



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
ENVIRONMENT

The Director-General

11 JAN. 2019

Brussels,
ENV/DCC/CB/

Dear Sir, dear Madam,

Commissioner Vella has asked me to thank you for your mail on disposable coffee capsules and to reply to the points you raise.

I share your view on the need to make prevention of waste a top priority. This is in line with the basic principle of EU waste policy - the "waste hierarchy". The Directive relevant in this context is Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste. The overall objective of this Directive is to avoid the production of packaging waste and to promote the reuse of packaging and recycling in order to reduce the volume of waste being disposed. As part of a wider reform of EU waste legislation, the European institutions have recently amended this Directive to set more ambitious targets for the recycling of packaging and different packaging materials, such as aluminium, but also to strengthen the obligation to avoid packaging waste and to increase the proportion of reusable packaging. The measures to be taken by the Member States may include waste prevention programs, economic incentives and, for re-use, deposit systems, the setting of targets or the setting of a minimum percentage of reusable packaging placed on the market. It has also been brought to my attention that relevant companies have started introducing systems to ensure the collection and recycling of used coffee capsules.

In addition to this, the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive lays down a number of 'essential requirements' packaging must meet in order to be allowed on the market. Packaging must be manufactured and marketed in such a way that it can be reused or recycled, including material recovery, and its environmental impact must be minimized by eliminating packaging waste or residue from packaging waste management.

I would like to reassure you of the European Commission's commitment to sustainable waste management. In the EU's transition to a Circular Economy we are also looking at all possibilities to reduce resource use. I hope this information has been useful.

Yours sincerely

Daniel Calleja

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