

# CGF Plastic Waste Coalition of Action

**Design Workstream**

**Key Messages & FAQ**

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## **MESSAGE #1 [State our role and impact of our actions]**

### **1. In aligning and adopting several industry-proven “Golden Design Rules” for plastic packaging design, we are leading the way for design innovation and scalable impact.**

In taking on the plastic waste challenge by focusing on design innovation, Coalition members have demonstrated leadership by adopting Golden Design Rules for the design of plastic packaging that will influence the use of plastic within their own respective operations. These are voluntary, visible and ambitious changes that require convergent action to achieve progress towards a circular economy for plastics.

These Golden Design Rules are based on published eco-design guidelines including those published by the Association of Plastic Recyclers and Plastic Recyclers Europe, advice from experts and recycling associations, and input from Coalition members, some of whom have already implemented elements of these Rules.

## **MESSAGE #2 [State the objectives of the Rules]**

### **2. When possible, we need to use less plastic and better plastic in order to realise a circular economy.**

To accelerate progress towards achieving the targets set out in the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment, we need to reduce the use of unnecessary plastic packaging, and where it is necessary, use better plastic that is recyclable or reusable.

The first two Golden Design Rules focus on ensuring ‘better plastic’ by encouraging design that increases recyclability and the availability of recycled content.

These rules are:

1. Increase value in PET recycling by using transparent and uncoloured PET (preferred), or transparent blue or green in all PET bottles, and ensuring material choice, adhesive choice and size of sleeve is not problematic for recycling

2. Remove problematic elements from plastic packaging that disrupt the recycling process. These elements are: undetectable carbon black; PVC and PVDC; EPS and PS; PETG in rigid plastic packaging; and oxo-degradables.

There are several problematic types of plastic used in packaging, for example: plastics that have no available recycling pathway when they are used in packaging, plastics that contribute to increased microplastic pollution, or plastics that disrupt the recycling process for other plastics. If these are phased out of packaging materials, it will help simplify recycling efforts, resulting in higher quality recycled materials. The second Golden Rule focuses on this element.

The rules are scalable: if fully adopted by industry, the first two Golden Design Rules would affect more than 20 percent of consumer plastic packaging (by weight). Future Golden Design Rules offer the opportunity to enable less and better plastic across a broader share of plastic packaging.

## **MESSAGE #3 [Reinforce message of impact and accountability]**

### **3. We commit to transparently reporting our progress and working with technical experts to ensure the Golden Design Rules continue to deliver high-impact changes.**

In order to measure the impact of these Golden Rules, members also commit to reporting on the implementation of these rules annually through a simple process aligned with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's New Plastics Economy Global Commitment reporting. Additionally, members will have the opportunity to reflect on the implementation of these rules and offer suggestions for amendments and exceptions.

An independent Expert Panel, convened by the CGF, will support this process, providing technical input where required in order to offer guidance to the Coalition and members on next steps. Additionally, an Extended Expert Panel will also be available to offer technical expertise for concerns raised by the Core Panel. The Core and Extended Expert Panels both consist of external expert stakeholders.

## **MESSAGE #4 [Celebrate those who have endorsed the Rules]**

## 4. We are demonstrating leadership by targeting the best opportunities for change in our operations in order to drive the strongest impact.

Changing how we use a material as ubiquitous as plastic is not always an easy process. Our progress to move away from a linear economy towards circularity will also be non-linear. While we move forwards collectively as a Coalition, we have the task of looking at our individual operations to see if these Rules are relevant, and if so, where these Rules might be implemented to have tangible impact.

Coalition members are in various stages of adopting appropriate guidelines for their operations based on their internal review process. As of December 2020, 26 companies have signed up to Golden Design Rule 1, 2 or both, representing 12 percent of the total plastic packaging market and with an annual combined revenue of more than 1 trillion euros. As Coalition members who have adopted some or all of the Golden Design Rules start to implement them and see their impact, they will share their experiences with other Coalition members, which can help encourage members who have yet to adopt a Rule to join them. The Golden Design Rules are ambitious changes to each member's packaging portfolios and require collective power to achieve an industry-wide circular system.

## Design Workstream FAQs

### 1. What is the CGF Plastic Waste Coalition of Action?

- a. The CGF Plastic Waste Coalition of Action was launched in March 2020 as part of an organisation-wide strategy to help CGF members drive more impactful collaborations that benefit both people and planet, and seize the opportunities offered by purpose-driven business models. The Coalition's vision of accelerating progress towards the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's New Plastics Economy Global Commitment is embodied by its central aims for members to work towards implementing a small number of impactful "golden rules" on design and the development of an industry-supported EPR framework. It also aims to ensure that developed and transitional markets both make progress towards the development and/or improvement of effective waste management systems, and to help overcome barriers to scaling advanced chemical recycling effectively. For more, please visit: [www.tcgfplasticwaste.com](http://www.tcgfplasticwaste.com).

### 2. What is the CGF (The Consumer Goods Forum)?

- a. The Consumer Goods Forum ("CGF") is a global, parity-based industry network that is driven by its members to encourage the global adoption of practices and standards that serves the consumer goods industry worldwide. It brings together the CEOs and senior management of some 400 retailers, manufacturers, service providers, and other stakeholders across 70 countries, and it reflects the diversity of the industry in geography, size, product category and format. Its member companies have combined sales of EUR 3.5 trillion and directly employ nearly 10 million people, with a further 90 million related jobs estimated along the value chain. It is governed by its Board of

Directors, which comprises more than 50 manufacturer and retailer CEOs. For more, please visit: [www.theconsumergoodsforum.com](http://www.theconsumergoodsforum.com).

