



Brussels, 22.8.2018

C(2018) 5645 final

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion on the Communication on a European Strategy for Plastic in the Circular Economy {COM(2018) 28 final}.

The Commission welcomes the Camera Deputaților's overall support for the Communication. It believes that a transition towards a new plastics 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 is aimed 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 Camera Deputaților'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 Facilities¹, which was adopted together with the Plastics Strategy, goes a long way in ensuring that ship waste

¹ 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}.

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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 review if there is a basis for restricting microplastics intentionally added to products and oxo-degradable plastics.

The Commission would also like to inform the Camera Deputaților that on 28 May 2018 it adopted a proposal for a Directive on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment² to tackle mainly plastic marine litter originating from single use plastics and fishing gear. If adopted, it will be the most comprehensive legal instrument to fight plastic pollution at global level.

The Commission agrees with the Camera Deputaților on the need for clear and correct information on biodegradable plastics and has started work to develop harmonised rules on defining and labelling compostable and biodegradable plastics.

With regard to the objective to ensure that by 2030 all plastics packaging placed on the European market can be reused or recycled in a cost-effective manner, the strategy calls for cross-industry dialogue and voluntary commitments from the producers of packaging and products to support this objective. The Commission is also tasked with reviewing the essential requirements for packaging, by 2020, with a view to improving design for reuse and promoting high quality recycling.

The strategy will create new opportunities for investment, innovation and for new business models that young entrepreneurs can benefit from. One of the four axes of the strategy addresses innovation and investment that foresees that, on top of the EUR 250 million already invested in plastic research, by the Horizon 2020 Programme, this programme will make available up to 2020 an additional EUR 100 million. The Commission will also develop a Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda on Plastics to provide guidance for investments in this area post 2020.

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

Yours faithfully,

*Pierre Moscovici
Member of the Commission*

² 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}.