

Press Release

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The Netherlands Take Clear Anti-Litter Actions

WFO welcomes The Netherlands' decision to keep a reverse vending scheme in place!

The steady increase of litter piling up along streets, motorways, car parks and in and around other public places is of increasing concern in Europe. Meanwhile, this land based litter is recognised as a major source of inflow of marine litter. Therefore, Waste Free Oceans had recently called upon legislators to stop European motorways from becoming littering sites.

Whereas the impact of awareness raising campaigns have proven to be of too little effect, the Dutch authorities have now announced they will add value to used beverage cans and small bottles – items mostly found littered in the Dutch environment – by using a reversed vending premium.

This measure follows the failed year-long attempt of leading packers and fillers, under the clear leadership of Coca-Cola, to abolish the well-functioning Dutch deposit scheme on larger PET bottles. Earlier this week, it was finally confirmed that the packers and fillers had not lived up to several of their essential obligations under the Dutch Framework Agreement.

Whereas last year they were given additional time to fulfil their obligations, a vast majority of the Dutch political parties and the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure & Environment have now concluded that the discussions are over once and for all. Next to the continuation of the present deposit schemes and the introduction of a reversed vending premium for several other products, the minimum for mandatory recycling content for bottles is foreseen to substantially increase. Waste Free Oceans has previously advised a minimum recycling content of 80% rPET for countries with deposit schemes in place – a target well achievable today

Finding solutions to the emerging problem of marine litter is of great concern to the EU authorities. Public-private partnerships under the umbrella of Waste Free Oceans, where multi-stakeholders including European fishermen work increasingly together, have proven that pragmatic solutions are currently available and that clean-ups need to be further developed.

The EU announced a 50% reduction target on marine litter. At Waste Free Oceans, we believe such a target can be achieved provided proper legislation including producer responsibility and recycling targets be put in place and strongly enforced.

As a direct result, eco-design and sorting qualities of post-consumer waste streams, which are currently far behind today's technical possibilities, will be brought much higher on the agenda of packers and fillers and specifiers.

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