

PLASTICS
PACT



Plastics Pacts: Scaling Impact

Executive Summary

Convened by



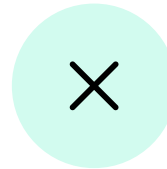
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Introduction

The way that we currently produce and use plastics poses a major risk to people and the planet. The world produces 142.6 million tonnes of plastic packaging every year¹, continuing this trend, 30 million tonnes of plastic will end up in the environment annually by 2040, with serious consequences for the natural world as well as for human health².

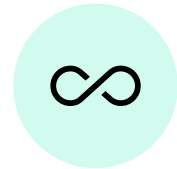
The **Plastics Pact Network** is a globally coordinated response to this world-wide problem. There is now a Pact on every continent, forming a global network involving over 900 local and global organisations. Each Pact brings together businesses, government bodies, NGOs, research organisations and citizens of a country or region with a programme of action and targets tailored to the local context, yet at the same time, all Pacts are aligned under one common global vision: to create a circular economy for plastics, and so eliminate plastic waste and pollution.

Six years in, Plastics Pacts are a proven model for tackling plastic pollution. Thanks to Plastics Pacts, billions of problematic or unnecessary plastic items have been eliminated; design for reusability, recyclability and compostability in practice and at scale has increased by 23%; and incorporation of recycled content back into packaging has increased by 44%.



Target 1

Eliminate problematic and unnecessary plastic packaging and items



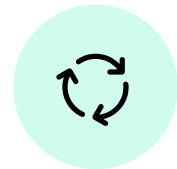
Target 2

Plastic packaging to be reusable or recyclable (or compostable)



Target 3

Increase amount of plastic packaging effectively recycled



Target 4

Increase average recycled content across all plastic packaging

**+900
Members**

from NGO, business and public sector organisations

NATIONAL PLASTICS PACT

- Canada
- Chile
- Colombia
- France
- India
- Kenya
- Poland
- Portugal
- South Africa
- United Kingdom
- United States of America

REGIONAL PLASTICS PACT

- Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Island Nations (ANZPAC)

**12
Plastics Pacts**

The Plastics Pact Network spans every continent.

¹OECD (2022) Global Plastics Outlook - Economic Drivers, Environmental Impacts and Policy Options. <https://doi.org/10.1787/de747aef-en>

²OECD (2023) Towards Eliminating Plastic Pollution by 2024. A Policy Scenario Analysis, Interim Findings. <https://www.oecd.org/environment/plastics/Interim-Findings-Towards-Eliminating-Plastic-Pollution-by-2040-Policy-Scenario-Analysis.pdf>

Executive Summary

Plastics Pacts are a proven model for dealing with plastic pollution at pace. In 2018, WRAP and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation launched the UK Plastics Pact. Six years later, a dozen Plastics Pacts in countries representing over 2 billion people and spread across all continents, form a global network with a proven track record of delivering real impact towards eliminating plastic waste and pollution. This report shares the impact and learnings from the past 6 years and looks ahead at how Plastics Pacts will continue to be a driving force of local, collaborative action around the world, informing and complementing national policy and a Global Plastics Treaty.

