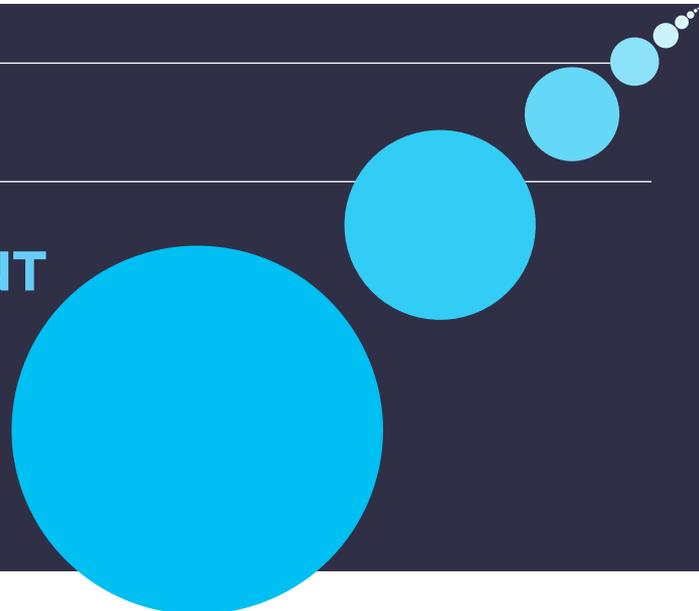


THE GLOBAL COMMITMENT FIVE YEARS IN:

LEARNINGS TO ACCELERATE TOWARDS A FUTURE WITHOUT PLASTIC WASTE OR POLLUTION



This document summarises key learnings from the biggest global voluntary effort to date to tackle plastic packaging waste and pollution - [the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's and UNEP's Global Commitment](#). It is aimed at negotiators of the international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution, providing data from five years of voluntary action. For the full paper see emf.org/global-commitment

PROGRESS AT SCALE HAS PROVEN POSSIBLE AND THE SOLUTIONS CAN BE MANDATED GLOBALLY

Limiting virgin plastics use, eliminating problematic and avoidable plastic items, and increasing recycled content are all areas where Global Commitment business signatories have shown significant progress is possible, but where the market as a whole is lagging behind. Policymakers have an opportunity to accelerate the shift by creating a higher level playing field where the entire industry advances in these areas.

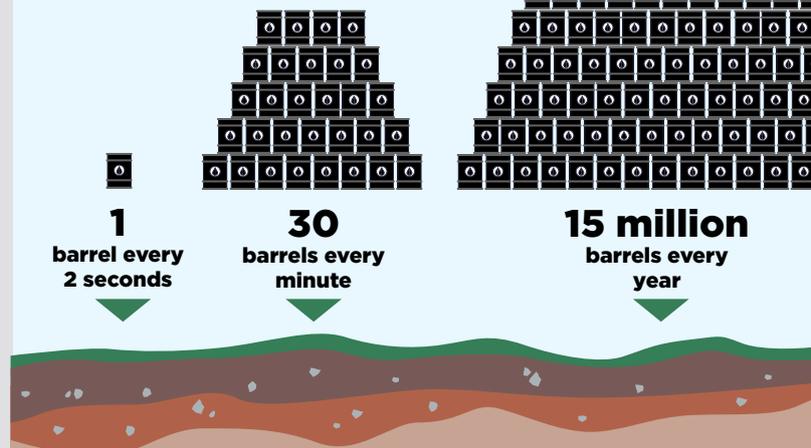
The Global Commitment provides initial stakeholder alignment on definitions and transparent reporting, on which the instrument could build. The business signatories, representing 20% of the global plastic packaging market, all use common definitions for metrics such as recyclability, as well as criteria and lists of commonly identified problematic and unnecessary plastics.

The best performing business signatories have demonstrated what is possible. On average the entire group of business signatories have significantly outperformed their non-signatory peers in tackling plastic waste, showing that a concerted effort can unlock change. These pioneering efforts show that ambition can yield results, despite the barriers the group and market as a whole are facing.

| | 2022 | |
|--|---------------|--|
| | Global Market | Top quartile Global Commitment signatories |
| Decrease the use of virgin plastic (% change by weight vs 2018) | ↑ +11% | ↓ -13% |
| Eliminate problematic or unnecessary packaging > EPS packaging use (% change by weight vs 2020) | ↑ +3% | ↓ -100% |
| | ↑ +3% | ↓ -92% |
| Increase the share of post-consumer recycled content (percentage point change vs 2018) | ↑ +1pp | ↑ +19pp |

This has already led to significant reductions in the extraction of finite resources

Every **2 seconds**, the equivalent of 1 barrel of oil is kept in the ground through efforts spurred by the Global Commitment



THREE PIVOTAL HURDLES CURRENTLY BLOCK PROGRESS AND MUST BE OVERCOME THROUGH CONCERTED POLICY & BUSINESS ACTION

Three pivotal hurdles stand in the way of further progress. Even industry leaders have made limited progress in overcoming those without strong policy support. Overcoming these challenges is critical – otherwise, progress will simply plateau long before coming close to solving plastic waste and pollution. They are:

TAKING REUSE FROM NICHE TO SCALE



TACKLING FLEXIBLE PLASTIC PACKAGING WASTE IN HIGH-LEAKAGE MARKETS



ESTABLISHING INFRASTRUCTURE TO COLLECT AND CIRCULATE PACKAGING AFTER USE



The fastest way forward is through an “ambition loop” in which government policy and business action mutually reinforce and build off each other.

GOVERNMENT POLICY

- Negotiate an ambitious international legally binding instrument
- Drive national and local policy

BUSINESS ACTION

- Accelerate delivery of action
- Advocate for more ambitious policy



VOLUNTARY ACTION ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH - LEGALLY-BINDING GLOBAL RULES REPRESENT A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO ACCELERATE SYSTEMS CHANGE AND END PLASTIC POLLUTION

Currently, 80% of the global plastic packaging market is not covered by the Global Commitment and performing, on average, much worse than the 20% who have signed up. The learnings so far reinforce the need for more, and more ambitious, binding policy measures, as well as accelerated voluntary business action. This cannot be an either-or: both are crucial to tackling plastic waste and pollution at the pace and scale required. The international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to meet the scale of the challenge and accelerate global change.

We call on delegations negotiating the legally binding instrument, other policymakers and businesses, to:

- (1) Replicate, scale, and mandate the solutions that industry leaders have already compellingly demonstrated are possible.
- (2) Overcome three pivotal hurdles currently blocking progress through concerted policy action and business innovation.

Launched in October 2018 by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, in collaboration with the UN Environment Programme, the Global Commitment unites businesses, governments, NGOs, and investors behind a [common vision](#) of a circular economy in which we eliminate the plastic we don't need; innovate towards new materials and business models; and circulate all the plastic we still use, to keep it in the economy and out of the environment.

Representing **20%** of global plastic packaging

\$10+ billion invested by signatories

1,000+ organisations united behind a common vision



emf.org/global-commitment

