



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 7.8.2018  
C(2018) 5464 final*

*Mr Milan ŠTĚCH  
President of the Senát  
Valdštejnské náměstí 17/4  
CZ – 118 01 PRAGUE 1*

*Dear President,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Senát for its Opinion on the Circular Economy Package, including the Communication on a European Strategy for Plastic in the Circular Economy {COM(2018) 28 final} and the Communication on a Monitoring Framework for the Circular Economy {COM(2018) 29 final}.*

*The Commission welcomes the Senát's overall support for these Communications. It believes that a transition towards a circular economy will provide Member States with good opportunities for economic growth and jobs while reducing residual waste to a minimum.*

*The Strategy for Plastics in the Circular Economy presents a vision for a more sustainable plastics industry, which integrates reuse and recycling activities into production chains to bring growth, jobs and added value to Europe. This vision aims at achieving more sustainable and safer consumption and production patterns for plastics. It also offers opportunities for the development of other materials that could replace plastics when appropriate. The strategy provides a fertile ground for social innovation and entrepreneurship, creating a wealth of opportunities for European citizens. Most importantly, the strategy helps protect our environment, reduce marine litter, greenhouse gas emissions and our dependence on imported fossil fuels. The objective is to curb plastic pollution and its adverse impact on our lives and the environment, protecting European citizens and empowering them to make the right choices to preserve the planet and ensure their well-being.*

*As regards the Senat's observation concerning the prevention of waste, the Commission recalls that prevention of plastic waste is one of the four axes of the strategy and the first action to be tabled for the implementation of the strategy concerns mainly prevention.*

*In that regard, the proposal for a new Directive on Port Reception Facilities<sup>1</sup>, which was adopted together with the Plastics Strategy, goes a long way to ensuring that ship waste*

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<sup>1</sup> Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on port reception facilities for the delivery of waste from ships, repealing Directive 2000/59/EC and amending Directive 2009/16/EC and Directive 2010/65/EU {COM(2018)33 final}.

*is delivered to adequate port reception facilities, instead of being discharged at sea. Moreover, the Commission has already engaged with the European Chemicals Agency to restrict microplastics intentionally added to products and oxo-degradable plastics.*

*The Commission is also pleased to inform the Senát that on 28 May 2018 it adopted a proposal for a Directive aimed at reducing marine litter<sup>2</sup>. The proposal covers the ten single-use plastic products most often found on Europe's beaches and seas, as well as lost and abandoned fishing gear. Together, these constitute 70% of all marine litter items. If adopted, the Directive will be the most comprehensive legal instrument to fight plastic pollution globally.*

*The Commission is aware that throughout the Union, the uptake of recycled plastics in new products is still too low, and often remains limited to low-value or niche applications. It supports the creation of more stable markets for recycled plastics with clear innovation and growth perspectives where more products are made of recyclates. This includes efforts to ensure safe, high-quality recycling. The Commission also hopes that a pledging campaign for companies on recycled content, as announced in the Plastics Strategy, will result in specific commitments from companies in that regard. Should the results of this exercise be deemed insufficient, the Commission will start work on possible next steps, including regulatory action.*

*In this context, the Commission also aims at making it easier to trace and/or remove possible chemicals of concern from the recycling streams, thus ensuring a high level of health and environmental protection for European citizens.*

*Finally, as regards the monitoring framework for the circular economy, this framework aims at measuring progress over time in the Union and in the Member States. It consists of 10 indicators and largely builds on existing data, produced mainly by Eurostat and other official sources. However, for two areas of high relevance for the shift towards a circular economy - green public procurement and food waste - appropriate indicators are not yet available. The Commission is currently working on them and expects to produce these in the coming years, building on new data provided by the Member States<sup>3</sup>.*

*The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issues raised by the Senát and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Günther H. Oettinger  
Member of the Commission*

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<sup>2</sup> Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment {COM(2018) 340 final}

<sup>3</sup> For further information please see the Staff Working Document {SWD(2018) 17}.