

Innovators win \$1 million to prevent ocean plastics

Malta, October 5, 2017

Highlights:

- Six innovators will share a \$1 million prize for new designs to prevent plastic from becoming waste and entering the ocean
- The winners will be presented with their awards today by Karmenu Vella, European Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, at the Our Ocean conference in Malta hosted by the European Union.
- Also today at Our Ocean, six participants of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's New Plastics Economy initiative - MARS, M&S, PepsiCo, The Coca-Cola Company, Unilever, and Werner & Mertz - are making or reiterating pledges to use 100% reusable, recyclable or compostable packaging by 2025 at the latest
- The Ellen MacArthur Foundation is calling on industry to adopt more commitments and scale up innovation to keep plastics in the economy and out of the ocean

With 8 million tonnes of plastic entering the ocean each year, action is needed urgently to change the way we make and use plastics, so that they don't become waste in the first place. That is why the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, together with the Prince of Wales's International Sustainability Unit, launched the **\$2m New Plastics Economy Innovation Prize** in May this year. The Prize is funded by Wendy Schmidt as Lead Philanthropic Partner of the New Plastics Economy initiative.

Today the **winners of the \$1m Circular Design Challenge** (part one of the Prize, run in collaboration with OpenIDEO) **are being awarded by Karmenu Vella, European Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, at the Our Ocean conference in Malta.** The Challenge focused on the 30% of plastic packaging items that are either too small or too complex to be recycled and often find their way into the ocean, for example shampoo sachets, wrappers, and coffee cup lids. More than 600 innovators from over 60 countries from across the world participated.

The Circular Design Challenge winners fall into three categories:

Category 1:

Rethinking grocery shopping. Today's supermarkets are full of single-use plastic packaging to keep our groceries safe and fresh. Yet by rethinking the way we get products to people around the world, innovators can design out waste.

- **MIWA**, from the Czech Republic, introduces an app that lets shoppers order the exact quantities of the groceries they need, which are then delivered in reusable packaging from the producer to their closest store or to their home.
- **Algramo**, a Chilean social enterprise, offers products in small quantities in reusable containers across a network of 1,200 local convenience stores in Chile.

Category 2:

Redesigning sachets. Hundreds of billions of sachets are sold each year to get small quantities of personal care and food products, such as shampoo and soy sauce, to people mostly in emerging markets. Those sachets are not recycled and many end up polluting the ocean.

- **Evoware**, an Indonesian startup, designs food wrappings and sachets (containing, for example, instant coffee or flavouring for noodles) made out of a seaweed-based material that can be dissolved and eaten.
- **Delta**, from the United Kingdom, offers a compact technology that allows restaurants to make and serve sauces in edible and compostable sachets.

Category 3:

Reinventing coffee-to-go. More than 100 billion disposable coffee cups are sold globally every year, yet today almost none of them (nor their lids) are recycled.

- **CupClub**, based in the United Kingdom, introduces a reusable cup subscription service, in which reusable cups can be dropped off at any participating store.
- **TrioCup** from the United States offers a disposable paper cup made with an origami-like technique that removes the need for a plastic lid. The team has chosen a 100% compostable material and is working on an alternative that is 100% recyclable.

Starting in 2018, the winning innovators will join a 12-month accelerator programme in collaboration with Think Beyond Plastic, where they will work with mentors and expert advisors from the plastics industry and investor community to refine their design prototypes and scale them to become marketable solutions.

“Plastics in the ocean are a clear sign of a broken system, as this was never intended to happen. That is why rethinking the way we make and use plastics is so crucial: how can we capture the material’s benefits, retain its value and make sure it does not end up where it does not belong? Designers and innovators responding to our challenge have displayed tremendous creativity. The combination of the winning entries being announced today and the companies committing to 100% reusable, recyclable or compostable packaging by 2025, will help us get closer to a waste-free circular economy.” – Dame Ellen MacArthur

“These innovative approaches to replacing some of today’s ubiquitous disposable packaging are inspiring to us all. They are deserving of both prize money and also the support they will continue to receive as their prototypes move into a new development phase of fine tuning and partnerships that will enable them to scale

globally. This is how positive systemic change in the world's plastic economy can happen relatively quickly." —Wendy Schmidt

"Bringing your fish home in a plastic bag one year and bringing that plastic bag home in a fish the next, is the reality. This award shows how innovation can inspire redesign, reduction of waste and reutilisation. Something also central to the European Commission's upcoming strategy on plastics. Congratulations to the six innovators."—Commissioner Vella

While the winning innovations represent the type of solutions needed to build a plastics system that works, these entrepreneurs cannot drive the transition alone. Major businesses, governments, and investors must make clear commitments and collaborate towards a circular economy for plastics.

