



Circular Business Model Blue Print 2025-2040



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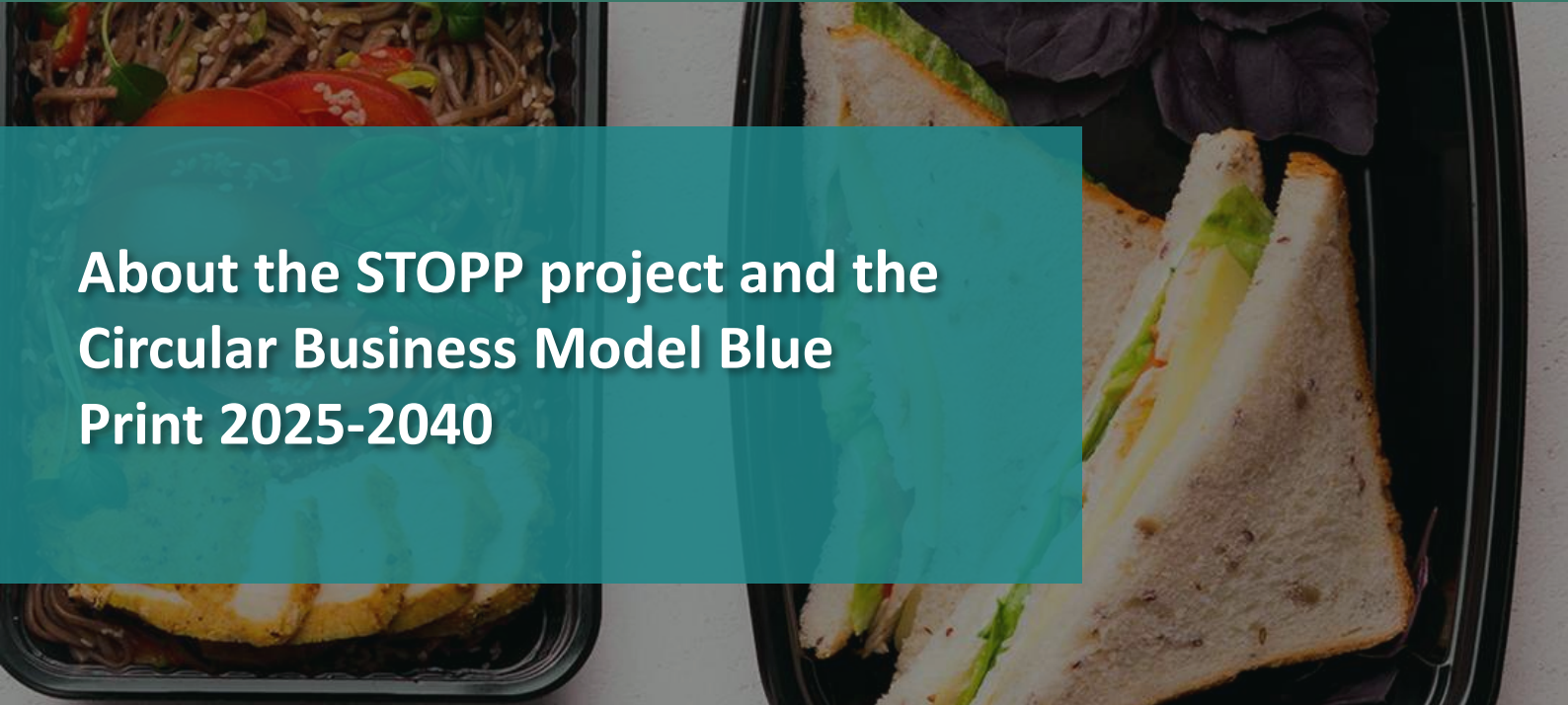
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About the STOPP project and the Circular Business Model Blue Print 2025-2040

The STOPP Project

The [STOPP project](#) aims to revolutionise food plastic packaging by implementing the “5 Rs”: Refuse, Reduce, Redesign, Reuse, and Recycle. Its primary goal is to minimise the environmental impact of plastic waste in line with the EU’s Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive. STOPP seeks to develop several training materials and strategies that support circular economy solutions in the packaging industry. By engaging stakeholders across the value chain, the project focuses on innovative recycling methods, reusable packaging systems, and consumer awareness to drive a large-scale shift towards sustainable food packaging.