**3. What are the “Golden Design Rules”?**

- a. The Golden Design Rules are a set of guidelines for the design of plastic packaging which help encourage circularity at the beginning of the life cycle of packaging. These are voluntary, visible and ambitious changes that require convergent action to achieve progress towards a circular economy for plastics.

**4. How were these Golden Design Rules developed?**

- a. The Golden Design Rules were developed by Coalition members and external experts. . The Golden Design Rules are based on commonly adopted expert design guidelines, retailer design guidelines and advice published or shared by reputable bodies, including the Ellen MacArthur Foundation New Plastic Economy Commitment (NPEC), the European Commission, Association of Plastic Recyclers (APR), PRE, Recoup Packaging Resources Action Group (PRAG), WRAP, Berndt+Partners, national and regional-level governments, SYSTEMIQ, and Coalition member company experts. The work of the Coalition itself, including the Design workstream, is built on the findings of a comprehensive study conducted by CGF members, SYSTEMIQ and McKinsey which created a blueprint for the success of CGF members working on the plastic waste challenge.

**5. Are all members of the Coalition participating in the Design workstream which produced these Golden Design Rules?**

- a. Coalition members have joined workstreams based on several reasons, including the relevance of the workstream’s objectives to their own operations, the availability of resources, and others. 35 Coalition members are members of the Design workstream.

**6. Is it mandatory for each Coalition member to adopt all Golden Design Rules?**

- a. Adopting any or all of the Golden Design Rules is a voluntary choice made by each Coalition member. Details about which members have adopted which Rules is available on the Coalition’s [website](#).

**7. Has every member of the Coalition adopted the Golden Design Rules?**

- a. Adopting any or all of the Golden Design Rules is a voluntary choice made by each Coalition member. Details about which members have adopted which Rules is available on the Coalition’s [website](#). Importantly, not all of the Golden Design Rules are relevant to every Coalition member’s operations, which can explain why they may have not adopted a certain Rule.

**8. Why have some Coalition members only adopted some of the Golden Design Rules, and others have not adopted any of them?**

- a. Adopting and implementing the Golden Design Rules is a voluntary choice made by Coalition members taken after an evaluation of each members’ packaging portfolio. Transforming one’s approach to a material as ubiquitous as plastic takes time, and each member of the Coalition is at different stages in their respective journeys towards circularity. For the Coalition, the development of the Golden Rules serves as a guidance for all Coalition members about possible changes that can be made to packaging design in order to support a circular economy. Furthermore, some of the Golden Rules are not always relevant to member companies and their respective operations.

**9. What efforts are being taken to encourage other Coalition members to adopt more of the Golden Design Rules?**

- a. The Coalition provides members an opportunity to share knowledge, learnings and best practices. As Coalition members who have adopted some or all of the Golden Rules start to implement them and see their impact, they will share their experiences with other Coalition members, which can help encourage members who have yet to adopt a Rule to

join them. The output of the Coalition's work is shared with all CGF members at Board meetings to invite further adoption by companies beyond the Coalition.

**10. Is there an expected timeline for when members should implement these Rules?**

- a. Members are working to adopt relevant Golden Design Rules by 2025.

**11. How will the impact of these Rules be measured?**

- a. When a Coalition member commits to implement a Golden Rule, they also commit to reporting on their progress in a simple process aligned with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's New Plastics Economy Global Commitment (NPEC) reporting. These reports will be evaluated by the Coalition's Expert Panels, an external group of expert stakeholders who can advise on members' progress.

**12. How were the members of the Core Expert Panel and Extended Expert Panel selected?**

- a. Members of the expert panel will represent the technical expertise that will be required to support the CGF's consolidation of reports made by members. They are drawn from across geographies and markets in line with the global reach of the PWCoA member companies.

**13. For technical questions, please refer to the Golden Design Rules Fact Packs for more information.**

**14. What happens if a technology comes to market that means a Golden Design Rule is no longer impactful?**

- a. The design rule can be revised if needed, with technical input available from the independent expert panel, if such a technology is proven at scale.

**15. For Rule 1, why are transparent and uncoloured PET bottles preferred?**

- a. Transparent and uncoloured bottles have higher value for recycling and are more likely to be recycled back into bottles. This rule is based on published eco-design guidelines, expert advice and input from member companies.

**16. How was Rule 2 developed?**

- a. This rule is based on published eco-design guidelines, expert advice and input from member companies.

**17. In Rule 2, why eliminate PVC/PVDC from plastic packaging?**

- a. PVC/PVDC is problematic when used in packaging because it is uncommon in the packaging materials stream (and so it has low recycling rates when used in packaging) and it can disrupt recycling of other plastics.

**18. In Rule 2, why eliminate PS/EPS from plastic packaging?**

- a. PS/EPS is problematic when used in packaging because it is uncommon in the packaging materials stream (and so it has low recycling rates when used in packaging)

**19. In Rule 2, why eliminate PETG in rigid plastic packaging?**

- a. PETG is problematic when used in packaging because it is uncommon in the packaging materials stream (and so it has low recycling rates when used in packaging) and it can disrupt recycling of PET.

**20. In Rule 2, why should companies eliminate oxo-degradable plastic from packaging?**

- a. "Oxo-degradation" is specified by CEN (the European Standards authority) in TR 15351:2006 as "degradation identified as resulting from oxidative cleavage of macromolecules." Oxo-degradable plastics contribute to microplastic pollution and are not suited for effective long-term reuse, recycling at scale or composting.