Six participants in the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's New Plastics Economy initiative - MARS, M&S, PepsiCo, The Coca-Cola Company, Unilever, and Werner & Mertz - are pledging (or reiterating a pledge) **in Malta today to use 100% reusable, recyclable or compostable packaging by 2025 at the latest.** This is a major step forward, and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation calls on the whole industry to follow their lead, as well as to make commitments that ensure packaging is not just recyclable, but also in practice recycled, reused or composted. One critical action is to increase demand for recycled materials. Consumer goods producer Werner & Mertz's pledge today to use 100% recycled content in all its consumer packaging by 2025 sets a great example for others to follow. A critical mass of such commitments is essential to move towards a new plastics economy in which no plastic becomes waste.

ENDS

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NOTES FOR EDITORS:

THE ELLEN MACARTHUR FOUNDATION

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation was created in 2010 to accelerate the transition to a circular economy. The Foundation works across five areas: insight and analysis, business and government, education and training, systemic initiatives, and communication. With its Knowledge Partners (Arup, IDEO, McKinsey & Co., and SYSTEMIQ), and supported by Core Philanthropic Funder (SUN), the Foundation works to quantify the economic opportunity of a more circular model and to develop approaches for capturing its value. The

Foundation collaborates with its Global Partners (Danone, Google, H&M, Intesa Sanpaolo, NIKE, Inc., Philips, Renault, Unilever), and its CE100 network (businesses, universities, emerging innovators, governments, cities, and affiliate organisations), to build capacity, explore collaboration opportunities and to develop circular business initiatives. The Foundation has created global teaching, learning and training platforms on the circular economy, encompassing work with leading universities, schools and colleges, and online events such as the Disruptive Innovation Festival. By establishing platforms such as the New Plastics Economy initiative, the Foundation works to transform key material flows, applying a global, cross-sectoral, cross value chain approach that aims to effect systems change. The Foundation promotes the idea of a circular economy via research reports, case studies and books series, using multiple channels, web and social media platforms, including circulatenews.org which provides a leading online source for circular economy news and insight.

Further information: ellenmacarthurfoundation.org | [@circulareconomy](https://twitter.com/circulareconomy)

THE NEW PLASTICS ECONOMY

The New Plastics Economy is an ambitious, three-year initiative to build momentum towards a plastics system that works. Applying the principles of the circular economy, it brings together key stakeholders to rethink and redesign the future of plastics, starting with packaging. The initiative is led by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation in collaboration with a broad group of leading companies, cities, philanthropists, policymakers, academics, students, NGOs, and citizens.

The initiative is supported by Wendy Schmidt as Lead Philanthropic Partner, MAVA Foundation, Oak Foundation, and players of People's Postcode Lottery (GB) as Philanthropic Funders. Amcor, The Coca-Cola Company, Danone, MARS, Novamont, PepsiCo, Unilever, and Veolia are the initiative's Core Partners.

The New Plastics Economy initiative focuses on five interlinked and mutually reinforcing building blocks:

1. Dialogue Mechanism – Bringing together for the first time a group of over 40 leading companies and cities across the global value chain to complete collaborative pioneer projects and inform the other building blocks
2. Global Plastics Protocol – Providing a common target state to innovate towards, to overcome existing fragmentation and enable the creation of effective markets
3. Innovation – Mobilising innovations that can scale globally, to re-define what's possible and create the conditions for a new economy
4. Evidence Base – Building an economic and scientific evidence base to guide improvement and inform the global debate
5. Stakeholder Engagement – Engaging a broad set of stakeholders, including academics, students, policymakers, NGOs, and industry associations in the design of a better plastics system.

Learn more at www.newplasticseconomy.org | [@NewPlasticsEcon](https://twitter.com/NewPlasticsEcon)

THE PRINCE OF WALES'S INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY UNIT

The Prince of Wales's International Sustainability Unit (ISU) was formed in 2010 to address critical challenges to development and the environment. The ISU builds on the success of The Prince's Rainforests Project, established to help find a solution to tropical deforestation. With an international reputation for neutral convening, underpinned by rigorous analysis, the ISU engages key actors from Governments, the private sector, research communities and civil society to catalyse positive change across the global sustainability agenda.

