential access.
- **Multi-Material Packaging Fees** to support development of recycling education, collection and sortation infrastructure.
- **Disposal Fees** to equalize the cost of recycling with that of disposal.
- **Advanced Recycling** acceleration by removing regulatory roadblocks and establishing deployment incentives.
- **Recycled Content** growth based on science, engineering, healthy communities and attribution via mass balance accounting.
- **Recycling Infrastructure and Education** growth via equal treatment of all recycling processes for federal programs and incentives that spurs technology and innovation.
- **Public Recycling Infrastructure** funding via grants, loans and other financial assistance mechanisms to state, local and tribal governments.
- **Research & Development** incentives to encourage innovative, market-based solutions and catalyze private capital to enable the development of integrated waste management systems and strengthen markets for recycled materials.
- **International Leadership** in global policy forums to direct national and international standards development on definitions, mass balance and attribution.

2

Minimize Plastic Waste through Recycling

- Build on recent domestic industry-announced investments of **more than \$5 billion** in traditional and advanced recycling.
- Increase and expand traditional mechanical recycling.
- Accelerate adoption and expansion of advanced recycling to complement traditional recycling.
- Participate with leading technologies/business models to build out advanced recycling plants.
- Partner with government entities, including DOE efforts, to support advanced recycling and ensure recycled content definitions include output from advanced recycling.
- Research and develop innovative ways to repurpose used plastics (e.g., in infrastructure projects, such as roads and bridges).

3

Advance the Circular Economy in the Manufacturing of Plastic Products

- Support and expand plastic reuse and reusable packaging.
- Use recycled plastic and other sustainable alternatives as feedstock to produce new plastics, chemicals, other products and fuels.
- Improve plastic product design to increase recyclability and reduce the amount of material required in products.
- Grow adoption of mass balance as the leading measurement of recycled content produced by advanced recycling, aligning with a similar technique used to track renewable energy to the end user.

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Support a National Recycling Framework

- Support integrated waste management systems and improve market demand for recycled materials.
- Improve the effectiveness of residential and community recycling programs through public education and outreach.

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Support Markets for Recycled Content

- Continue to work cooperatively across the value chain to identify potential new markets for recycled plastics.
- Support federal programs and incentives that spur technology and innovation.

6

Promote Sustainability Within the Circular Economy

- Advance innovative, market-based solutions and catalyze private capital to prevent and reduce plastic waste and marine debris.
- Support development of policies that encourage recycling for all packaging materials.
- Accelerate adoption of Operation Clean Sweep blue to prevent pellet loss at production sites and throughout the value chain.
- Support a life cycle assessment study by the National Academy of Sciences reviewing advanced recycling technologies needed to address plastic waste.
- Ensure decisions about mandatory material uses or bans are informed by scientific and life cycle analysis for all applicable materials.
- Provide input to policy changes involving plastics that may have public health implications.