



Single-Use Plastics Policy

Contents

- 1. Introduction 3
- 2. Objective 3
- 3. Scope..... 4
- 4. Target..... 4
- 5. Reporting..... 6
- 6. Policy framework 6
 - 6.1 Environmental/science-based targets 6
 - 6.2 Packaging 6
 - 6.3 Human Rights Principles and Code of Conduct..... 6
- 7. Action plan 2025..... 7
 - 7.1 Certification..... 7
 - 7.2 Partnerships 7
 - 7.3 Projects..... 8
- Annex 1: Product scope10
- Annex 2: Alternative materials12
- Annex 3: Certification13
- Annex 4: Glossary14

1. Introduction

Within the last 50 years, global plastic production has increased from 15 million tonnes to 370 million tonnes per year, and it is expected to double over the next 20 years. The ways in which plastics are currently produced, used, and discarded have a major impact on the environment, for instance in the form of landfill and marine pollution. A transformation to a new plastics economy is key to stopping the trend that, by 2050, would otherwise cause us to find more plastic in the oceans than fish, in terms of weight.

We support more than 16 million customers worldwide. Many of them work in hotels, restaurants, and the food service industry, where plastic articles are often indispensable for reasons of logistics, food safety and food waste prevention.

For now, a complete ban on plastics cannot be our goal. Single-use plastic products fulfil an important function with a view to food safety and hygiene, playing a major role at large-scale events, for example. Therefore, our main aim is to offer our range of single-use items in a more sustainable framework by achieving improved resource efficiency and reducing their plastic footprint.

METRO supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and, with its commitment to sustainability, strives to achieve the global agenda. For this policy, the following goals are particularly relevant:

- SDG 12 (Responsible consumption and production)
- SDG 13 (Climate action)
- SDG 14 (Life below water)
- SDG 15 (Life on land)
- SDG 17 (Partnerships for the goals)

2. Objective

As disposables and especially single-use plastic items are an important element of the company's business, METRO takes responsibility at various stages of the value chain.

With this policy, METRO wants to go beyond what legislation prescribes and seeks to expand the sustainability of its range of single-use items.

Therefore, METRO strives to:

- Decrease the share of disposables and transform them into reusable models if applicable
- Where reusable options are not feasible, we offer single-use solutions made from alternative materials that are recyclable or compostable

3. Scope

The METRO Single-Use Plastics Policy applies to the following scopes:

Operational scope

All METRO operations in all countries, including International Trading Offices and all Food Service Distribution (FSD) (for these operations and certain country operations, alternative timelines may apply).

Brand scope

Focus is on Own Brand (Private Label) and no-name brand single use products as well as Producer Brand products - purchased and sold by METRO. In addition, we will also work with industry partners and other stakeholders on systematic changes towards sustainable single use products.

Product scope

METRO will focus in a first step on near food products in accordance with Annex 1 purchased and sold by METRO.

Important note: the list of products is not an exhaustive list; countries need to extend the scope to their specific market and legal requirements if necessary.

4. Target

By the end of FY 2025, we will empower our customers' businesses to move into a 100% future without any conventional single-use plastics and constantly increase resource efficiency.

We achieve this by

- Providing reusable, recyclable, and compostable alternatives only
- Supporting our customers in this phase-out
- Advocating the movement towards a circular economy regarding plastic

To achieve the target of offering single-use solutions made from alternative materials that are recyclable or compostable in its own-brand and branded products, METRO refers to the following schemes:

Products/product packaging (primary and secondary) made from paper and wood

- The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)
- Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC)

Industrially compostable ¹products

- DIN-Geprüft Industrial Compostable
- TÜV AUSTRIA industrial compostable
- CIC industrial compostable

Home-compostable products

- DIN-Geprüft Home Compostable
- TÜV AUSTIRA home compostable

Addition for METRO own brands

If one of the above-mentioned certified logos is on the back of the packaging, the METRO internal packaging logo for home-compostable or industrially compostable products may be used on the front.

For claiming something compostable there must be a certification. In that effect we are open to accepting any local eco-label equivalent to the above certification standards.

We are living in times where the 'take, make, waste' industrial model has reached its limits. METRO is fully committed to the transition to a more circular economy, where the value of products, materials and resources is maintained in the economy for as long as possible and the generation of waste is minimised.