The ISU's Marine Programme focuses on the global transition to a sustainable Blue Economy. The core components of this work include fish stock recovery, coral reef health and marine plastic pollution. During the last six years the ISU has brought together stakeholders from all sectors to accelerate solutions to some of the most pressing ocean-related challenges and build consensus on solutions for and a pathway towards a sustainable Blue Economy. Learn more at www.pcfisu.org

WENDY SCHMIDT

Wendy Schmidt is President of The Schmidt Family Foundation, where she works to advance the development of renewable energy and the wiser use of natural resources. The Foundation houses its grant-making operation in The 11th Hour Project, which supports more than 150 non-profit organizations around the world in program areas including renewable energy, ecological agriculture, human rights, and our maritime connection through its 11th Hour Racing program. In 2009, Wendy Schmidt and her husband, Eric Schmidt, created the Schmidt Ocean Institute (SOI), and in 2012 launched the research vessel, *Falkor*, as a mobile platform to advance ocean exploration, discovery, and knowledge, and catalyze the sharing of information about the oceans. Since 2012, *Falkor* has hosted more than 400 scientists from 29 countries.

To further her commitment to ocean issues, in 2010 Wendy Schmidt partnered with XPRIZE, following the Deepwater Horizon disaster, to sponsor the Wendy Schmidt Oil Cleanup XCHALLENGE, a \$1.4 million competition designed to identify efficient and innovative solutions to clean up surface oil spills. Wendy Schmidt once again partnered with XPRIZE in 2012 to design the Wendy Schmidt Ocean Health XPRIZE, a \$2 million purse, awarded in July, 2015, where competitors responded to the global need for accurate and available sensors to more broadly measure the signs of ocean acidification, one of the harbingers of climate change.

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OpenIDEO

OpenIDEO is IDEO's open innovation portfolio, empowering people to design solutions to the world's toughest challenges, and working with partners around the world to bring these solutions to life. OpenIDEO was created to put the power of human-centered design in the hands of many, harnessing the diverse skills and perspectives of people from all over the world to spark conversation and innovation where it's needed most. Learn more at www.ideo.com

COMPANY PLEDGES

MARS

“Mars announced to reach 100% recyclability of its packaging by 2025, with the aim of reducing its carbon footprint over the lifetime.”

M&S

“Marks & Spencer announced that all its plastic packaging in the UK will be 100% recyclable and widely recycled by 2022. It will work to eliminate packaging that strays into the environment (particularly oceans) and actively design out packaging parts that can't be reused or recycled. It will introduce products with reclaimed social plastics as a component, providing positive social benefit to the communities from which the materials are sourced. In addition, M&S will assess the feasibility for all its plastic packaging to be made from one polymer group by 2022 to reduce consumer confusion and to improve recycling.”

UNILEVER
“Unilever announced its commitment to help transform global plastic packaging material flows by: ensuring all of its plastic packaging is reusable, recyclable or compostable by 2025; increasing its use of recycled plastic content in its packaging the full “palette” of plastics materials used in its packaging by 2020 to help create a plastics protocol for the industry; and helping tackle the industry-wide sachet waste issue, by investing in proving, and then sharing with industry, a technical solution to recycle multi-layered sachets – CreaSolvâ.”

PEPSICO

“PepsiCo announced its ambition to design 100% of its packaging to be recyclable, compostable or biodegradable, increase recycled materials in its plastic packaging, reduce packaging's carbon impact, and in partnership with the PepsiCo Foundation, work to increase recycling rates by 2025.”

UNILEVER

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THE COCA COLA COMPANY

“The Coca-Cola Company announced that it will make all its consumer packaging 100% recyclable by 2025. While the great majority of the bottles and cans used to distribute its products are already 100% recyclable, the Company will expand 100% recyclability to its entire consumer packaging range (including pouches, cartons and others). This is one of many steps Coca-Cola will take to ensure its packaging gets recycled and does not end up in the wrong place, in particular our oceans. The Coca-Cola Company is building a more

holistic packaging plan to move forward these efforts and will share details in coming months.”

W&M

“The Werner & Mertz Group, whose packaging is already hundred per cent recyclable, announced its commitment to use hundred per cent recycled plastic in at least 70 million bottles each year as of 2017, corresponding to sixty-five per cent of its entire annual bottle volume, aiming to go up to one hundred per cent for all its consumer goods packaging by 2025.”