The Circular Business Model Blue Print 2025-2040

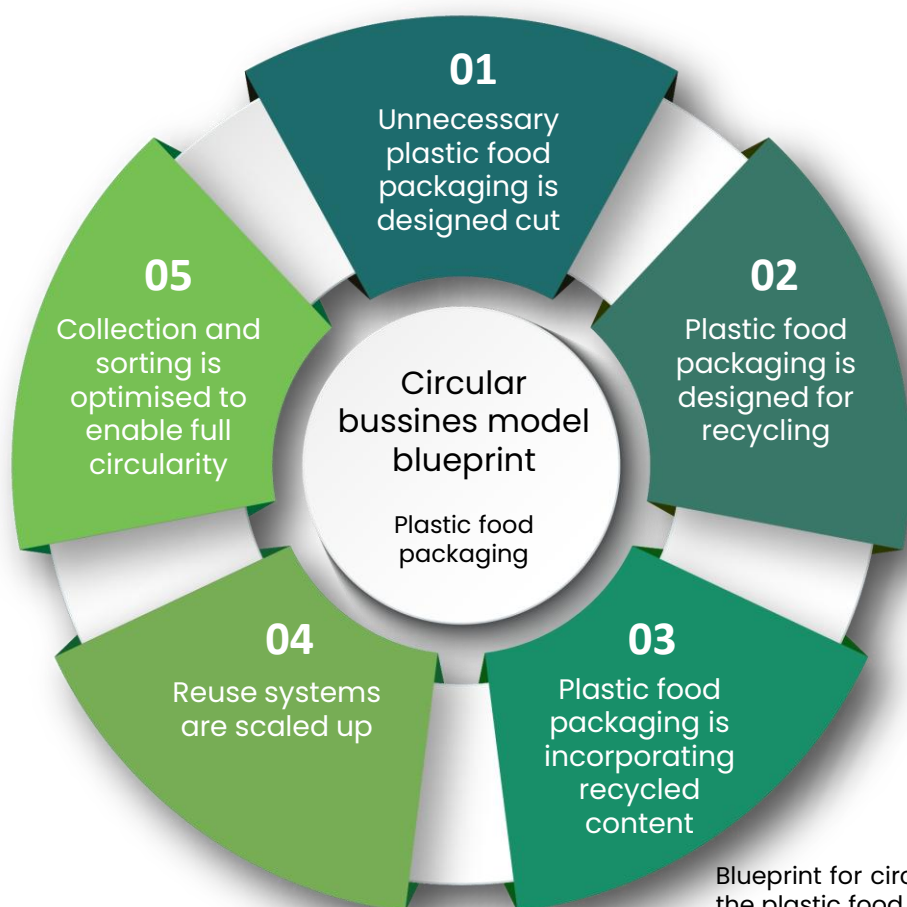
The Circular Business Model Blueprint 2025-2040 provides a detailed plan to achieve circular plastic food packaging, structured around five key objectives. The blueprint outlines specific pathways and actions for each objective, organised by system change levers, aiming to scale up circular business models and ensure they are future-fit for sustainable plastic food packaging.

The Circular Business Model Blueprint 2025-2040 is designed with the urgent need to become future fit, accelerating the uptake of circularity within the plastic food packaging sector. As environmental concerns intensify, it is crucial for the industry to adopt sustainable practices that not only address current challenges but also prepare for future demands. By focusing on scalable and practical solutions, the blueprint aims to drive the transition towards a circular economy, reducing waste and promoting resource efficiency across the value chain. This will enable the sector to meet evolving regulations and consumer expectations, ensuring long-term sustainability and resilience.

Circular Business Model Blue Print 2025-2040

Blueprint overview

The following blueprint is a detailed and comprehensive plan that outlines the specifications, requirements, and processes needed to achieve circular plastic food packaging.



Blueprint for circular business models in the plastic food packaging value chain

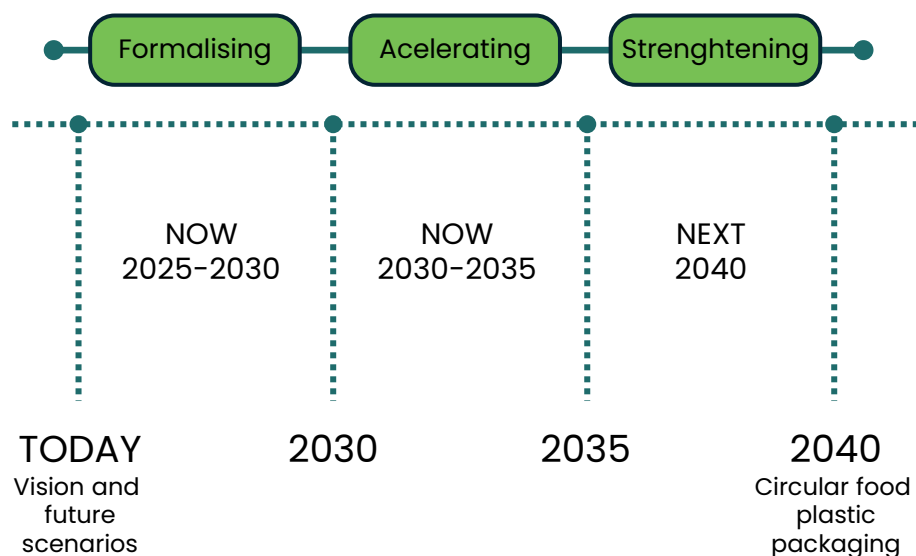


The blueprint is organised around 5 key objectives that together frame how business models for circular plastic food packaging can scale up and become future-fit:

- Unnecessary plastic food packaging is designed out
- Plastic food packaging is designed for recycling
- Plastic food packaging is incorporating recycled content
- Reuse systems are scaled up
- Collection and sorting is optimised to enable full circularity

Pathways and key actions

The following section describes the key pathways to achieve the objectives of the blueprint and details a set of actions organised by system change levers. The key objectives are presented in order 1 to 5 with their respective pathways and actions.



KEY OBJECTIVE 1: Unnecessary food plastic packaging is designed out



Challenge:

How might we reduce the use of unnecessary virgin plastic?



Pathways:

1. Rethinking plastic packaging use.
2. Replace fossil fuel plastic packaging with biomass.

PATHWAY 1: RETHINKING PLASTIC PACKAGING USE

Description: Incentivize and facilitate solutions that reduce the total volume of material in the market.

Action cards

Strategic lever	Process innovation
Name of action	Packaging free Redesign
Description	Rethink the use of plastic packaging in product portfolio. Redesign and launch packaging-free products and/or redesign products and packaging to minimize the volume of materials used for the required utility. Design out excess material and weight and eliminate avoidable packaging.
Stakeholders involved	• Manufacturers and brands • Retailers
Outcome/impact	Decrease of unnecessary plastic use.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030



PATHWAY 1: RETHINKING PLASTIC PACKAGING USE

Strategic lever	Communication
Name of action	Commitment to reducing plastic packaging
Description	Brands commit to reducing plastic demand (and physical material demand in general) through elimination and new delivery models by embracing product redesign and supply chain innovations. Commitments are aligned.
Stakeholders involved	• Manufacturers and brands • Retailers
Outcome/impact	Decrease of unnecessary plastic use.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030

Strategic lever	Financial incentives
Name of action	Financial support for DRS
Description	Deposit refund schemes can help facilitate waste collection, reduce littering and material leakage and encourage recycling. Incentives and support to deploy deposit return schemes (DRS) are needed to ensure its full implementation. EPR schemes can play an active role in the deployment of DRS.
Stakeholders involved	• Governments and Public sector • Packaging producers • Manufacturers and brands • Retailers
Outcome/impact	Decrease of unnecessary plastic use.
Timeline	• NEAR: 2030–2025



PATHWAY 1: RETHINKING PLASTIC PACKAGING USE

Strategic lever	Awareness raising
Name of action	Consumer education on plastic packaging free consumption
Description	Funding of consumer education and training to encourage adoption of circular solutions and playing their role in waste sorting. Training focuses on consumer behaviour embracing zero waste practices and packaging free consumption.
Stakeholders involved	• Governments and Public sector • Academia and research
Outcome/impact	Decrease of unnecessary plastic use
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030

Strategic lever	Legislation and Regulation
Name of action	Single use plastic ban on selected food products
Description	Ban or restriction on single use plastic packaging for a portfolio of specific food products (ie: unprocessed fruits and vegetables).
Stakeholders involved	• Governments and Public sector
Outcome/impact	Decrease of unnecessary plastic use.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030



PATHWAY 2: REPLACE FOSSIL FUEL PLASTIC PACKAGING WITH BIOMASS

Description: Explore and frame the sustainable use of biomass as feedstock for plastics production.

Action cards

Strategic lever	Innovative partnerships
Name of action	Invest in solutions that replace virgin plastics
Description	Further the cooperation with suppliers of sustainably sourced biomass to scale up plastics from biomass. Engage in dialogue between industry and policy makers to facilitate market entry of bioplastics solutions.
Stakeholders involved	• Plastic producers • Recyclers and processors • Academia and research
Outcome/impact	Virgin plastic is substituted with more sustainable feedstock.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030



PATHWAY 2: REPLACE FOSSIL FUEL PLASTIC PACKAGING WITH BIOMASS

Strategic lever	Fiscal measures
Name of action	Incentives for sustainable bioplastics
Description	Set up incentive schemes that enhance the use of biomass for materials. Incentives are linked to standardised sustainability assessment tools developed to select and prioritize sustainable feedstock (see action below).
Stakeholders involved	• Governments and Public sector • Academia and research
Outcome/ impact	Virgin plastic is substituted by more sustainable feedstock.
Timeline	• NEAR: 2030–2035