¹ At METRO we recommend using Home compostable products. Home compostable is proven to be the better solution in practice as industrially compostable products need to be collected and properly treated in a specific facility. (Also see Annex 4)

5. Reporting

METRO will make this policy publicly available, and progress will be reported in the annual METRO AG Corporate Responsibility Report. The progress in achieving the target will be measured based on the following key performance indicators (KPIs):

Total numbers of SKUs according to Annex 1 and thereof number of SKUs made from alternative materials.

Information will be disclosed in our Annual Corporate Responsibility Report and METRO Sustainable Website.

6. Policy framework

6.1 Environmental/science-based targets

METRO is committed to reducing absolute Scope 3 CO₂ emissions (supply chain) by 15% by 2030 compared to FY 2018. Scope 3 emissions account for more than 90% of our total carbon footprint. In its own global business operations METRO has committed to climate neutrality by 2040.

6.2 Packaging

METRO works on the improvement of the packaging of products. Therefore METRO expects from its suppliers to comply with the principles described in the "[METRO Cash & Carry Own Brand Packaging Policy](#)".

6.3 Human Rights Principles and Code of Conduct

To enhance its business impact and to benefit its customers, society and the environment, METRO has stated its respect for human rights as a fundamental value in its [Human Rights Principles](#) and formulated the [METRO Code of Conduct for Business Partners](#), which it expects all its suppliers to adhere to.

7. Action plan 2025

The METRO Single-Use Plastics Policy will be supported by the METRO Single-Use Plastics Action Plan. In this plan, METRO will outline timelines and actions for meeting its targets. The plan will be a living document which will be defined for 18 to 24 months. It will be regularly reviewed and updated accordingly. The action plan consists of 3 pillars (certifications, partnerships, and projects) to ensure relevant actions with the right partners.

7.1 Certification

To achieve the objective and targets of this policy, METRO refers to various certification schemes. The list of accepted standards and certifications is a living document and will be updated according to new insights and benchmarks. See 4. for the list of accepted certification schemes and Annex 3.

7.2 Partnerships

METRO is working actively on the implementation of its Single-Use Plastics Policy together with different stakeholders within the value chain. To drive the change towards a new circular economy, METRO believes it is essential to implement a dialogue mechanism spanning the entire value chain to ensure a close and trustful collaboration between all participants. METRO also encourages its subsidiaries to partner with nationally relevant stakeholders.

[Ellen MacArthur Foundation \(EMA\)](#)

In October 2018, METRO joined the New Plastics Economy initiative of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation. In this international network, more than 450 organisations, companies, universities, academics and financial institutions work together to achieve the following, amongst other goals:

1. Taking action to eliminate problematic or unnecessary plastic packaging by the end of CY 2025
2. Taking action to move from single-use towards reuse models where relevant by the end of CY 2025
3. Ensuring that 100% of plastic packaging is reusable, recyclable or compostable by the end of CY 2025
4. Using recycled content for all plastic beverage and near-food packaging by the end of CY 2025

[Circular Plastics Alliance](#)

The Circular Plastics Alliance is an initiative under the European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy (2018). The European Commission launched the

Circular Plastics Alliance in December 2018 to help plastics value chains boost the EU market for recycled plastics to 10 million tonnes by the end of calendar year 2025.

The Circular Plastics Alliance is open to all public and private actors from European plastics value chains who are ready to actively contribute to delivering on the declaration of the alliance.

[EuroCommerce](#), of which METRO is a member, joined the alliance on 20 September 2019. Together with other retailers and wholesalers, METRO works to influence and support sustainable consumption by reducing unnecessary use of virgin materials, optimising logistics and offering alternatives to plastic in products and their packaging.

Consumer Goods Forum (CGF)

The Consumer Goods Forum is a global industry network that brings together the CEOs and senior management of retailers, manufacturers, service providers and other stakeholders across 70 countries. The CGF is driven by its members to encourage the global adoption of practices and standards that serve the consumer goods industry worldwide. METRO Cash & Carry participates in 2 working groups dealing with transparency and environmental issues as well as social topics.

7.3 Projects

Not only does METRO strive for certification: it also recognises the positive impact singular projects can have on the sustainable development of an area or local community.

Loop

In October 2020, METRO France joined together with [Loop](#) by Terracycle to kick off a trial in dedicated stores in and near Paris, enabling customers to buy products in containers designed to be returned and refilled repeatedly: a way to cut down consumer goods packaging.

After successful testing, METRO aims to expand Loop into its other countries.

Loop already operates in the US and France, while expansion to Canada, Japan and Australia is planned for early 2022.

