

Press Release

FEAD participates in the European Parliament hearing on plastics

Brussels, 25 February 2021 - Today, **FEAD, the European Waste Management Association**, represented by its **President, Mr. Peter Kurth**, participated in the European Parliament ENVI and PETI Committees' Joint Public Hearing entitled "**Plastics and waste management in the circular economy**".

Waste management activities are integral to circular industrial chains and have a crucial role to play to ensure the circularity of our economies. The European private waste management sector, represented by FEAD, has a clear understanding of the environmental, health, and economic impacts of plastics and microplastics. Plastic waste will remain a reality despite proposed measures to limit the relentless increase of plastic production and consumption. FEAD strongly advocates to have a regulatory framework at EU level that would result in a sound management of plastic waste. In particular, we emphasise the following:

- The current use of excessive virgin plastic needs to be replaced by a **circular model**, whereby plastics already introduced into the economy are reused through **recycling and recovery**;
- **Mandatory recycled content** in priority sectors (packaging, automotive, construction products), and **green public procurement rules** can ensure a strong and long-lasting demand and boost the market for plastic recyclates. The rules on **Eco-design** play a key role in the recyclability of plastic products, because they stipulate the avoidance or limitation of additives and hazardous substances from the very start of the product value chain;
- Closing the plastic loop within the EU is dependent on **safe and efficient intra-EU waste shipment rules** and on greater law enforcement efforts preventing illegal exports and waste crime;
- To stop the leakage of plastic waste and consequently of microplastics we need to have a better **collection and separation system and improve recycling rates. Biodegradable and bio-based plastics** are not necessarily a solution, depending upon their impact on the environment, as most plastics do not degrade, but cause litter and end up in smaller pieces.

Peter Kurth, FEAD's President states: "A recent study for the European Parliament showed that € 630 million is spent every year across Europe to clean plastic waste from coasts and beaches while the failure to recycle costs the European economy € 105 billion. This is evidence that tells us that collecting, recycling, recovering is the only solution moving forward. Over the next 10 years, our industry is ready to invest € 10 billion in plastic collection and recycling facilities, provided there is enough economic viability in the uptake of plastic recyclates. Pull measures, such as mandatory recycled contents and green public procurement, are needed to create a true shock on demand for recyclates. Large scale and appropriate funding for selective collection and sorting is vital. And finally, safe exports are also crucial to ship plastic waste to places where they will be further treated and reprocessed."

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