Strategic lever	Legislation and regulation
Name of action	Biomass certification
Description	Endorse trustworthy certification systems and standards for the sustainable sourcing of biomass feedstocks. Create a legally binding framework with clear sustainability criteria and incentives for labels and externally assured third-party certification systems to create a thriving European market for sustainably sourced biomass streams.
Stakeholders involved	• Governments and Public sector • Academia and research
Outcome/ impact	Virgin plastic is substituted by more sustainable feedstock.
Timeline	• NEAR: 2030–2035



PATHWAY 2: REPLACE FOSSIL FUEL PLASTIC PACKAGING WITH BIOMASS

Strategic lever	Fiscal measures
Name of action	Increasing biomass streams
Description	Incentivise biowaste sorting by households and enterprises for biomass streams that can serve as feedstock for plastics.
Stakeholders involved	• Governments and Public sector
Outcome/ impact	Increased volume of biomass to be transformed into bioplastics.
Timeline	• NEAR: 2030–2035



KEY OBJECTIVE 2:

Plastic food packaging is designed for recycling



Challenge:

How might we improve at the design stage plastic features to facilitate recycling at the end of life?



Pathways:

1. Foster circular design.

PATHWAY 1: FOSTER CIRCULAR DESIGN

Description: Bring plastics to the market that are functional and affordable but also easy to recycle or repurpose at the end of their life cycle.

Action cards

Strategic lever	Capacity building
Name of action	Design for recycling guidelines
Description	Develop industry design guidelines (i.e.: removal of colours from packaging, simplification of material streams to core polymers). Successful dissemination of the guidance and the understanding of the connection between design features and recyclability are important.
Stakeholders involved	• Plastic producers • Packaging producers • Recyclers and processors • Academia and research
Outcome/ impact	Standardised design guidelines is disseminated.
Timeline	• NOW: 2030–2035



PATHWAY 1: FOSTER CIRCULAR DESIGN

Strategic lever	Material and Process innovation
Name of action	Design for recycling
Description	Design products for recycling, including removing, decreasing or replacing design features that make recycling more difficult or less economical, for example additives, pigments, adhesives, labels, and inks. Residue left in packaging can also be minimized by package design.
Stakeholders involved	• Packaging producers • Manufacturers and brands
Outcome/impact	New products recycling ready.
Timeline	• NEAR: 2030–2035

Strategic lever	Material and Process innovation
Name of action	Rethink the logistical dimension of packaging
Description	Analyse the full packaging/product value chain, and design functional logistical aspects (rigidity, stacking capabilities, warehousing..) in ways that do not feature in the final consumer packaging, and that can lend themselves to standardisation and reuse capabilities.
Stakeholders involved	• Packaging producers • Manufacturers and brands
Outcome/impact	Reduction of packaging needs.
Timeline	• NEAR: 2030–2035



PATHWAY 1: FOSTER CIRCULAR DESIGN

Strategic lever	Fiscal measures
Name of action	Financial support in design for recycling
Description	Develop economic incentives to change packaging design according to the design for recycling guidance. Provide financial support to related manufacturing transformations.
Stakeholders involved	• Governments and Public sector
Outcome/ impact	Most plastic packaging waste is designed for recycling.
Timeline	• NEAR: 2030–2035



KEY OBJECTIVE 3:

Food packaging is incorporating recycled content



Challenge:

How might we reduce virgin plastic and increase the incorporation of recycled content in packaging?



Pathways:

1. Expand mechanical recycling
2. Scale up chemical recycling

PATHWAY 1: EXPAND MECHANICAL RECYCLING

Description: Maximise the use of recycled content in plastics production.

Action cards

Strategic lever	Process innovation
Name of action	Technological development
Description	Invest in new technologies and collaborate to speed up technology development. Technology development is to be focused especially on quality of the recyclate and decontamination technologies.
Stakeholders involved	• Plastic producers • Packaging producers • Recyclers and processors • Academia and research
Outcome/impact	Increased volume and quality of recycled content in plastic production.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030 • NEAR 2030–2035



PATHWAY 1: EXPAND MECHANICAL RECYCLING

Strategic lever	Prototyping and experimenting
Name of action	Experimentation on inclusion of recycled content
Description	Development of trials to increase recycled content in food packaging and overcome barriers to food contact applications.
Stakeholders involved	• Academia and research • Packaging producers
Outcome/ impact	Decreased knowledge gap on incorporation of recycled content.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030