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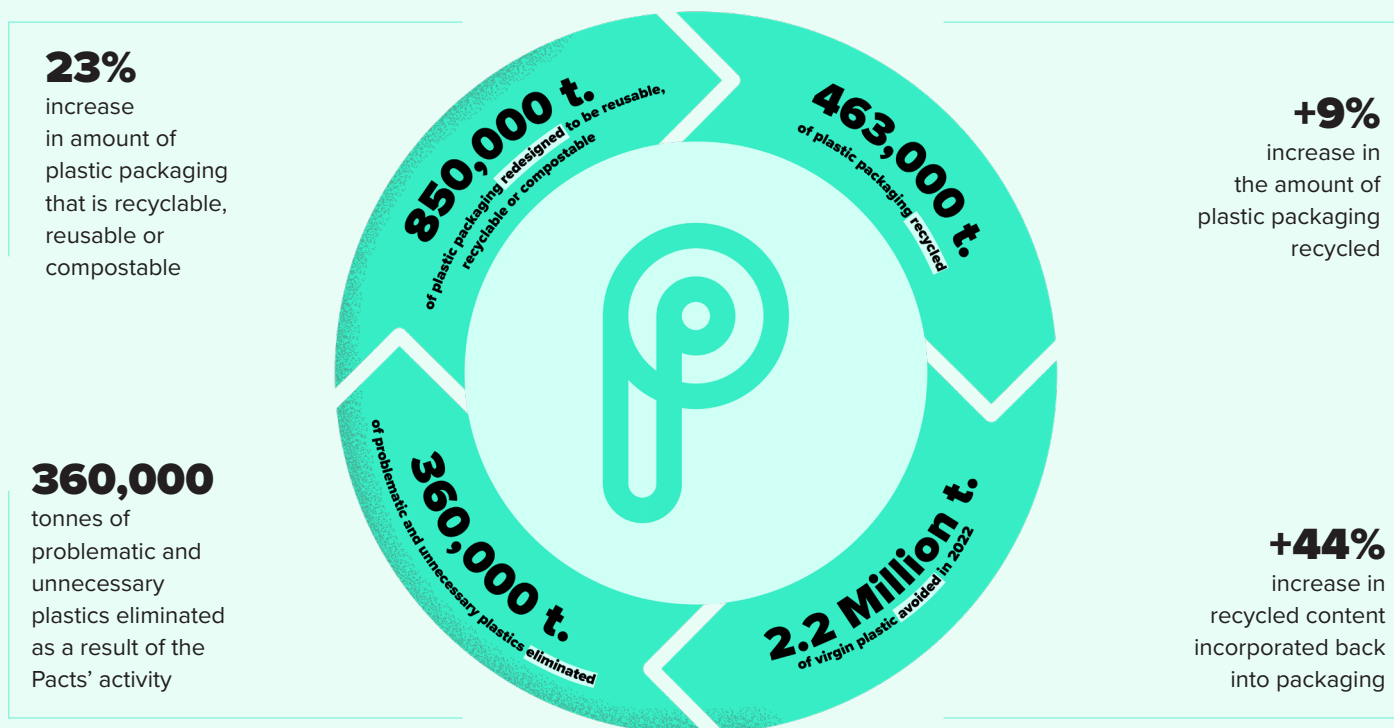
Plastics Pacts mobilised over 900 organisations in 19 countries around the world to collaborate towards a common vision and targets. Each Pact brings together businesses from across the full value chain, government bodies, NGOs and other stakeholders at national level. In Pact countries, their members collectively account for an average of 33%³ of the plastic packaging that is placed on

the market, all united behind a [common vision](#) of a circular economy which is aligned with the [Global Commitment](#).

The Plastics Pacts are delivering impact on the ground and at scale towards eliminating plastic waste and pollution.

- Together, Plastic Pacts have achieved the elimination of over 360,000 tonnes of problematic and unnecessary plastics, meaning that tens of billions of items have been removed from circulation.
- Plastics Pacts have redesigned more than 850,000 tonnes of plastic packaging so that it is reusable, recyclable or compostable at scale and have increased recycled content in packaging by 44%, meaning that over 2.2 million tonnes of virgin plastic were avoided in 2022.
- Plastics Pact countries saw a 9% increase in the amount of plastic packaging recycled; equating to 463,000 tonnes.

While the Network has been active for the past 6 years, many of the Plastics Pacts only launched within the past 3 years; this impressive impact has been achieved in a relatively short timeframe.



³ This figure does not consider Pacts with 2030 targets (India, Kenya and Colombia).

Plastics Pacts are well-established platforms for collaboration, evidence-based knowledge creation, and sharing and creating transparency. Plastics Pacts facilitate impactful action by fostering local and global collaboration across the value chain, boasting over 70 working groups and 100+ publications, including guidance, tools, reports and research findings, as well as the implementation of pilots and collaborative projects. Pacts have made real changes happen on the ground by taking actions such as creating strategies to increase recycled plastic in priority packaging applications, building insights on the requirements to scale up reuse and refill models, aligning in design for recyclability rules, piloting new inclusive collection systems and developing behaviour change strategies to increase citizen engagement. Pacts enable evidence-based decisions through public annual reporting, enhancing transparency and informing business and government decisions at a national and global level. With 27 annual reports providing quantitative data and qualitative case studies, the Plastics Pact Network shares insights on the challenges of transitioning to a circular economy in plastics; in learning from one another, Plastics Pacts accelerate and direct focus towards innovative solutions and best practice.

