

Briefing for Vice President Katainen

**[REDACTED], President of UNESDA**

**Union of European Soft Drinks Associations**

**ENV contribution**

**Scene setter**

You will meet UNESDA President [REDACTED]. You will discuss with him about the Plastics Strategy and about packaging waste in the context of the Waste Framework Directive.

UNESDA welcomed the publication of the EU Strategy for Plastics, as well as the ambition to create a circular economy for plastic packaging. UNESDA members affirm they have taken steps to primarily use recyclable materials, increase EU recycling rates and expand recycled materials in their soft drinks packaging.

In its formal contribution to the European Commission's preliminary consultation on actions related to marine litter and single use plastics, UNESDA expressed their support to a holistic and multi-stakeholder approach to tackle the issues of marine litter by strengthening waste management and enforcing waste legislation to ensure effective household collection. In particular, UNESDA called for strong EPR minimum requirements to encourage waste collection and recycling.

**Objective(s)**

- Inform UNESDA about the Plastics Strategy by highlighting the importance of business associations to make the Strategy a success story. In particular, encourage UNESDA to promote, among their members, the current Plastics Strategy's pledging campaign.
- Recall to UNESDA relevant features of the proposed Directive on single use plastics & fishing gear, and stress that the proposed Directive is an action to tackle the unsustainable use of some plastic items, not against plastic per se.
- Recall to UNESDA the recent changes in EU Waste legislation regarding the increased packaging recycling targets and the changes to the requirements for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes to improve their governance and cost-efficiency.
- Inform UNESDA of the Commission's ongoing preparatory work for:
  - a future revision of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive with a view to revisit the Directive's Essential requirements to help ensure inter alia that by 2030 all plastics packaging placed on the EU market can be reused or recycled in a cost-effective manner;
  - a guidance on the modulation of producer fees under EPR.

- Invite UNESDA to participate over the coming year in the stakeholder consultation that will be taking place in the context of both studies.

## Line to take

### **Plastics Strategy**

- The strategy presents a vision for a smart, innovative and sustainable plastics industry, with reuse and recycling activities integrated into production chains to bring growth, jobs and added value in Europe. This strategy will also help protect our environment, reduce marine litter, greenhouse gas emissions and our dependence on imported fossil fuels.
- To achieve this vision, it foresees actions along four main axes:
  - Improve the economics and quality of plastic recycling: By 2030, all plastic packaging should be reusable or recyclable. This will be achieved by improved design and by boosting high quality recycled content, improving separate collection and increasing demand for recycled plastics.
  - Curb plastic waste and littering, including micro-plastics, oxo-degradable plastics and single use plastics.
  - Drive investments and innovation in the value chain: In 2018 the Commission will develop a Strategic Research Innovation Agenda for Plastics while until 2020, the EU Research and Innovation Programme Horizon 2020 will invest an additional 100 million Euros in plastics innovation.
  - Call for global action to reduce plastics pollution
- Some of **UNESDA members** in the soft drinks sector already committed to take actions. For example, *The Coca Cola Company* announced it will collect and recycle the equivalent of all its packaging by 2030. It will also aim to make all of its packaging with an average of 50 per cent recycled content by the same date. *Danone's* Evian vowed to use 100 percent recycled plastic in bottles by 2025. However, **we can step up our ambitions by involving more companies** in the plastics circular transition. **UNESDA's role is therefore crucial.**
- The Plastics Strategy also includes a pledging campaign to boost the uptake of recycled plastics to ensure that by 2025 ten million tonnes of recycled plastics find their way into new products on the EU market. The deadline to submit these voluntary pledges on plastics is upcoming, on 30 September 2018. **Associations like UNESDA play a vital role in making the pledging campaign a success**, for example by encouraging their members to submit their own pledges. **I encourage you to circulate this information among your contacts.**
- As a follow up to the Plastics Strategy, the Commission proposed a **Directive on single use plastics & fishing gear**, which is **not an action against plastics**; it is an action to tackle the unsustainable use of some plastic items. We are not tackling the single-use items as such, but focussing on items, completely or partially made of plastics, which are major contributors to marine litter.
- Among other actions, producers will help cover the costs of waste management and clean-up, as well as awareness raising measures for food containers, drinks containers and cups. Member States will be obliged to collect 90% of single-use plastic drinks bottles by 2025, for example through deposit refund schemes. Single-use drinks containers made with plastic will only be allowed on the market if their caps and lids remain attached.

- **We received UNESDA's formal contribution to the Single Use Plastics Directive's preparatory discussion**, and we look forward to keep cooperating in the next phase.

### **Packaging waste & Waste Framework Directive**

- **Packaging waste is an important part of the overall waste stream.** Its efficient collection, management and treatment, in line with the waste hierarchy, are important just as other environmental challenges linked to use of packaging material.
- The recently adopted **waste package** contains a number of **elements of relevance to the soft drinks sector**, such as minimum recycling targets for packaging - increasing from 55% to 65% in 2025 and 70% in 2030. For glass the target will be of 70% in 2025 and 75% in 2030 whereas for plastic it will be 50% in 2025 and 55% in 2030.
- The recently revised Waste Framework Directive introduced changes to how the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes are run. They aim to improve their governance and cost-efficiency and were strongly supported by the packaging producer organisations and associations (EUROPEN, EXPRA). As most Member State EPR schemes will need to be adjusted, **advise that the soft drinks industries take part in the review processes that will happen in Member States in the coming 4 years** (2023 is the deadline to adjust existing schemes to the new requirements).
- The EU Plastic Strategy has envisaged the review of the Essential Requirements regulating what packaging can be placed on the market under the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive. The objective of the review is to increase their effectiveness in avoiding packaging waste and overcoming barriers to reuse and recycling of packaging. A consultant is carrying supportive studies and workshops with the industry to assist us in this work.
- The EU Plastic Strategy also requires the Commission to issue, by the end of 2019, guidance on modulation of producer fees under EPR schemes to facilitate harmonized application across the EU. A consultant is carrying supportive studies and workshops with the industry to assist us in this work.
- Relevant stakeholders, including from the **soft-drinks packaging and fillers sector** (normally represented by associations like EUROPEN and EXPRA) will be **invited to get involved** in this **preparatory work** on both the review of the Essential requirements and the guidance of eco-modulation.

### **EMAS**

- **Encourage UNESDA to promote EMAS membership** (EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme) among their contacts. EMAS is a premium management instrument developed by the European Commission for companies and other organisations to evaluate, report, and improve their environmental performance. EMAS is the most credible and robust environmental management instrument on the market. This is a great opportunity for the whole soft drinks sector, as it enhances performances, as well as credibility and reputation.