Press release | 16.04.2014

Plastic waste

Single-use plastic bags need binding EU reduction targets according to EP vote

The European Parliament today voted on new EU legislation aimed at reducing the use of single-use plastic carrier bags. 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 today voted to significantly strengthen draft EU rules aimed at reducing plastic bag use and waste, notably to include obligatory European reduction targets and a requirement that plastic bags come at a cost. As front-running countries have demonstrated, dramatically reducing the consumption of these disposal bags is easily achievable with coherent policy. Swiftly phasing-out these bags is a readily-implementable solution to the pervasive problem of plastic waste in the environment.

"MEPs have voted to include clear EU targets to reduce single-use plastic bags by 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 could do so under the proposals voted today. 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."

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Opinion

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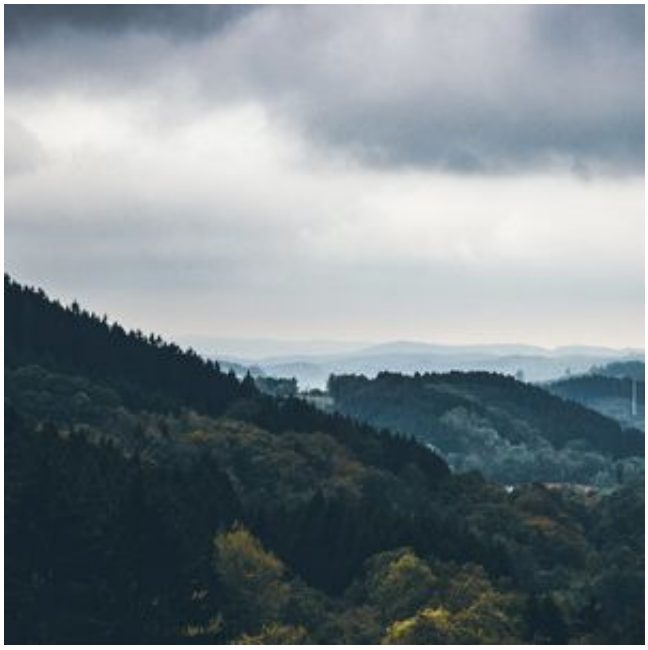


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Margrete Auken

Member

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