

# 5 THINGS THAT NEED TO HAPPEN NOW FOR CHEMICAL RECYCLING TO CONTRIBUTE TO EU CIRCULAR ECONOMY

In Europe, about 30 million tonnes of plastic waste is collected every year. Still, 84% of that does not find its way back into new products, as most of it is **INCINERATED, EXPORTED or SENT TO LANDFILL**.



This is not only a source of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions but is also a waste of valuable resources. To further increase plastic recycling, a rapid scale-up of mechanical and chemical recycling capacity is needed. This 5-point plan explains what needs to be done for chemical recycling to help tackle more plastic waste.

# 1

## Create an EU Single Market for waste and end-of-life resources

To improve the circularity of plastics, we need to collect and sort more plastic waste, and make sure it gets sent to recycling facilities. These facilities need sufficient quantities of plastic waste to become operational.

Creating a larger market for plastic waste and allowing plastic waste to be moved between EU member states is paramount to increasing recycling rates.



# 2

## Recognise all recycling technologies across all EU legislation

We need all hands on deck to achieve the EU circular economy objectives. Creating an inclusive regulatory framework will help create a breeding ground for innovative recycling technologies.

In particular, chemical recycling and its role need to be recognized under all relevant EU waste and product legislation. Otherwise, waste treated by chemical recycling will not count against EU recycled content target discouraging the market from buying chemically recycled products.



# 3

## Recognise a verified mass balance approach to calculate recycled content in plastics

Virgin and recycled feedstocks cannot be physically separated once they are co-fed into recycling installations. Since it is impractical to build an entirely new stand-alone infrastructure to produce plastics solely from recycled waste, we need to make use of the existing recycling facilities.



This is only possible if we mix recycled feedstock with the virgin one. In this case, we need a methodology to calculate and verify the amount of recycled content allocated to final products based on the amount of recycled feedstock that was put into the system.

Mass balance is one of the well-known and widely used “chain of custody” models that gives a high level of confidence that what is put in the process does come out at the end. It is already successfully deployed in other sectors, including biofuels, cocoa and coffee.



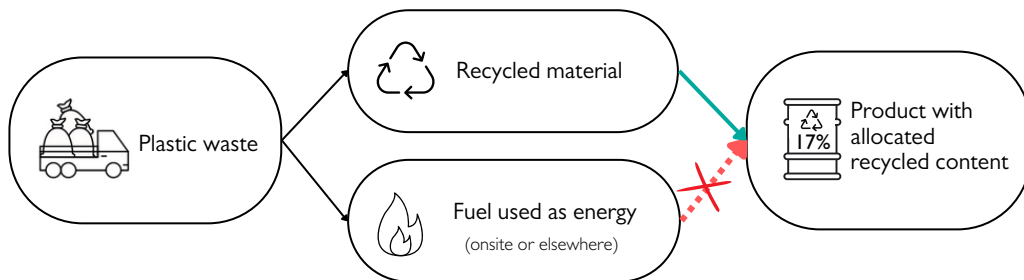
# 4

## Ensure the reliability and workability of mass balance

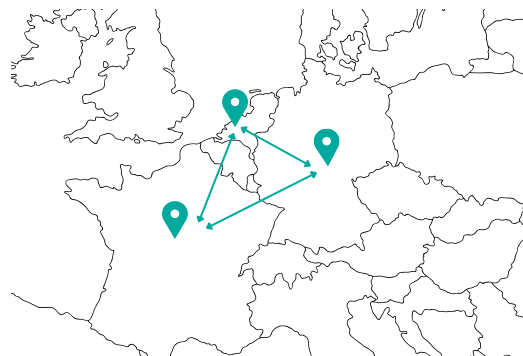
Cefic supports a clear and transparent use of “recycled content” claims. For the mass balance system to be reliable and trustworthy, it needs to



- Exclude recycled feedstock that is used to produce energy (“fuel-use-exempt model”). Only the feedstock that goes into production of new materials and products can count in the mass balance model.



- Allow “credit transfer” to be able to assign recycled content produced in one location for products produced in a different location (but within one company, for same products and within the limited area of EU-27). Without it, the “physical” transfer of recycled content would lead to unnecessary additional costs and emissions from transport & logistics.
- Be verified and then certified by third party.



# 5

## Drive investments into plastic recycling R&D programmes and new business models.

Encouraging investments along the value chain for chemical recycling will help scale up the market uptake and improve the technology (e.g. make it more resource and energy efficient). It will also help develop new value chains for collection, sorting and recycling of plastic waste, which will generate more jobs and ‘know-how’ in Europe.

Ultimately, this will help achieve the EU circularity objectives and secure the EU’s strategic autonomy.

