

One year on for European bottled water producers pledges on circular economy

EFBW Press Release: Brussels, 15th of May 2019

Today marks one year since the natural mineral water and spring water producers pledged to reach 90% collection of PET water bottles and use at least 25% of recycled PET by 2025. “Plastic waste management is a serious challenge and we recognize the urgency to act. That is why one year ago we were the first within the food and drink industry to publicly pledge to support the circularity of our packaging”, says Jean-Pierre Deffis, President of the European Federation of Bottled Waters. “None of our producers wants to see any of our products as litter in the environment. Our PET bottles are 100% recyclable and therefore a valuable resource, which we are determined to give a second life.”

The natural mineral and spring water producers appreciate the commitment of the European Commission to boost the circular economy in Europe. The newly initiated ‘EU Circular Plastics Alliance’, a group of all stakeholders in the plastics value chain, is a most welcome initiative. “Indeed, close collaboration of all value chain members is necessary to reach the targets of the EU Single Use Plastics Directive. Therefore, we would like to re-emphasize the crucial role of efficient collection and sorting to obtain high quality recycled materials, which we can then re-use for our bottles. We are keen to stay a reliable partner and play a key role in sharing best practices at national level and foster constructive dialogue”, said EFBW Sustainability Director, Ermis Panagiotopoulos. The EFBW now calls on the European Commission to swiftly authorize all recycling processes that have been positively evaluated by EFSA.

“Sustainability is and has always been at the heart of our business. As much as we care for our natural water sources and their surrounding environment, we care for the packaging of our products. We are now looking forward to the guidelines the European Commission announced, which should facilitate a harmonized and efficient implementation of the Single Use Plastics Directive at Member State level”, says Panagiotopoulos.

To ensure that its members can continuously deliver on the pledges, the EFBW works closely with all relevant stakeholders, including Plastics Recyclers Europe (PRE). PRE’s President Ton Emans welcomes EFBW’s efforts: “Over the last years, the bottled water industry has been a front runner in PET circularity. PET recyclers do not have enough feedstock to supply the market, which is why the priority remains to drastically improve collection and quality sorting.”

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The European Federation of Bottled Waters (EFBW) is the voice of the bottled water industry. We are dedicated to promoting the unique qualities of natural mineral and spring waters as well as sustainable use of water resources and Circular Economy. EFBW represents almost 550 Natural Mineral and Spring Water producers in Europe, most of them small- and medium sized companies.