METRO Plastics Initiative

The METRO Plastics Initiative is a multi-year global commercial initiative with a focus on sustainably tackling the reduction, recycling and recovery of plastic – starting in June 2021. It aims to:

- Act upon METRO’s sustainability strategy of promoting a transition to a circular plastics economy
- Create awareness among our customers and educate them on sustainable plastic packaging
- Create a commercial incentive for customers at the same time

This will be implemented by:

- Supporting customers with information and products that help them to make a change by introducing Sustainable Plastic Zones – online and in stores
- Supporting increased recycling rates by installing recycling stations in stores
- Supporting the reduction of plastic in the ecosystem by partnering with [Plastic Bank](#) to prevent the flow of plastic into oceans

Annex 1: Product scope

This is not an exhaustive list; countries need to extend the scope to their specific market and legal requirements if necessary.

METRO will focus in a first step on the following near food products:

Category	Article	Plastic material(s)	Alternative material(s) (also check Annex 2)
Disposables and tableware			
Cups/cup lids	Brown handle cup	PS, PP	Bagasse, bamboo, paper cups coated in BioPBS/PE/PLA, rPET
	White handle cup	PS, PP	
	White drinking cup	PS, PP	
	Transparent drinking cup	PS, PP	
	Thermal cup	EPS, PS	
	Cup lid	PS, PP	Paper/cardboard, sugar cane
Glasses	Transparent schnapps glass	PS	Reusable PP (no available alternative single use options)
	Red/white wine glass	PS	
	Cocktail glass	PS	
	Champagne glass	PS	
Plates	Plates, unseparated	PP, PS	Bagasse, palm leaf, paper, bamboo
	Plates, separated	PP, PS	
Bowls		PP, PS	Bagasse, palm leaf, paper, bamboo If coated: BioPBS/PE/PLA
Food containers (packaging cups and lids)	Burger boxes (with lid)	PS, PP, PET	Bagasse, paper, rPET If coated: BioPBS/PE/PLA
	Menu/meal boxes (with lid)		
	Salad boxes/trays		
Take-away containers		EPS	Aluminium, bagasse, paper, wheat If coated: BioPBS/PE/PLA
Cutlery	Knives	PS, PP	wood, wheat, paper, bamboo
	Forks	PS, PP	
	Tablespoons	PS, PP	
	Teaspoons	PS, PP	
	Chip forks	PS, PP	
	Skewers	PS, PP	

Category	Article	Plastic material(s)	Alternative material(s) (also check Annex 2)
Stirrers	Coffee stirrers	PP, EPS	Bamboo, wood
	Cocktail stirrers	PP, EPS	Bamboo, wood
Straws		PP, EPS	Paper, bagasse, wheat
Lightweight carrier bags	T-shirt bags (coloured)	HDPE/LDPE	Cotton, high-density bio-polyethylene made from sugar-cane ethanol, paper
	Fruit and vegetable bags	HDPE/LDPE	Cotton
Beauty and personal care			
	Cotton buds	PP	Bamboo, paper

Not in the scope: pastry bags, freezer bags, garbage bags, gloves

Key to abbreviations: PS = polystyrene, EPS= Expanded Polystyrene, PE = Polyethylene, PET = Polyethylenterephthalat, HDPE = high-density polyethylene, LDPE = low-density polyethylene, PVC = polyvinyl chloride, Bio PBS = Polybutylene succinate

Please note that polylactic acid (CPLA/PLA), a commonly used alternative, is not much better than conventional plastic. CPLA/PLA is known as a bio-based plastic which is made from biomass, for example plants. Unfortunately, it is not recyclable as it negatively impacts the recycling stream of widely recycled plastic materials and where anaerobic digestion is used. The material is not suitable for home composting either, and in Europe the products will either be banned, or their use will be severely limited.