Strategic lever	Innovative partnership
Name of action	Securing recycled plastic supply with long term partnerships
Description	Partner with waste management organisations to secure circular feedstock. Involvement of public authorities to derisk investment in recycling capacity infrastructures.
Stakeholders involved	• Plastic producers • Waste management • Recyclers and processors • Governments and Public sector
Outcome/ impact	Secure access to recycled feedstock.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030



PATHWAY 1: EXPAND MECHANICAL RECYCLING

Strategic lever	Legislation and Regulation
Name of action	Circular content targets
Description	Impose minimum circular content targets (also for imported plastics) at EU level.
Stakeholders involved	• Governments and Public sector
Outcome/ impact	Increased content of recycled plastic.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030

Strategic lever	Legislation and Regulation
Name of action	Norms and certifications on circular content
Description	Put forward clear definitions and practical methodologies (CEN or ISO level), to impose binding requirements to design products for the EU market (including imports) in such a way that they can be easily recycled and valorised as High-quality feedstock for the industry.
Stakeholders involved	• Governments and Public sector • Academia and research • Recyclers and processors • Certification bodies
Outcome/ impact	Increased content of recycled plastic.
Timeline	• NEAR 2030–2035



PATHWAY 1: EXPAND MECHANICAL RECYCLING

Strategic lever	Data and tech
Name of action	Digital product passport for plastics
Description	Speed up the development of digital tools to share information in the value chain and enable better tracking of materials and units produced, used, and sold.
Stakeholders involved	• Plastic producers • Packaging producers • Manufacturers and brands • Waste management • Recyclers and processors • Academia and research
Outcome/ impact	Increased knowledge on recycled plastic features for closed-loop processes.
Timeline	• NEAR 2030–2035



PATHWAY 2: SCALE UP CHEMICAL RECYCLING

Description: Chemical recycling can complement mechanical recycling in providing effective solutions for difficult-to-recycle plastic waste, and for applications such as food-contact packaging.

Action cards

Strategic lever	Economic incentives
Name of action	Scaled up investments in chemical recycling
Description	Have chemical recycling operational at scale by investing in capacity and partnering with technology providers. Support blended finance mechanisms to lower capital costs and attract more investments.
Stakeholders involved	• Recyclers and processors • Governments and Public sector • Academia and research
Outcome/impact	Improved recycled plastics volumes, and new recyclates originating from chemical recycling.
Timeline	• NEAR: 2030–2035 • NEXT: 2035–2040





KEY OBJECTIVE 4:

Reuse systems are scaled up



Challenge:

How might we scale up reusable packaging systems?



Pathways:

1. Increase packaging standardisation.
2. Scaling shared infrastructure.
3. Incentivisation of regulation for reuse.
4. Consumer acceptance of reusable packaging.
5. Ensuring financial viability of reusable packaging systems.
6. Ensuring the sustainability benefits of reusable packaging systems.

PATHWAY 1: INCREASE PACKAGING STANDARDISATION

Description: Standardising packaging for certain product types can significantly increase the efficiency of sorting, cleaning and storing. If the goal is to standardise packaging, labels and closures can be used to differentiate brands and product lines.

Action cards

Strategic lever	Engaging and convening
Name of action	Standardisation of packaging innovation
Description	Bring packaging designers and marketers together to innovate towards standardised and pooled packaging for high priority products across a range of packaging materials and categories.
Stakeholders involved	• Packaging producers • Manufacturers and brands • Reuse operators
Outcome/impact	Packaging are being standardised and ready to be used with multiple brands.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030



PATHWAY 1: INCREASE PACKAGING STANDARDISATION

Strategic lever	Innovative partnerships
Name of action	Product portfolio selection
Description	Identify 'quick win' products (e.g. fast-cycling products) and where the transition to standardised or pooled packaging is possible near term.
Stakeholders involved	• Packaging producers • Manufacturers and brands
Outcome/impact	Key product lines selected for pilots.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030

Strategic lever	Innovative partnership
Name of action	Quality standards protocols
Description	Create and implement health, hygiene, safety, and quality standards to ensure food safety and safe return systems (including quality control measures to dismiss damaged packaging).
Stakeholders involved	• Packaging producers • Manufacturers and brands • Retailers • Hospitality (restaurants) • Reuse operators
Outcome/impact	Guidelines to be used by the industry for key products packaging in the context of reuse.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030



PATHWAY 2: SCALING SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE

Description: Having to separate packaging and interact with multiple collection streams is a barrier for customers. Sharing infrastructure, such as collection, sorting, cleaning and transportation, provides economies of scale. Beyond shared costs, it provides customers with a consistent and streamlined experience.

