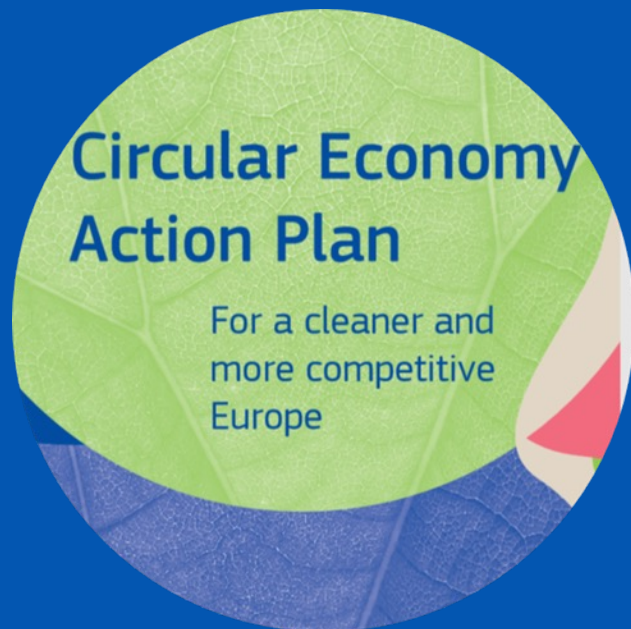


Plastics in the circular economy



*Werner Bosmans
Teamleader 'Plastics'
DG Environment*

22 Feb 2024



**A climate-neutral,
resource-efficient and
competitive economy**



Maintaining the value of products,
materials and resources in the economy
for as long as possible, & minimising the
generation of waste



*Improving the economics
and quality of recycling &
curbing plastic waste &
littering*

The plastics strategy (2018): Recycled content

Aim of the Plastics Strategy:

10 million tons of recycled plastics in new products on the EU market by 2025



Mandatory requirements for key products such as packaging, construction materials and vehicles + textiles
→ **ESPR**



Single use plastics directive

Reduce impact of certain plastic products on the marine environment

Recycled content targets for SUP beverage bottles:

- **25% in PET bottles by 2025**
- **30% in all bottles by 2030**



Calculating Recycled Content: SUP Directive

Implementing Decision in SUP beverage bottles:

Step 1: first Implementing Decision:
mechanically recycled PET (2023/2683)

Step 2: amendment to introduce controlled blending
and mass balance

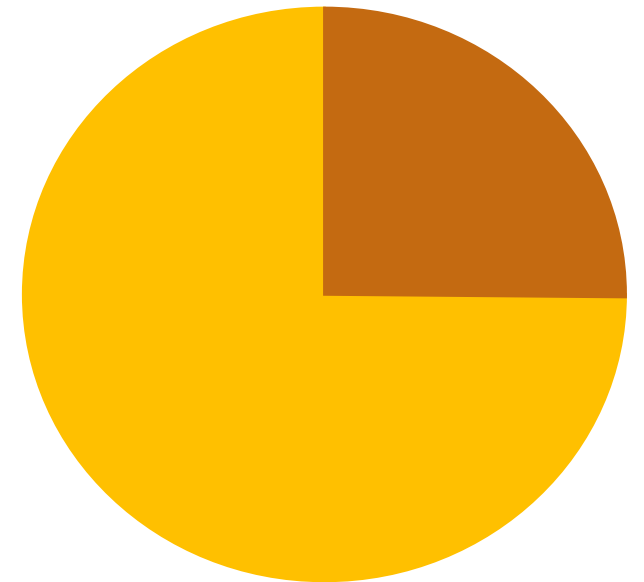
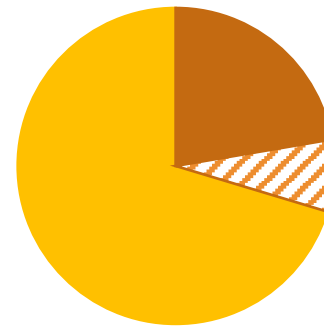
- Discuss COM proposal for amendment with MS
- Public feedback in winter 2024
- Proposal for March 2024



