

### Efficient collection systems are a key step towards circularity

Brussels, 11.03.2020 EFBW welcomes the European Commission's new Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP) and its efforts to further drive the European Union towards a fully circular economy. We specifically welcome the focus on eco-design, resource efficiency and effective waste management.

European natural mineral and spring water producers market their products in fully recyclable packaging materials, such as PET, glass or aluminium.

Our members are committed to further improving the sustainability of their packaging, by making it fully circular. Natural mineral and spring water producers support the European Commission's intention to boost design for recycling. EFBW and its members are involved in pan-industry initiatives on product design. For instance, EFBW is a founding member of the European PET Bottle Platform ([EPBP](#)), a voluntary industry initiative providing design guidelines for recycling and evaluating new bottle packaging solutions and technologies on the market.

Our members have already embarked on a transformation journey to become a circular business, through collaboration with value chain partners on separate collection, quality sorting and recycling in order to incorporate an increasing amount of recycled materials back to beverage containers.

In order to make their bottles circular, producers need a consistent supply of high-quality, food contact, recycled material. To meet these requirements, separate collection is essential. EFBW was the first sector to endorse Deposit Refund Systems ([DRS](#)), in July 2019, as an efficient way to meet the quantitative and qualitative requirements for PET collection and uptake of recycled PET. *"Natural and spring water producers want to achieve circularity and give every bottle a second life. Well-designed DRS can greatly help deliver that objective"*, says EFBW President, Jean-Pierre Deffis.

Natural mineral water and spring waters are food products. Food producers must adhere to strict legal requirements for packaging materials that come into contact with food and beverages. This is especially true for Natural Mineral Water which by law must retain their purity from source to final consumer. The swift finalisation of pending authorisation procedures for plastics recycling processes in food contact will pave the way towards an increased uptake of recycled content. We are also happy to be collaborating with Plastics Recyclers Europe on [EuCertPlast](#), a scheme focuses on traceability of plastic materials (throughout the entire recycling process and supply chain), and on the quality of recycled content in the end-product.

EFBW supports the objective of CEAP to empower consumers by providing them with reliable and comparable information on products' sustainability credentials. The sector participated voluntarily in the Commission's Product Environment Footprint Category Rules ([PEFCR](#)) for food and non-food products. Specific category rules for packaged water enable bottled water producers to assess their environmental performance based on qualitative life cycle assessment.

Water has a crucial role to play towards healthy hydration and obesity prevention, another important EU goal. In that context, we find the reference to the “reduction of dependence on bottled water” unfortunate and not in the public health interest; indeed, increasing access to water, from all sources, should be encouraged.

Our members aim to become circular while at the same time offering EU citizens a healthy way to hydrate.

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**EFBW:**

The European Federation of Bottled Waters (EFBW) is the voice of the bottled water industry. We are dedicated to promoting the unique qualities of natural mineral and spring waters as well as sustainable use of water resources and Circular Economy. EFBW represents almost 550 Natural Mineral and Spring Water producers in Europe, most of them small- and medium sized companies.