



Statement

For Immediate Release

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Plastics Industry Emphasizes Solutions to Eliminate Plastic Waste and Drive the Circular Economy Forward

WASHINGTON (December 8, 2020) – Today, The Center for Biological Diversity, along with partner organizations, will hold a virtual press conference. The following statement may be attributed to Joshua Baca, ACC’s vice president of plastics:

Looking to 2021 and beyond, America’s plastic makers will continue working in a bipartisan, practical and collaborative fashion to advance solutions for a circular and sustainable economy for plastics. We look forward to rolling up our sleeves and working with the incoming Biden administration to address the challenge of plastic waste and collaborate on constructive, real-world solutions that can be implemented to help ensure plastic can be recycled and reused, and to eliminate plastic waste in the environment.

While ambitious, achieving this goal is critical to effectively meet the environmental and climate challenges we face. It requires that disparate voices work together toward a common goal and continue to work with the federal government to be a catalyst for innovation.

Misguided policies that aim to eliminate all plastics overlook the myriad of benefits provided by the material on which Americans rely and would also increase negative environmental impacts.

Plastics help doctors save lives, make cars more fuel efficient, and protect our loved ones at home, on the job, and at play. In addition, a study by Trucost found that the environmental costs of alternatives to plastic in 16 consumer goods sectors were nearly four times greater than those of plastic. Plastics also help to significantly reduce energy use, greenhouse gas emissions and waste. And plastics are helping to solve some of society’s greatest challenges, such as delivering clean drinking water and supporting the management of COVID-19’s effects.

Setting a Course through Industry Action

Our industry is already mobilizing to meet these challenges. We’re making investments for a more circular future, scaling up advanced recycling technologies that reimagine the concept of recycling, and supporting bipartisan legislation such as the [Save our Seas 2.0 Act](#).

America’s plastic makers have set goals to jumpstart a more circular economy for plastics in the U.S., with the aim of making 100% of U.S. plastics packaging reused, recovered or recycled by 2040. To help achieve these goals, ACC introduced our [Roadmap to Reuse](#) earlier this year, which

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together with our [Guiding Principles](#), provides a framework to guide actions that support the delivery of solutions.

Domestic investments in the U.S. recycling system are on the rise. In just the last three years, 64 projects in mechanical and advanced recycling in the U.S. have been announced, valued at \$5.3 billion. Together, these projects have the potential to divert more than 4.0 million metric tons (about 8.9 billion pounds) of waste from landfills each year. This is a strong start, but more needs to be done.

Endorsing EPA's 50 By 30 Strategy

ACC and its members support [EPA's "50 by 30" goals](#). This shift to a more comprehensive national strategy will help create a stronger, more resilient domestic recycling system and give all stakeholders greater opportunity to reduce plastic waste in the environment.

Solving the complex challenge of recycling and improving waste management requires everyone to play a role. Plastics producers, product manufacturers, retailers, recyclers and waste haulers, as well as communities, nonprofits, and federal, state and local governments must come together to create the circularity solutions and infrastructure this problem requires.

We must continue to focus on modernizing our recycling systems, investing in and scaling advanced recycling technologies to capture and reuse more plastic, and closing the loop to keep plastics in use – as the building blocks for tomorrow's plastic and other products. We are asking manufacturers and businesses to join us and support achieving these circularity goals. We are calling on Congress to enact meaningful policies that will support EPA's effort and enable us to capture the value of plastic waste as a resource.

Working Together to Achieve Circularity

Achieving these goals and creating the 21st century recycling system that citizens want will require smart policies, such as a harmonized national approach to community recycling programs, encouraging the use of recycled content, and increasing private investment in circularity by updating regulatory frameworks for new and innovative advanced recycling technologies.

Last week, Pennsylvania became the ninth state to pass [bipartisan legislation](#) that will enable greater adoption and encourage investment in advanced recycling technologies that can recycle and recover more types of plastics.

Creating the critical change needed to combat plastic waste requires true commitment, realistic solutions and collaboration. The incoming Biden administration will find a willing and dedicated partner in the plastics industry as we collaborate to end plastic waste.

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The American Chemistry Council (ACC) represents the leading companies engaged in the business of chemistry. ACC members apply the science of chemistry to make innovative products and services that make people's lives better, healthier and safer. ACC is



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committed to improved environmental, health and safety performance through Responsible Care®; common sense advocacy designed to address major public policy issues; and health and environmental research and product testing. The business of chemistry is a \$553 billion enterprise and a key element of the nation's economy. It is among the largest exporters in the nation, accounting for ten percent of all U.S. goods exports. Chemistry companies are among the largest investors in research and development. Safety and security have always been primary concerns of ACC members, and they have intensified their efforts, working closely with government agencies to improve security and to defend against any threat to the nation's critical infrastructure.