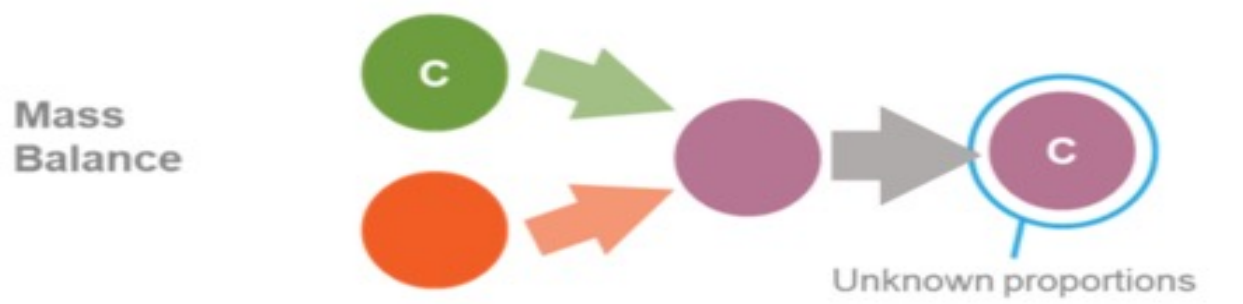
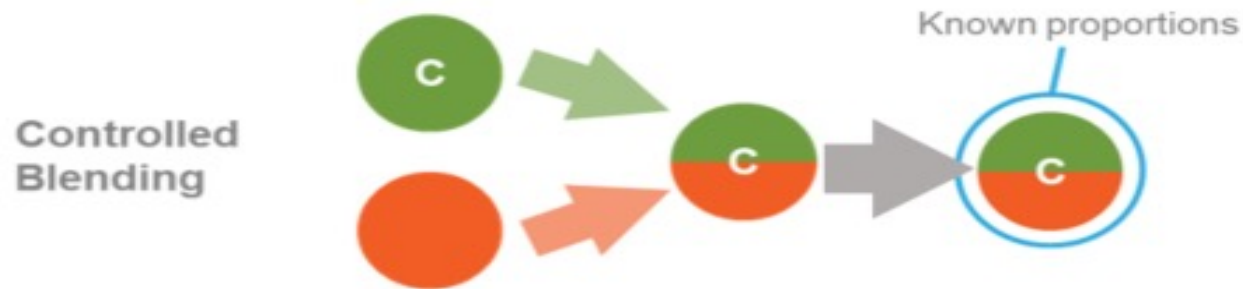
Chemical Recycling ('long-loop')

- **Chemical recycling complements mechanical recycling, if it causes less environmental burden than incineration and virgin plastic production**

➔ more important than how to split up the cake is to make the cake bigger!