Action cards

Strategic lever	Business model innovation
Name of action	Shared infrastructure business models
Description	Leverage combined technical expertise to plan and develop the establishment of shared logistics infrastructure for packaging collection, cleaning, and transport.
Stakeholders involved	• Manufacturers and brands • Retailers • Reuse operators
Outcome/impact	Business models and business plans showing feasible and viable deployment of shared infrastructures.
Timeline	• NEAR 2030–2035



PATHWAY 2: SCALING SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE

Strategic lever	Innovative partnerships
Name of action	Shared infrastructure guidelines
Description	Create guidelines for shared return infrastructure and sorting and cleaning centres to facilitate seamless industry cooperation, ensure effective governance and guarantee return models are inclusive for large and small businesses, as well as customers. In situations where infrastructure is shared, but specific stages, such as sorting or cleaning, are owned by different stakeholders, the guidelines also address ownership and access rights among these stakeholders.
Stakeholders involved	• Reuse operators • Academia and research
Outcome/impact	Shared practices and quality.
Timeline	• NEAR: 2030–2035

Strategic lever	Process innovation
Name of action	Innovative cleaning processes
Description	Foster innovation across the return value chain, and especially in cleaning processes for packaging applications that are more difficult to clean, which may further improve returnable packaging's environmental and economic outcomes.
Stakeholders involved	• Reuse operators • Academia and research
Outcome/impact	New products available on the market leading to efficient cleaning process.
Timeline	• NEAR: 2030–2035



PATHWAY 2: SCALING SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE

Strategic lever	Process innovation
Name of action	Manufacturing assets adaptation
Description	Studying the feasibility of adapting existing manufacturing assets and filling lines for returnable packaging and the impact of standardisation on this process.
Stakeholders involved	• Brand manufacturers
Outcome/impact	Increased assets ready for refill/reuse.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030

Strategic lever	Economic Incentives
Name of action	Financial support for shared infrastructure
Description	Provide financial support (e.g. grants) to foster the development of shared return infrastructure. Make capital available to businesses at favorable rates to support their transition to standardised and pooled packaging. Collaborate between public and private institutions on mechanisms such as blended finance, to offer guarantees, or de-risking, to crowd in sufficient capital.
Stakeholders involved	• Brands and manufacturers • Reuse operators • Governments and Public sector • Financial institutions
Outcome/impact	Shared infrastructure financed.
Timeline	• NEAR: 2030–2035



PATHWAY 2: SCALING SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE

Strategic lever	Innovative partnerships
Name of action	Collaborative governance guidelines for shared infrastructure
Description	Develop and cultivate cross-value chain collaboration e.g. through developing a collaborative governance structure for operating shared systems that work for communities and businesses of all sizes.
Stakeholders involved	• Reuse operators • Brands and manufacturers
Outcome/impact	Existence of governance guidelines.
Timeline	• NEAR: 2030–2035

Strategic lever	Innovative partnerships
Name of action	Shared infrastructure pilots
Description	Implementation of reuse shared infrastructures.
Stakeholders involved	• Packaging producers • Manufacturers and brands • Retailers • Hospitality (restaurants) • Reuse operators
Outcome/impact	Collect learnings and insights: better understanding of feasible applications.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030



PATHWAY 3: INCENTIVISATION OF REGULATION FOR REUSE

Description: Engage in regulatory transformation to increase the scale of reuse systems.

Action cards

Strategic lever	Legislation and regulation
Name of action	Reinforce reuse legislation
Description	Legislate with a recognition of the different challenges and nuances between foods, beverages, personal care, home care, and other categories. Develop consistent legal definitions and design standards to facilitate the scale up of return systems. Review and harmonise resource classification in waste legislation to ensure an enabling regulatory environment for return systems. Foster the uptake of reuse, for example by setting ambitious, evidence-based reuse targets. Enforce the reuse legislation. Set penalties for not obeying the reuse standards set in the legislation to ensure the safety and sustainability of the reuse system.
Stakeholders involved	• Governments and Public sector
Outcome/ impact	Legislation directing supporting reusable packaging systems.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030 • NEAR: 2030–2035



PATHWAY 4: CONSUMER ACCEPTANCE OF REUSABLE PACKAGING

Description: Develop strategies to engage and maintain consumer in using reusable packaging.

