

World Plastics Council INC-4 Messaging

Increasing circularity in plastics is an effective way to address plastic pollution and improve the overall sustainability of value chains.

1. Design for circularity

We call for globally standardised criteria on design for circularity to be developed.

To achieve circularity, we must design for it. This includes design for reuse and design for recycling.

As there is no one-size-fits-all in this space, criteria will need to be implemented at local / national level depending on circumstances and capabilities as well as the application / product type.

2. Recycled content

We call for clear and timebound, national or regional targets for the inclusion of recycled content in plastic products, to create demand for recycled plastics and stimulate investments.

Recycled content targets must be technology-neutral, i.e., allow all recycling technologies, including mechanical and chemical recycling, to contribute towards the targets.

Combined targets of mandatory minimum recycling rates and application-based recycled content targets secure sufficient recycled feedstock availability as well as a reliable market for recycled plastics and therefore act as a driving force for circularity.

3. Avoidable or problematic plastic applications

We call for a globally standardized approach to be developed, not arbitrary bans or restrictions on substances or materials, which are disconnected from the value that products add.

Criteria to determine whether applications are avoidable or problematic should be based on the ability to improve circularity, on the waste management hierarchy, taking into account the essential use and societal value, the need for the application in a local context, and the life-cycle assessment.

4. Financing

Lack of waste management infrastructure is a key issue driving the plastic pollution challenge. Funding to develop infrastructure is an important part of the solution.

We call for the mandatory, effective, and inclusive implementation of financing mechanisms, which could include EPR or EPR-like systems at a national or local level applying standardised guiding principles, as an effective tool to finance necessary investments in the collection, sorting, and recycling of plastic waste.

While leaving flexibility to adapt to local circumstances, these systems should be based on a common set of design and governance principles, including the use of revenues to increasing circularity of plastics while also ensuring material and technology neutrality.

5. Trade of plastic waste and recycled feedstocks

We call for measures to support trade of plastic waste and recycled materials, so that plastic waste and recycled feedstock can find their way to an environmentally sound waste management solution and into production of recycled plastics across national borders. Measures need to be based on national capabilities and industry sector application.

This includes standardised end-of-waste definitions and criteria and the simplification of measures foreseen in the Basel Convention.