Plastic Pacts encourage a just transition by promoting inclusive recycling. With over 2.4 million informal waste pickers in Plastic Pact countries, informal waste sector associations are Pact members in South Africa, Kenya, Chile and India. This has allowed the Pacts to understand the major challenges faced by the informal waste collection and recycling sector, helped to raise their voice with businesses and governments, and support a just transition to new systems.

The Plastics Pact Network is demonstrating the swift and impressive impact that can be achieved through collaborative voluntary action, but this is not enough. A large part of the industry is not yet taking action (representation in Pacts is 33%) and a major push is still needed in topics such as reuse, infrastructure, and flexible packaging to advance the targets. The learnings so far reinforce the need for additional, and more ambitious, binding policy measures, as well as accelerated voluntary business action. This cannot be an either/or: both are crucial to tackling plastic waste and pollution at the pace and scale required.

Voluntary action needs to be complemented by policy that creates the right incentives and regulatory frameworks to support further elimination of unnecessary packaging, simplification of packaging design, scaling up of reuse/refill systems, ensures the collection and recycling of all recyclable plastics and encourages higher investment in critical infrastructure.

The international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity. To end plastic pollution globally, we need ambitious regulation to complement and accelerate voluntary efforts and create a level playing field for all businesses.

An ambitious Global Plastics Treaty, with legally binding global rules, would significantly accelerate policy and business action around the world. Establishing mandatory global requirements is essential to level the playing field for all countries and businesses, guaranteeing a minimum level of ambition and impact worldwide. This framework creates the necessary conditions to attract vital investments in infrastructure, innovation, and skills on a global scale.

"Even with an ambitious Global Plastics Treaty, there will be a continuing need for voluntary action and Plastics Pacts in driving greater ambition specific to the opportunities in each country and in advancing innovation and knowledge exchange. "

The Plastics Pacts are uniquely placed to inform and support in implementing a future Global Plastics Treaty at national level. It is a well-established and proven platform to bring together, align and facilitate collaboration between the entire value chain, government bodies, NGO and other stakeholders at national level. It can inform and enable policymaking and treaty implementation through its large repository of tools, insights, guidance, and standardised definitions from across the Plastics Pacts Network, avoiding the need to start from scratch, by allowing the adoption of established approaches with greater efficiency. Furthermore, the Pacts' annual and transparent reporting can help measure progress and inform decision making.



Looking ahead, the Plastics Pact Network will accelerate and further scale its impact at national and global level, by building on the mechanisms in place, the stakeholders mobilised, and the impact and learnings to date. We are looking to ‘supercharge’ the Plastics Pact Network – accelerating, and further scaling its impact at national and global level. To do so, the Network will:

- 1) increase its focus on priority themes – waste prevention, reuse, and flexible packaging;
- 2) ensure that a just transition is integrated in the circular economy strategy;
- 3) and increase emphasis on informing policy.

To bring the Plastics Pacts Network to this next level, WRAP, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and individual Plastics Pacts are looking for additional funding.

We strive for the Plastics Pact Network to be funded through a combination of philanthropic funding and membership fees. Corporate membership fees ensure industry relevance and buy-in, while philanthropic funding supports global south countries with limited funding and ensures the independence and neutrality required for the Pacts to be trusted partners for policymakers, NGOs, and the public. With additional funding, the Plastics Pact Network will be able to realise its ambitious goal to further accelerate business action and policymaking, impacting many millions of tonnes of materials with positive outcomes for the environment.

There is a vital mission ahead of us to address the urgent global crisis of plastic waste and pollution; Plastics Pacts will play a significant role in this. With a bold Global Plastics Treaty, revitalized business backing, and increased investment, the Plastics Pact Network is uniquely positioned to play a critical role in ending plastic pollution. Together, let's take decisive action and create a more sustainable future for people and our planet.

Together We Can



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