Calculating Recycled Content: CoC Models



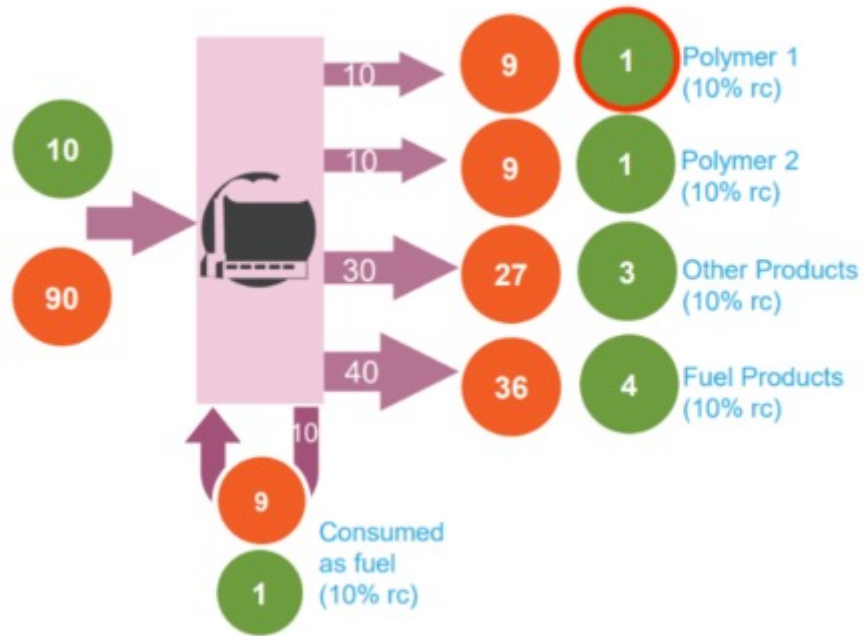
Third-party verification



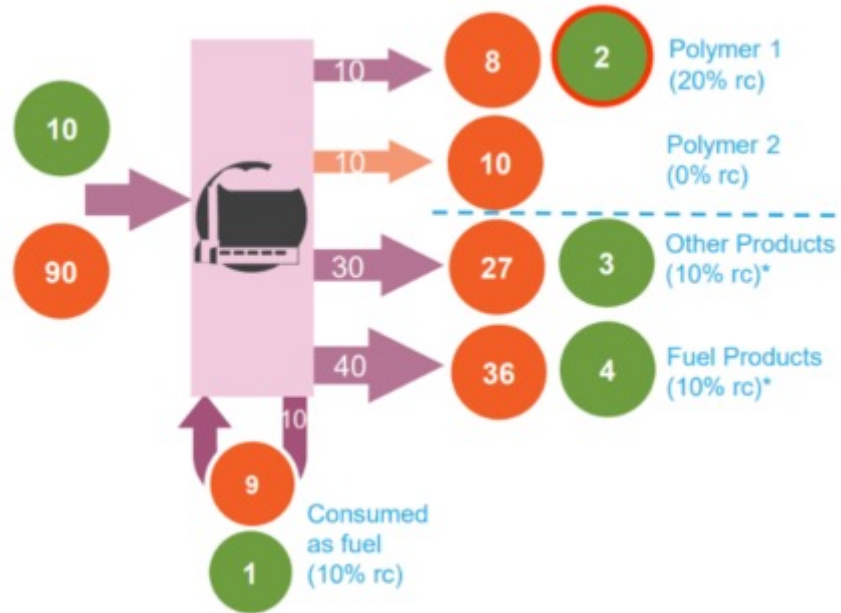
Source: Eunomia, *Study to develop options for rules on recycled plastic content for the implementing act related to single-use plastic bottles under Directive (EU) 2019/904 (2022)*

