

## PRESS RELEASE

### DIRECTIVE ON THE REDUCTION OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC PRODUCTS REMAINS VAGUE ON SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVES

**Berlin, 29 May 2018 – The European Commission presented an ambitious new Directive to tackle marine litter by introducing a number of measures including reduction and restriction of selected single-use plastic products, such as disposable balloon sticks, straws, cutlery, plates, cups and food containers. “The proposal is a meaningful addition to existing legislation and strategies, unfortunately, however, it remains vague regarding sustainable alternatives”, states François de Bie, Chairman of European Bioplastics (EUBP).**

According to EUBP, the potential positive impacts of the already introduced measures in the revised EU waste legislation need to be assessed first. Additional actions as presented in the proposal should be based on these efforts and efficiently tie in with such developments in the sense of better regulation. The proposal specifically foresees the substitution of currently used single-use products by ‘readily available, more sustainable materials’. “Plastics have evolved to become one of the closest scrutinised material categories existing today, especially when it comes to food packaging and catering items”, stresses de Bie and adds: “bioplastics can offer such sustainable and safe alternatives for some of these identified products”.

The proposed market restrictions on certain single-use catering items, such as plates and cutlery, do not seem to sufficiently consider the reality of food consumption today, and the proposal falls short on clearly defining the intended action. In a considerable number of contexts, single-use catering items are relevant and necessary, for example in closed systems with integrated waste management schemes, such as airplanes, sport arenas, or open air events. Safety and hygiene requirements need to be considered here, next to several other factors. “In these specific cases, bio-based plastic catering items can help to reduce environmental impacts, for example through a lower carbon footprint. Whether the items should be mechanically recyclable or compostable depends on the defined waste management concept of the respective closed system”, suggests de Bie.

EUBP is looking forward to closely working together with the EU institutions and all relevant stakeholders in the upcoming discussions on the proposal in order to ensure that bio-based plastics that are mechanically or organically recyclable are recognised as sustainable and available alternatives.

*About European Bioplastics:*

*European Bioplastics (EUBP) is the European association representing the interests of the bioplastics industry along the entire value chain. Its members produce, refine and distribute bioplastics i.e. plastics that are bio-based, biodegradable, or both. More information is available at [www.european-bioplastics.org](http://www.european-bioplastics.org).*

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