EUROPEN and its role in promoting well designed packaging to protect food and beverages

Philippe Diercxsens, PhD – Member of the Executive Committee of EUROPEN

Abstract (2000 word limit)

In the European Union, around 88 million tonnes of food waste are generated annually with associated costs of 143 billion euros, according to the most recent estimate (1).

To avoid this squander EUROPEN – a Brussels based association composed of 65 corporate members spanning the whole packaging supply chain as well as of 12 national packaging associations - is at the heart of defending the role of packaging in our modern society. Well-designed packaging should be fit for the product it is protecting, optimise the climate and environmental footprint of the packaging and packaged product and use only as much of the right kind of material as necessary to perform this task.

EUROPEN's vision is based on the commitment to climate neutrality by 2050, the protection of natural resources, the acceleration of circularity and the strengthening of EU competitiveness.

EUROPEN members are leading the transformation of the packaging value chain to deliver sustainable packaging solutions. Through continuous innovation, they are striving towards reducing the carbon footprint of packaging and packaged products. They are developing optimal packaging solutions preventing resource depletion, food and product waste and packaging entering the environment. They are driving the uptake of innovative packaging design for increased reuse and recycling and contributing to the development of new sorting, collection and recycling technologies.

Achieving a strong and resilient single market for packaging and packaging goods is a key priority of EUROPEN to continue to drive investments in innovation in the packaging industry and support its sustainable transition. The protection of the Single Market principles is close to the heart of EUROPEN and actions to defend these principles have animated the year 2021. Uneven and diverging implementation of EU laws at national level hamper the free movement of goods, investments in innovations necessary to the EU circular economy, and threaten the achievement of the European Green Deal's objectives. EUROPEN's efforts to advocate for the safeguard of the Single Market is gaining more and more importance considering the current proliferation of national diverging initiatives, such as country-specific labelling obligations and unilateral national targets. These measures are concerning and this problem will continue to escalate in the absence of strong action to prevent Single Market distortions.

The presentation will be based on reviewing the 4 most important EU legislation concerning Packaging and Packaging Waste and its consequences for producers and importers of food and beverage products:

- The Waste Framework Directive
- The Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive
- The Single Use Plastics Directive
- The Waste Shipment Regulation

(1) http://www.eu-fusions.org/phocadownload/Publications/Estimates%20of%20European%20food%20waste%20levels.pdf

Recent Publications (minimum 5)

None



Biography (150 word limit)

Philippe Diercxsens holds a PhD in Ecotoxicology of the Polytechnic School of Lausanne in Switzerland.

He works for DANONE since 1999 as Environmental chemist specialized in packaging and packaging waste management issues. He is chairman of EUROPEN Sustainability & Regulatory Affairs Committee (The European Association for Packaging and the Environment) as well as FoodDrinkEurope Environment & Sustainability Committee (The Confederation of the Food and Drink Industries of the European Union).

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Notes/Comments:

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Session name/ number: Track 4 – Waste Management and Recycling
Category: Oral presentation