Calculating Recycled Content: Mass Balance Allocation Methods

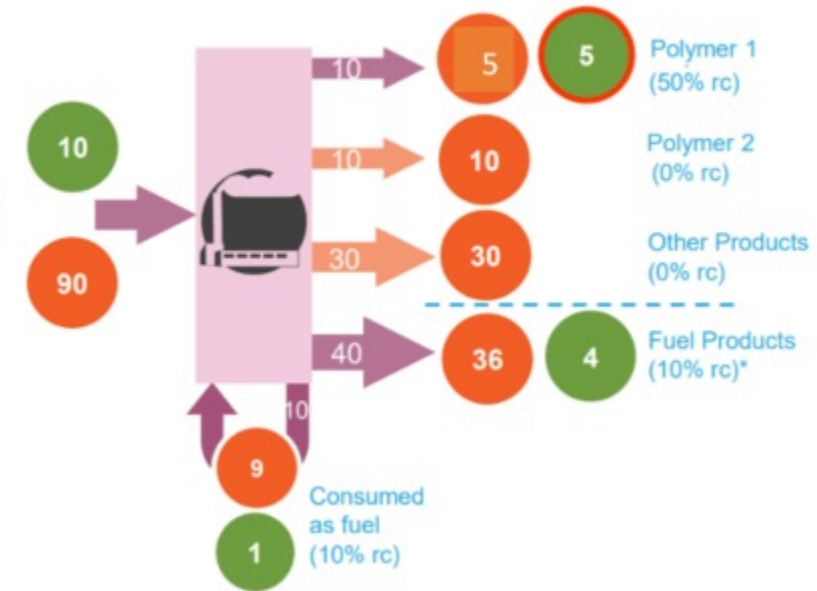
a) Proportional



b) Polymers only



c) Fuel use excluded





Regulation on packaging and packaging waste: plastics

Full recyclability of all packaging by 2030

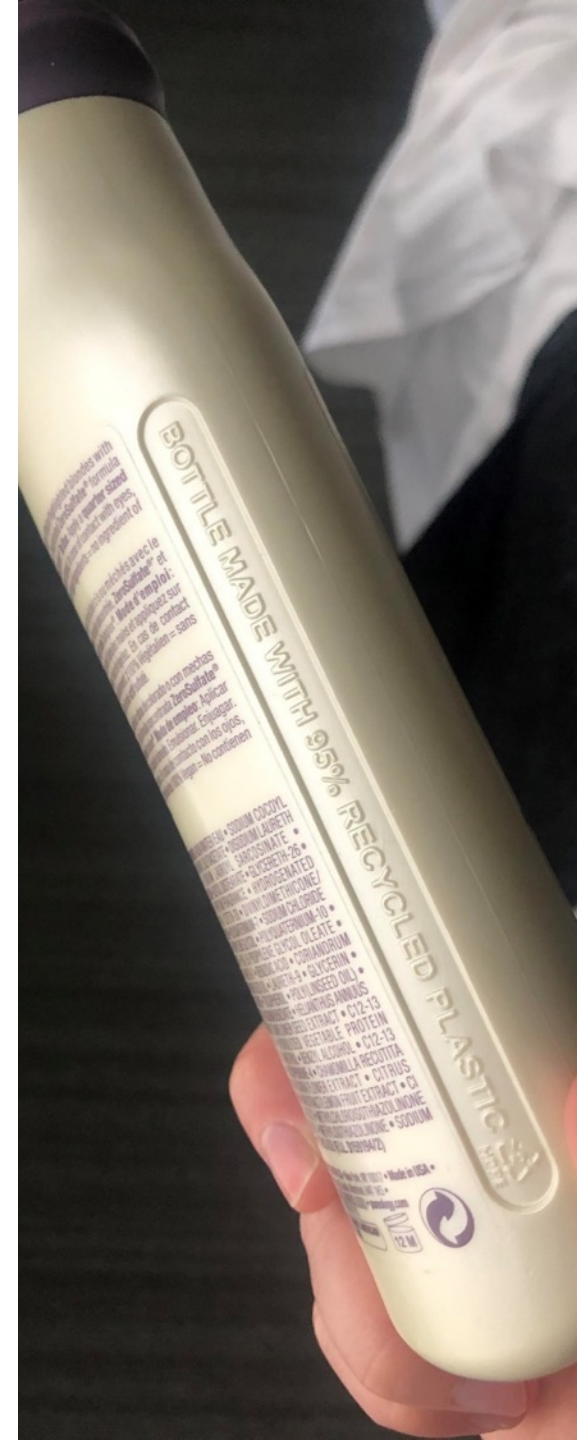
- As of 2030, all plastic packaging to be **recyclable**
 - Designed for recycling
 - Separately collected
 - Well sorted
 - Recyclates of quality
- Delegated act to provide methodology:
 - Design for recycling criteria
 - As of 2035, “recycling at scale”
 - Modulation EPR fees ~ recyclability & recycled content

Performance grade	Score of compliance with DfR criteria of a unit of packaging *
A	95%
B	90%
C	80%
D	70%
E	Less than 70%

* in terms of weight of the unit of packaging

PPWR: Recycled content of plastics

- **Targets** (2030, rising in 2040) at product level for
 - beverage bottles: 30%
 - contact sensitive: PET 30%, non-PET: 10%
 - non-contact sensitive: 35%
- EU harmonised **methodology** for quantification to avoid green washing