Action cards

Strategic lever	Experimenting – Data and tech
Name of action	Design frictionless customer experience
Description	Harmonise the customer experience and communication of how return systems operate to reduce friction to participate. Use of Data solutions.
Stakeholders involved	• Manufacturers and brands • Retailers • Hospitality (restaurants) • Reuse operators • Academia and research
Outcome/ impact	Tested customer experience reducing friction.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030



PATHWAY 4: CONSUMER ACCEPTANCE OF REUSABLE PACKAGING

Strategic lever	Prototyping and Experimentation
Name of action	Return incentives design and testing
Description	Create and test fit-for-purpose packaging return incentives that maximise return rates while ensuring inclusive affordability.
Stakeholders involved	• Manufacturers and brands • Retailers • Hospitality (restaurants) • Reuse operators • Academia and research
Outcome/ impact	Increased return rate and overall sustainability of the system.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030

Strategic lever	Awareness raising
Name of action	Reuse consumer Campaigns
Description	Establish and support awareness raising campaigns to build public trust in return systems. Educate consumers of the reuse systems, how they work and why they are needed.
Stakeholders involved	• Manufacturers and brands • Retailers • Hospitality (restaurants) • Reuse operators
Outcome/ impact	Improved consumer awareness on reuse (as a distinctive behaviour than recycling.)
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030 • NEAR: 2030–2035 • NEXT: 2035–2040



PATHWAY 4: CONSUMER ACCEPTANCE OF REUSABLE PACKAGING

Strategic lever	Public procurement
Name of action	Public Private Reuse piloting
Description	Scale Public Private Partnerships that enable governments and the private sector to work together to plan, procure, and/or pay for shared infrastructure projects.
Stakeholders involved	• Manufacturers and brands • Retailers • Hospitality (restaurants) • Reuse operators • Regional authorities
Outcome/ impact	Learnings on regional reuse systems.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030

Strategic lever	Capacity building
Name of action	Behavioural change research
Description	Understanding what levers drive the necessary customer behaviour to reach high return rates (e.g. deposits, penalties, education campaigns, shopping experiences, etc.)
Stakeholders involved	• Reuse operators • Academia and research
Outcome/ impact	Guidelines on nudging strategies leading to increased customer acceptance
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030



PATHWAY 5: ENSURING FINANCIAL VIABILITY OF REUSABLE PACKAGING SYSTEMS

Description: Set up innovative business models facilitating the financial viability of reusable systems.

Action cards

Strategic lever	Business model innovation
Name of action	EPR systems extension
Description	Set up and expand the adoption of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) systems — developed in collaboration with brands, retailers, and other industry stakeholders — with mechanisms (e.g. ecomodulation) to incentivise reuse.
Stakeholders involved	• Plastic producers • Packaging producers • Manufacturers and brands • Retailers • Hospitality (restaurants) • Reuse operators • Waste management • Recyclers and processors • Governments and Public sector • Academia and research
Outcome/impact	EPR systems generalized for Reusable packaging.
Timeline	• NEXT: 2035–2040



PATHWAY 6: ENSURING THE SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS OF REUSABLE PACKAGING SYSTEMS

Description: Ensuring that novel reuse systems are optimised from an environmental perspective by systematising Life Cycle assessments.

Action cards

Strategic lever	Environmental impact assessment
Name of action	Consolidating LCA knowledge
Description	Environmental analysis of return models (e.g. kerbside, return from home via online grocery delivery) are systematised. LCA on different packaging materials (including metal packaging and single use to reusable glass packaging) are developed. Publicly funded LCA's to ensure there is a neutral entity responsible of the studies, and that there are no biases stemming from different packaging producers.
Stakeholders involved	• Academia and research
Outcome/ impact	Increased knowledge on sustainability priorities.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030 • NEAR: 2030–2035



KEY OBJECTIVE 5:

Collection and sorting are optimised to enable full circularity



Challenge:

How might we increase collection and sorting rate?



Pathways:

1. Organise systematically the circularity of plastic streams.
2. Efficient and effective separation techniques to deliver clean recyclates.

PATHWAY 1: ORGANISE SYSTEMATICALLY THE CIRCULARITY OF PLASTIC STREAMS

Description: Significantly increase the recovery of plastic waste by introducing diverse and adequate recycling solutions for recovered plastics.

Action cards

Strategic lever	Legislation and regulation
Name of action	Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scale up
Description	Leverage and expand Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes and other policy instruments, such as Digital Product Passport (DPP), to increase and warrant the long-term financing of collection, sorting and recycling infrastructure with the aim to increase the quantity and quality of plastic waste collected for recycling.
Stakeholders involved	• Plastic producers • Packaging producers • Manufacturers and brands • Waste management • Recyclers and processors • Governments and Public sector
Outcome/impact	Improved waste collection and sorting, incentivised investments in recycling infrastructures.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030



PATHWAY 1: ORGANISE SYSTEMATICALLY THE CIRCULARITY OF PLASTIC STREAMS

Strategic lever	Business model innovation
Name of action	Producers' voluntary shift
Description	The shift towards recyclable plastics and deposit schemes can be achieved with the shift partly driven by the producers. Defining asset depreciation and investment scenarios according to EPR, provided that the objectives of different R-strategies are well-defined.
Stakeholders involved	• Plastic producers • Packaging producers • Manufacturers and brands
Outcome/ impact	Producers becoming more active.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030



PATHWAY 2: EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE SEPARATION TECHNIQUES TO DELIVER CLEAN RECYCLATES

Description: Ensure better sorting of plastic packaging waste. Pathway 1 can be seen as the requirement for this second pathway, as Extended Producer Responsibility, alongside other relevant legislation will define how the investments start cascading.

