Press release | 10.03.2014

Plastic bags

MEPs vote for tougher rules on reducing single-use plastic bags

New EU legislation aimed at reducing the use of single-use plastic carrier bags was this evening voted on by the European Parliament's environment committee. The Greens welcomed the outcome, which would significantly strengthen proposals from the European Commission, with Green MEP **Margrete Auken**, the parliament's rapporteur/draftsperson on the legislation, stating:

"MEPs have voted for EU legislation that would deliver a significant and swift reduction in single-use plastic bags. As front-running countries in the EU and beyond have demonstrated, dramatically reducing the consumption of these plastic bags is easily achievable with coherent policy. Swiftly phasing-out these bags is a very low-hanging fruit on the list of solutions to the pervasive problem of plastic waste in the environment. To this end, we welcome today's vote to strengthen the proposals to include ambitious and obligatory European reduction targets and a requirement that plastic bags come at a cost.

"The environment committee supported our proposals to include clear EU targets to reduce single-use plastic bags 50% in 3 years and 80% in 5 years. As countries like Ireland have shown, with the right policy, these targets are easily achievable. Those member states which want to go further and ban single use bags can do so. Biodegradable bags would also be included in the EU target. However, in those member states which have separate collection of bio-waste, like Italy or Germany, the price of biodegradable bags could be reduced by up to 50% so as to incentivise separate collection of bio-waste.

"MEPs also supported provisions aimed at ensuring mandatory pricing of plastic bags in the food sector, as well as a strong recommendation to do so in the non-food sector as well. Putting a price on single-use bags is a proven and highly effective policy tool for reducing their excessive consumption.

"We hope these provisions will be endorsed by Parliament as a whole when it votes in April. Significantly reducing single-use bags is a crucial and essential measure for tackling the problem of plastic waste and its impact on health and the environment. EU legislation must reflect this."

Recommended

Opinion

© Christian Kaufmann

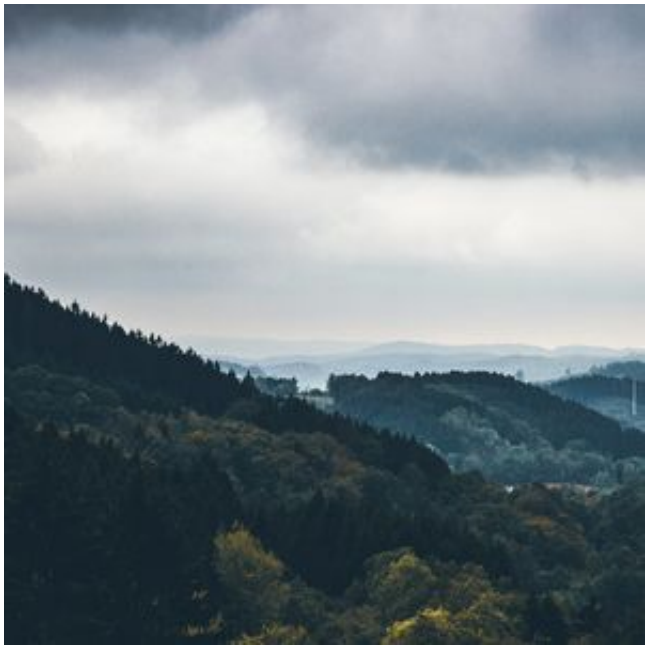


Healthy food starts with healthy farming. Europe must …

04.11.2026

Press release

sebastian-johann



Commission launching an attack against nature

04.11.2026

Press release

Image by joakant from Pixabay



The World must triple efforts to save nature

29.10.2026

Press release



Conservatives and Social Democrats Put Jobs at Risk

22.10.2026

Responsible MEPs



Margrete Auken

Member

Please share

- E-Mail