Annex 2: Alternative materials

Chart A: Function and circularity

Alternative material	Function	Reusable	Recyclable in practice and at scale	Home-compostable (55–60 °C)	Industrially compostable (in accordance with EN 13432)
Bagasse	Hot and cold food	✗	✗	✓	✓
Paper/cardboard	Fat-resistant	✗	✓		
Paper with BioPBS coating		✗	✗	✗	✓
Cardboard/paper with PLA coating	Frozen and hot food	✗	✗	✗	✓
Palm leaf	Resistant to fat, oil, humidity and heat	✗	✗	✗	✓
Bamboo		✓	✗	✗	✓
Reusable PP/PET		✓	✓ (if collected)	✗	✗
Wood	Hot and cold food	✓		✓	
Stainless steel		✓	Not collected for recycling	✗	✗

Chart B: **Not considered** a future-proof alternative material

Polylactic acid (CPLA/PLA)	This bio-based plastic (made from biomass, e.g. plants) is in the scope of the EU Single-Use Plastics Directive, and products made from it will either be banned or be subject to consumption reduction measures (national). Moreover, the material is not recyclable, and it impacts the recycling stream of widely recycled plastic materials and the anaerobic digestion process. The material is not suitable for home composting.
----------------------------	--

Annex 3: Certification

[The Forest Stewardship Council \(FSC\)](#) and the [Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification \(PEFC\)](#)

The FSC and PEFC's objective is to protect our forests by promoting sustainable forest management through certification which confirms that the forest is being managed in a way that preserves biological diversity and benefits the lives of local people and workers, while ensuring it sustains economic viability.

[DIN CERTCO Gesellschaft](#) für Konformitätsbewertung mbH offers certification for products or packaging made from biodegradable materials which are compatible with home and garden composting. It awards the DIN-Geprüft Home Compostable label for this, along with an individual registration number. Compostability combined with biodegradability represents an important element of the recycling management system.

Identification, and thus the return of products or packaging into the materials cycle, is only made possible by certification and by a system of unique labelling.

Due to their positive potential for meeting the requirements of the recycling industry, industrially compostable, biodegradable materials are in growing demand. (Please see Annex 4 for definitions.)

[CIC compostabile](#)

The CIC – Italian Composting and Biogas Association – is a non-profit organisation that promotes and enhances the recycling of the organic fraction of waste from by-products and has as its purpose the production of compost and biomethane. The certification scheme aims to direct industry towards environmental sustainability paths by using renewable raw materials, including biodegradable and compostable material.

[TÜV AUSTRIA: OK compost INDUSTRIAL/HOME](#)

Packaging or products featuring the OK compost INDUSTRIAL label are guaranteed to be biodegradable in an industrial composting plant. This applies to all components, inks and additives. In any event, any material featuring the OK compost INDUSTRIAL logo complies with the requirements of the EU Packaging Directive (94/62/EEC).

The OK compost HOME label guarantees that packaging or products meet specific requirements for complete biodegradability, even in the garden compost heap. The OK compost HOME certification programme does not explicitly refer to a specific standard but details all the technical requirements that a material must meet in order to obtain the certification.

Annex 4: Glossary

Post-consumer material:

- Post-consumer material is material generated by households or by commercial, industrial, and institutional facilities in their role as end users of the product. This material can no longer be used for its intended purpose.
- This includes returns of material from the distribution chain. It excludes pre-consumer material (e.g. production scrap).

Reuse of packaging:

- Operation by which packaging is refilled or used for the same purpose for which it was conceived, with or without the support of auxiliary material (a material used to support the refilling/loading of reusable packaging) present on the market, enabling the packaging to be refilled

Reusable packaging:

- Packaging which has been designed to accomplish, or proves its ability to accomplish, a minimum number of trips or rotations in a system for reuse

Recyclable packaging:

- Packaging or a packaging component is recyclable if its successful post-consumer collection, sorting and recycling has been proven to work in practice and at scale
- To qualify as recyclable in practice and at scale, a 30% post-consumer recycling rate must be achieved in multiple regions, collectively representing at least 400 million inhabitants

Material recycling:

- Reprocessing, by means of a manufacturing process, of a used material into a product or packaging, a component incorporated into a product, or a secondary (recycled) raw material, excluding energy recovery and the use of the product as a fuel

Industrially and home-compostable:

- Compostability is a characteristic of a material that is biodegradable under specific conditions (i.e. a certain temperature, time frame, etc.). At the end of this process, only natural residues remain (water, carbon, biomass).
- Industrially compostable material needs to be collected and properly treated in a specific facility. It will completely break down within 12 weeks under specific conditions in accordance with European standard EN 13432. In the case of industrial composting, the process is accelerated due to limited infrastructure. Packaging which does not completely break down is incinerated. Moreover, this system is not available in all countries.

It is not biodegradable in landfills or in-home compost bins. Furthermore, if it ends up in marine environments, it will function similarly to conventional plastic, breaking down into micro-sized pieces lasting for decades and presenting a danger to marine life.