Action cards

Strategic lever	Process innovation
Name of action	Investment in separation techniques
Description	Research and investment in new and cost efficient in-line separation techniques for various types of mechanical recycling processes (film extrusion, injection moulding, blow moulding, pipe/profile extrusion).
Stakeholders involved	• Waste management • Recyclers and processors • Governments and Public sector • Academia and research
Outcome/impact	Improved recyclability potential of plastic waste.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030



PATHWAY 2: EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE SEPARATION TECHNIQUES TO DELIVER CLEAN RECYCLATES

Strategic lever	Process innovation
Name of action	Investment in pre-treatment technologies
Description	Deploy targeted pre-treatment to increase purity, remove impediments to recycling (e.g., labels and inks) and generally achieve higher output quality of recycling processes.
Stakeholders involved	• Waste management • Recyclers and processors • Governments and Public sector
Outcome/ impact	Improved recyclability potential of plastic waste.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030



PATHWAY 2: EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE SEPARATION TECHNIQUES TO DELIVER CLEAN RECYCLATES

Strategic lever	Baseline assessment
Name of action	Opening markets for sensitive products and materials
Description	Recycling of sensitive materials, such as food contact materials (FCM) is constrained due to strict regulation. FCM regulations can be regarded as means-based, as they prevent contamination by ensuring a proper separation upstream. Result- or risk-based approaches, assessing the presence of contaminants, can provide an alternative for current assessment techniques. Defining risk-based value streams for sensitive materials will enable new sourcing other than closedloop recycling and open markets for materials that are not allowed to be recycled into food contact materials now.
Stakeholders involved	• Governments and Public sector • Academia and research
Outcome/ impact	The demand for sensitive materials is ensured.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030 • NEAR: 2030–2035



PATHWAY 2: EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE SEPARATION TECHNIQUES TO DELIVER CLEAN RECYCLATES

Strategic lever	Communication
Name of action	Labelling on local recycling capabilities
Description	Collaborate with retailers to create standardized labelling in line with local recycling capabilities to maximize consumer participation
Stakeholders involved	• Retailers • Waste management
Outcome/ impact	Increased volume of recyclable content.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030

Strategic lever	Fiscal measures
Name of action	Phase out landfilling and incineration of recyclable plastic
Description	Harnessing instruments such as disposal taxes. Phasing in minimum landfill and incineration taxes on all waste streams containing plastics that steadily increase. The phasing out must be done over a period of time to prevent stagnation of slowly-emerging markets.
Stakeholders involved	• Waste management • Recyclers and processors • Governments and Public sector
Outcome/ impact	Diversion of plastic waste from landfill into recycling.
Timeline	• NEAR: 2030–2035 • NEXT: 2035–2040



PATHWAY 2: EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE SEPARATION TECHNIQUES TO DELIVER CLEAN RECYCLATES

Strategic lever	Financial and economic incentives
Name of action	Funding recycling facilities
Description	Simplify and speed up permitting processes for circular and net-zero infrastructure. Provide funding that makes circular plastics production in Europe competitive and speeds up the circular transition. Speed up circular investments in recycling.
Stakeholders involved	• Waste management • Recyclers and processors • Governments and Public sector
Outcome/ impact	Improved infrastructures to recycle plastic packaging.
Timeline	• NEAR: 2030–2035

Strategic lever	Prototyping and experimentation
Name of action	Pilots to collect films and flexibles
Description	Get a better understanding on approaches to better collect films and flexibles.
Stakeholders involved	• Waste management • Recyclers and processors
Outcome/ impact	Improved collection rate on films and flexibles.
Timeline	• NEAR: 2030–2035



PATHWAY 2: EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE SEPARATION TECHNIQUES TO DELIVER CLEAN RECYCLATES

Strategic lever	Capacity building
Name of action	Informing and nudging citizen behaviour in recycling
Description	Harmonize and simplify recycling labelling and help educate consumers on what and how to recycle. The nudging needs to be consistent in order to build consumer behaviour, a way of communicating progress may be helpful in educating consumers.
Stakeholders involved	• Governments and Public sector • Academia and research • Manufacturers and brands
Outcome/ impact	Improved sorting.
Timeline	• NOW: 2025–2030 • NEAR: 2030–2035





Circular Business Model Blue Print 2025-2040



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