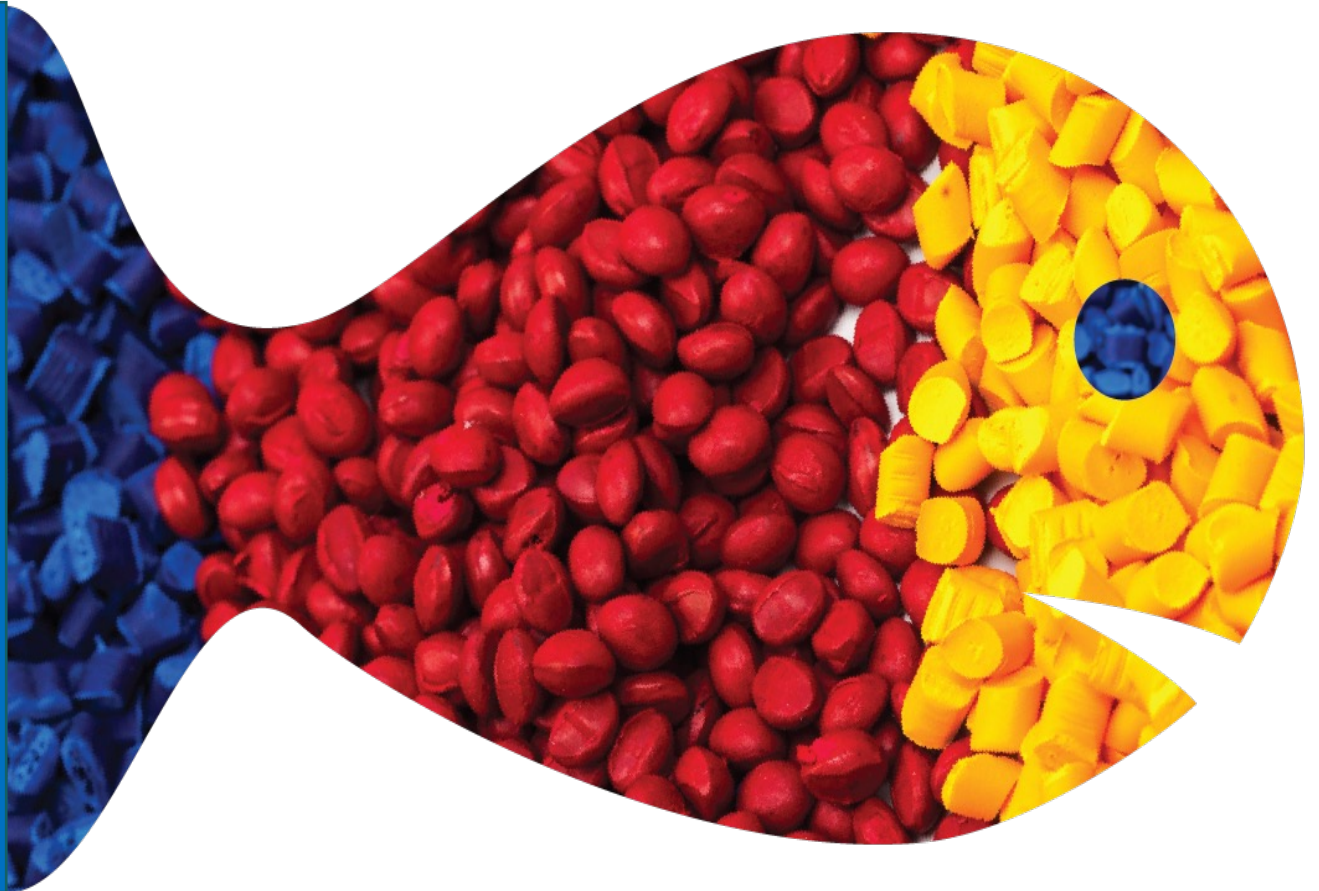


**30% reduction of
microplastic releases
by 2030**

Microplastics

Plastic pellet losses

The equivalent of between **2100** and **7300** truckloads of pellets were lost to the environment in the EU in 2019



Proposal for pellets regulation

Proposal released October 2023



Photo: Eunomia

- **Prevent – Contain – Clean-up**: best handling practices & up-to-date risk assessment plan (~**OCS**)
- **Mandatory certification** (large firms) & **self-declarations** (small firms): to verify compliance
- A **harmonised methodology** to estimate losses
- **Lighter requirements** for micro & small enterprises
- **Specific measures** for carriers

Way forward

Circular economy

Keeping products, **plastics** & resources in the loop, and their value, for as long as possible

Plastics

- NO littering
- Reducing microplastics
- Recyclability, collection & recycling, recycled content

Packaging:

- Applying these principles
- Focus on prevention, design for reuse & recyclability

