



# Global Tourism Plastics Initiative

## COMMON VISION

We, the signatories of the Global Tourism Plastics Initiative, endorse the common vision of a circular economy for plastics, where plastics never become waste, as provided by the Foundation's New Plastics Economy initiative. We recognise this common vision offers a root cause solution to plastic pollution with profound economic, environmental, and societal benefits.

Collectively, we will work towards this vision by meeting our individual commitments and collaborating within and beyond this coalition of signatories.

For plastic packaging and plastic items<sup>1</sup>, specifically, we recognise a circular economy is defined by six characteristics:

- 1. Elimination of problematic or unnecessary plastic packaging through redesign, innovation, and new delivery models is a priority**
  - a. Plastics bring many benefits. At the same time, there are some problematic items on the market that need to be eliminated to achieve a circular economy, and sometimes, plastic packaging can be avoided altogether while maintaining utility.
- 2. Reuse models are applied where relevant, reducing the need for single-use packaging**
  - a. While improving recycling is crucial, we cannot recycle our way out of the plastics issues we currently face.
  - b. Wherever relevant, reuse business models should be explored as a preferred 'inner loop', reducing the need for single-use plastic packaging.
- 3. All plastic packaging is 100% reusable, recyclable, or compostable**
  - a. This requires a combination of redesign and innovation in business models, materials, packaging design, and reprocessing technologies.
  - b. Compostable plastic packaging is not a blanket solution, but rather one for specific, targeted applications.
- 4. All plastic packaging is reused, recycled, or composted in practice**
  - a. No plastics should end up in the environment. Landfill, incineration, and waste-to-energy are not part of the circular economy target state.
  - b. Businesses producing, using and/or selling packaging have a responsibility beyond the design and use of their packaging, which includes contributing towards it being collected and reused, recycled, or composted in practice.
  - c. Governments are essential in setting up effective collection infrastructure, facilitating the establishment of related self-sustaining funding mechanisms, and providing an enabling regulatory and policy landscape.

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<sup>1</sup> The common vision was drafted specifically for plastic packaging, but applies equally to 'non-durable plastic items' such as cutlery, straws, carrier bags and cups. These items are typically used briefly and often only once, ending up as waste shortly after its use. As such, there are strong similarities with to how plastic packaging is used and how it creates plastic pollution. The tourism sector uses many of these items and has indicated it wants to make commitments including these items.



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- 5. The use of plastics is fully decoupled from the consumption of finite resources**
  - a. This decoupling should happen first and foremost through reducing the use of virgin plastics (by way of dematerialisation, reuse, and recycling).
  - b. Using recycled content is essential (where legally and technically possible) both to decouple from finite feedstocks and to stimulate demand for collection and recycling.
  - c. Over time, remaining virgin inputs (if any) should switch to renewable feedstocks where proven to be environmentally beneficial and to come from responsibly managed sources.
  - d. Over time, the production and recycling of plastics should be powered entirely by renewable energy.
- 6. All plastic packaging is free of hazardous chemicals, and the health, safety, and rights of all people involved are respected**
  - a. The use of hazardous chemicals in packaging and its manufacturing and recycling processes should be eliminated (if not done yet).
  - b. It is essential to respect the health, safety, and rights of all people involved in all parts of the plastics system, and particularly to improve worker conditions in informal (waste picker) sectors.

We recognise this common vision is the target state we seek over time, and acknowledge that realising it will require significant effort and investment. We also recognise the importance of taking a full life-cycle and systems perspective, aiming for better economic and environmental outcomes overall. Above all, we recognise the time to act is now.