STOPP and REBIOLUTION to bring EU research and policy perspectives together at joint final event on sustainable packaging

- *STOPP and REBIOLUTION will share results on the environmental impacts of plastic packaging, reuse and recycling pathways, persistent microplastics, and the development of bio-based and biodegradable materials*
- *A policy keynote and multi-stakeholder roundtable will explore how EU research results can inform packaging policy and help accelerate the uptake of sustainable and circular solutions.*

Brussels, Belgium. 03 November 2026 — The European research projects **STOPP** and **REBIOLUTION** will join forces for their Joint Final Event, ***"From Plastic Pollution to Circular Solutions"***, taking place on 3 December 2026, from 09:00 to 16:30 CET, at the Warwick Grand-Place in Brussels. The event will bring together research, industry and policy perspectives to examine how scientific knowledge and innovation can contribute to more sustainable and circular packaging systems, while highlighting the relevance of project results for European policy and future research and innovation.

The day will open with welcome remarks from Keti Medarova-Bergstrom (Research Executive Agency, European Commission), Milad Mosallaei (VTT, on behalf of **STOPP**) and Kai Oliver Siegenthaler (BASF, on behalf of **REBIOLUTION**), followed by a session on key EU project insights addressing the environmental impacts, sustainability and policy relevance of food packaging and agricultural films.

Contributions from **STOPP** will cover environmental impacts and prevention strategies (Andrej Krzan, NIC), sustainability assessment and consumer acceptance of circular packaging solutions (Julia Cilleruelo Palomero, GreenDelta), operational insights into reuse systems (Farzin Javanshour, VTT), and recycling pathways and food-contact safety (Mathilde Taveau, PRE). The project has examined how to reduce food packaging's environmental impact through the 5 Rs: Refuse, Reduce, Redesign, Reuse and Recycle, drawing together research on environmental impacts, circular solutions, reuse, recycling, sustainable business models and consumer perspectives.

REBIOLUTION will present work on technically non-recyclable applications and persistent microplastics (Kai Siegenthaler, BASF), life-cycle assessment and the challenges of evaluating these materials (Miriam Weber, Hydra Marine Sciences, and Maria Gallego, Contactica), material development and downstream processing (Yannick Matt, BASF), and biodegradation performance

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and recycling results (Prof. Michael Sander, ETH Zürich, and Christian Lott, Hydra Marine Sciences). The project focuses on developing fully bio-based, biodegradable and recyclable polyester blends for paper food packaging and agricultural films, investigating renewable feedstocks, material performance, safety, recyclability and end-of-life behaviour across different environments.

A dedicated keynote session, ***"From evidence to regulation,"*** will provide a policy perspective on the relationship between European research and policymaking. The session***, "What does EU packaging policy need from EU R&I projects?"***, will feature Wolfgang Trunk from DG ENV and Martin Policar, Policy Officer at DG RTD, who will explore how evidence and results generated through European research and innovation projects can respond to current policy needs.

This will be followed by a roundtable discussion, ***"From evidence to impact,"*** bringing together Wolfgang Trunk (DG ENV), Martin Policar (Policy Officer, DG RTD), Prof. Andreas Künkel (BASF), Dr. Andreas Kohl (Head of Specialty Chemicals and Catalysts, Verbio SE), Jeannette Morath (reCIRCLE) and Monica Harting Pfeifer (Remondis), alongside representatives from EU policy, industry, recyclers, academia, consumers and civil society organisations. The discussion will focus on pathways for accelerating and scaling up sustainable packaging systems, creating a space to consider how research findings, practical experience and different stakeholder perspectives can contribute to realistic pathways forward. The morning session will close with a summary of key takeaways and an outlook for future research and collaboration, presented by Leonor Baptista, Policy Officer at DG ENV and policy officer of the STOPP project.

The programme will also provide opportunities for networking and knowledge exchange. Following the main event, participants will be able to take part in a networking lunch featuring an EU R&I projects poster session, providing an opportunity to discover related research and foster connections across the European packaging research community. The afternoon will include an internal workshop organised by the Research Executive Agency of the European Commission, bringing together Horizon Europe projects working on innovative, sustainable and circular solutions for the packaging sector to exchange knowledge and strengthen collaboration.

By bringing together complementary research perspectives and a diverse group of stakeholders, the Joint Final Event aims to strengthen the dialogue between evidence, innovation and policy and contribute to a better understanding of the conditions needed to accelerate the transition towards more sustainable and circular packaging systems.

Registration will be available for in-person participation only: https://bit.ly/4do8sER

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About REBIOLUTION

REBIOLUTION is a European initiative aimed at advancing sustainability by establishing well-defined properties for biodegradable and recyclable bio-based products. The project focuses on developing non-toxic substances that reduce the consumption of non-renewable resources while ensuring products are suitable for composting, biodegradation in soil, and integration into freshwater and marine environments.

The **REBIOLUTION** Consortium consists of nine partners from seven countries: BASF SE (Germany), NORMEC OWS NV (Belgium), HYDRA MARINE SCIENCES GMBH (Germany), CONTACTICA S.L (Spain), AVANTIUM RENEWABLE POLYMERS BV (Netherlands), TAMPEREEN KORKEAKOULUSAATIO SR (Finland), STORA ENSO OYJ (Finland), CENTRE TECHNIQUE DE L'INDUSTRIE DES PAPIERS CARTONS ET CELLULOSES (France), and EIDGENOESSISCHE TECHNISCHE HOCHSCHULE ZUERICH (Switzerland).

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About STOPP

STOPP is a collaborative initiative that aims to revolutionise the food packaging value chain by promoting circular and sustainable solutions. It is led by VTT, and its consortium is formed by the University of Vaasa, the National Institute of Chemistry of Slovenia, the National Institute of Biology of Slovenia, ReMONDIS Recycling, HSY (Helsinki Region Environmental Services), GreenDelta, Sustainable Innovations, Plastics Recyclers Europe, Ekokumppanit, Pirkanmaan Jätehuolto, Veolia, Braskem, and reCIRCLE. STOPP has received a grant of €3,998,452.00 from the Horizon Europe research and innovation programme of the European Union.

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