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Press release | 27.03.2019

Single Use Plastics Directive

Quote from Margrete Auken MEP

The European Parliament will debate and vote on the confirmation of the Single Use Plastics Directive later this afternoon. The Directive, which was agreed between the three main EU institutions back in December, will see a ban on single-use items such as straws, cutlery and cotton buds, as well as a complete ban on plastic cups and food containers made out of expanded polystyrene.

Margrete Auken, spokesperson on plastics for the **Greens/EFA** group in the European Parliament comments:

"The Greens/EFA group have long been calling for an end to the consumption of single-use plastics, which is why it's welcome that the rest of the Parliament, the Commission and Council are waking-up to the dangers of plastic pollution. The Single Use Plastics Directive is just the start and must be used as a catalyst for change on how we as a society produce less waste and become more sustainable.

"Unless we change our attitude towards production, consumption and waste, then our species will become as disposable as a single-use coffee cup. This Directive will help us move on from single-use plastics and towards less consumption, the multiple use of better designed products, more innovation and a cleaner environment. The next step is to move away from our waste-based culture."

Background

The Directive also includes provisions for the clean-up and disposal of cigarette butts by the tobacco industry (in line with the polluter pays principle), collection targets for drinks bottles, and a requirement to redesign drinks caps to tether them to bottles. It adds national consumption-reduction targets for cups and food containers, and in a Greens/EFA group triumph: a complete ban on oxo-degradable plastic, which is often labelled as biodegradable but in in reality fragments into microplastics.

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