

Brussels, 12.11.2019

Dear Minister,

We are contacting you about the ongoing/upcoming European debate to decide on a potential restriction of microplastics under REACH.

Civil society organisations across multiple sectors reiterate their support to the restriction of all intentionally added microplastics irrespective of their use or sector under REACH, as proposed by the European Chemical Agency (ECHA).

Once released in the environment, microplastics are practically impossible to remove, and are expected to be present in the environment for hundreds, possibly thousands, of years¹, with severe and well documented effects on the environment.

The scientific data gathered by ECHA is unequivocal: microplastics constitute a serious risk to the environment, a source of pollution that is currently, and undeniably, out of control.²

While we strongly support the approach taken by ECHA to prevent over 400 000 tonnes of microplastics to be added to the EU environment³ (and to our food and water), the current proposal includes very broad and problematic derogations regarding allegedly biodegradable microplastics and unduly long transitional periods. Such derogations and delays will considerably undermine the capacity of the restriction to achieve its objective and should therefore be rejected.

For more details on our position, we invite you to consult the position paper in annex to this letter as well as the extensive technical contributions to the public consultations made by civil society⁴.

¹ Annex XV report, section 2.7.3. and 1.4.6.

² ECHA proposal for a restriction of intentionally added microplastics, Annex XV report, available at: <https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/12414bc7-6bb2-17e7-c9ec-652a20fa43fc>

³ ECHA proposal for a restriction of intentionally added microplastics, Annex XV report, available at: <https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/12414bc7-6bb2-17e7-c9ec-652a20fa43fc>

⁴ <https://eeb.org/library/ngo-comments-on-reach-restriction-of-microplastic>

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plastic

#breakfreefromplastic is a global movement envisioning a future free from plastic pollution made up of 1,800 organisations from across the world demanding massive reductions in single-use plastic and pushing for lasting solutions to the plastic pollution crisis.

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The Rethink Plastic alliance brings together ten leading European NGOs, representing thousands of active groups, supporters and citizens in every EU Member State. We are part of the global #breakfreefromplastic movement, which consists of over 1,800 NGOs and millions of citizens worldwide. Collectively, this growing global movement systematically addresses the environmental, economic and social impacts of plastic pollution while promoting solutions.



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