



Frans TIMMERMANS

First Vice-President of the European Commission

Jyrki KATAINEN

Vice-President of the European Commission

Brussels, **18 OCT. 2018**

Dear Mr Chumber,

Thank you for your follow-up letter of 27 August 2018 addressed to President Juncker, who has asked that we reply on his behalf. We also refer to previous correspondence with you on this matter in response to your letters of 28 May and 3 June 2018.

In your recent letter you maintain that balloons and balloon sticks have erroneously been included within the scope of the proposal for a Directive on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment (COM(2018) 340 final), and provide a number of detailed arguments criticising the analysis underlying this proposal.

We recognise your concerns about the robustness of the available data and methodologies related to marine litter count. However, we hold to our view that the methodology was suitably robust to identify balloons and balloon sticks among the top 10 single-use plastic items.

The Commission stands by its assessment that balloons and balloon sticks should be covered by appropriate measures in order to reduce their littering. Their presence in the environment is an indicator that, today, these items are not properly managed at the end of their life, and that additional efforts are needed to encourage consumers to reduce the littering of balloons and balloon sticks.

The Commission's proposal is currently being examined by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union as part of the ordinary legislative procedure, and has been highlighted in the Commission Letter of Intent as a key initiative for delivery before the European Parliament elections next year.

We trust that the European balloon industry will join us in our efforts to address plastic pollution.

Yours sincerely,

Frans Timmermans

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