

PRESS RELEASE
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Design for Recycling: the value chain of plastics packaging works towards a harmonised assessment of recyclability

RecyClass to collaborate with plastship, RECOUP and SUEZ.Circpack®

In 2019, several players from the value chain of plastics packaging joined forces in the RecyClass Platform initiative, to create harmonised Design for Recycling Guidelines, a scoring method, and test protocols to assess the recyclability of plastics packaging and of new packaging technologies in the European market. Working in line with the RecyClass guidelines makes it much clearer for designers to create recyclable packaging, and for brands and converters to assess the recyclability of their existing specific packages.

Brand owners, retailers and converters can make a first self-assessment of the recyclability of their specific plastics packaging using the Design for recycling guidelines and the freeware scoring available on the RecyClassTool via www.recyclass.eu. The next step is to obtain a certification of this self-assessment by a third party.

In order to operationalize this certification, Recyclass will rely on a series of recognised Certification Bodies throughout Europe, that are qualified to assess packaging according to Recyclass method. The first three organisations who did express their interest in becoming Certification Bodies are plastship, RECOUP and SUEZ.Circpack®. The auditors will be qualified via an Accreditation Course in compliance with the Procedures and Quality Management Systems for Recyclability Certification. "This is a great improvement." says Gian de Belder, chairman of the Advisory Board of RecyClass "Brand owners and packaging companies typically work cross-border. So far, we have seen that many different regional guidelines and scoring methods were in place. These differences made it almost impossible to make choices that would serve all markets. Now the value chain can really focus on improving recyclability of packaging for the whole of Europe". Moreover, the collaboration focuses on the development of sorting protocols and establishing a database of collection schemes across Europe which will also be considered when assessing the recyclability of a package.

Further extension of this collaboration is expected in the coming months. Any other initiatives and bodies working on plastic packaging design are welcome to join this collaboration to ultimately make plastic circular.

ABOUT

plastship is a subsidiary of RIGK GmbH, a German recycling scheme operator with more than 25 years of experience in plastics recycling, offering digital services to make plastics more circular. The company is providing a service network to increase plastics recycle uptake and to foster European circular economy. It addresses three major challenges: To simplify procurement with fitting plastics recycle qualities by use of a digital platform, to assess and to optimize the recyclability of products and packaging, and to create individual recycling concepts involving the recycling services of the network. By combining digital approaches with a maximum of service orientation, plastship is a project partner for business customers, helping to structure, to perform, and to communicate activities regarding plastics recycling and the use of plastics recycles.

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RECOUN is a leading authority providing expertise and guidance across the plastics recycling value chain. For over 10 years RECOUN has provided industry with detailed technical guidance for designing packaging for maximum recyclability with the "Recyclability By Design" publication. RECOUN have offered packaging MRF sorting tests as a benefit for members; and this work has increased substantially in recent months. This will be further increased with the agreement with RecyClass. Built on a network of valued members, collaboration is central to our activities, and we are committed to securing sustainable, circular and practical solutions for plastic resources both in the UK and world-wide.'

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SUEZ.Circpack® is a subsidiary of SUEZ, a company collecting, sorting and reprocessing packaging waste on a global scale. SUEZ.Circpack® advises brands, retailers and packaging converters who want to opt for recyclable packaging, and certifies the recyclability rate of specific packaging. For plastics based packaging, SUEZ.Circpack® is aligning its method of certification on the one of RecyClass.

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RecyClass is a comprehensive cross industry initiative that works to advance plastic packaging recyclability within Europe. RecyClass assesses recyclability and provides specific recommendations on how to improve packaging design to fit current recycling technologies. Activities within RecyClass include the development of Recyclability Evaluation Protocols and testing of innovation materials. Findings are used to update the RecyClass Design for Recycling guidelines and the online free tool.

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