

Leading drink companies together with NGOs target 70%-90% recovery of used beverage packaging

- Over 80% of beverage packaging, or over 1.7 billion containers, were wasted last year.
- The Drink Without Waste initiative supports cash-on-return of used packaging and the installation of refill dispensers.
- The HKSAR government is urged to regulate packaging standards and provide support for recycling.
- The beverage industry will take voluntary measures to reduce waste.

Hong Kong, 6 December 2018: Hong Kong's leading beverage producers and bottlers, representing nearly half of all the bottled water and soft drinks sold in the city, together with major retailers, recyclers and NGOs, today announce their proposals to reduce the over 1.7 billion used and discarded beverage containers that end up in Hong Kong's landfills, countryside, beaches and the marine environment. Last year, recovery rates in Hong Kong were at 9% for PET and 0% for liquid cartons.

The Single-Use Beverage Packaging Working Group was formed to help reduce the waste generated from non-alcoholic beverage consumption in Hong Kong. They launched the Drink Without Waste initiative in December last year and now pledge to work towards 70%-90% recovery rates for PET containers and liquid cartons in Hong Kong. They believe that with all parties – government, producers, retailers, recyclers and consumers – working closely together, this increase could be achieved by 2025.

"We all are responsible. We harm the environment when we dispose of single-use beverage containers at our landfills and in the natural environment," said Edwin Lau Che-feng, Founder and Executive Director of The Green Earth, Hong Kong and spokesperson for Drink Without Waste.

"Our aim is to reduce single-use beverage packaging and, where this is not possible, to increase the recycling rate of packaging with financial incentives. This is to encourage return and collection. Hong Kong also needs to develop efficient recycling for PET bottles and liquid cartons, ensure the quality of used packaging through legislation, and increase public education."

Strategies and actions to reduce waste from beverage consumption

The group is making four major recommendations to producers, importers, retailers, waste management services, consumers and the HKSAR government: to reduce single-use beverage containers, to regulate packaging standards, to recover used packaging, and to recycle them.

"We support creating an environment in Hong Kong, where consumers routinely refill their own bottles and cups from dispensers for water, soft drinks and other beverages throughout the city," said Dana Winograd, Director of Plastic Free Seas.

Simeon Cheng, Head of Sustainability at MTR Corporation Limited echoed this view: "We have installed water dispensers in Tung Chung Station and Hong Kong West Kowloon Station, and we are continuing to monitor the usage and effectiveness of our programme."

Mike Kilburn, Assistant General Manager, Sustainability at the Airport Authority Hong Kong, said: "HKIA has one of the largest networks of drinking fountains and hot water dispensers in Hong Kong. As of 2018, Airport Authority Hong Kong has installed 104 drinking fountains and 23 hot water dispensers in 13 locations throughout the terminal buildings. These fountains and hot water dispensers provide a welcome amenity and a free alternative to drinks served in single use plastic beverage containers to the passengers and staff travelling through and working at HKIA. Information about the locations of our drinking fountains and hot water dispensers is available through the "HKG MyFlight" app and other NGO platforms. We would be delighted to share our experience with others who may be interested to deploy drinking fountains and hot water dispensers of their own."

The group supports the HKSAR government call for cash-on-return schemes to increase recovery rates of plastic bottles. The group proposes that these schemes are extended to other packaging, including liquid cartons. Currently the recovery rates for used metal cans in Hong Kong is 85%, demonstrating the effectiveness of a monetary value. The group proposes that a levy should be collected from producers and importers to cover the cost of cash-on-return schemes and to help subsidise logistics and local recycling.

According to the group, regulations to homogenise all plastic bottles and liquid cartons allows used packaging to be processed into valuable feedstock such as PET and paper for new packaging and other products.

"We take sustainability seriously," said Neil Waters, Director and General Manager of Swire Coca-Cola Hong Kong and President of the Hong Kong Beverage Association. "We continuously reengineer our packaging, including significantly cutting the amount of plastic in our bottles and making our packaging 100% recyclable. Through 2019 we will complete the conversion of all our 'Bonaqua' Mineralized Water packaging to 100% rPET. In addition, we will launch 300 Bonaqua water stations across Hong Kong to promote the Bring Your Own Bottle initiative. We will continue to search out all possible opportunities to do more."

Other major drink producers are also making similar commitments. "We have voluntarily taken steps to transform our packaging to 100% recycled PET material since 2015," said Edmond Yu, General Manager – Marketing of A.S. Watson Industries. "This not only reduces the production, use and wastage of plastic, but also helps with cutting carbon emissions."

"Vitasoy Hong Kong supports the Drink Without Waste initiative. Consistently with our Company's sustainable growth model, we are working on both plastic and carton packaging. For plastics, beyond having implemented and continuing weight reduction, installing Reverse Vending Machines to collect used bottles and Water Refilling machines to support the Bring Your Own Bottle initiative, we are working on enabling recycled PET pilots in our 2019/20 fiscal year. For carton, we are engaging our suppliers and relevant recyclers to collaborate on carton pack collection and recycling in Hong Kong," said Dorcas Lau, CEO of Vitasoy Hong Kong and Vice President of the Hong Kong Beverage Association.

According to Edwin Lau, the waste import restrictions launched by mainland China since 2018 have changed the recycling practices in Hong Kong and around the world. "Relying heavily on exporting recyclable materials to the mainland and other economies is no longer a solution," he

said. "Hong Kong has to build state-of-the-art recycling facilities to take care of our own waste. This in turn will help develop a circular economy and help our city become sustainable."

Land and logistic support from the HKSAR government are considered essential to controlling the cost of recycling and to achieving the goal of between 70% and 90% recovery of packaging early.

About Drink Without Waste

The Drink Without Waste initiative demonstrates how industry players and environmental groups can work together to tackle environmental issues. Since December 2017, the Single-Use Beverage Packaging Working Group, a broad coalition of drink producers, bottlers, retailers, recyclers and NGOs, has been working to develop strategies and actions to reduce waste from the consumption of beverages in Hong Kong.

"We all know there needs to be wholesale change in the ways we design, use and recycle single-use packaging," said Paul Zimmerman, Chairman of the Single-Use Beverage Packing Working Group. "The strategies and actions we recommend are meant to be pragmatic and inclusive for Hong Kong. To stop 90% of beverage packaging from going to waste, all stakeholders including the industry, general public and the HKSAR government, will need to work together closely to limit impacts on consumer price, choice and convenience."

Members of the group include Airport Authority of Hong Kong, A.S. Watson Group, Dairy Farm Company Limited, The Hongkong and Shanghai Hotels Limited, MTR Corporation Limited, Plastic Free Seas Limited, Swire Beverages Limited, Vitasoy International Holdings Limited, WWF-Hong Kong and other key players.

The group commissioned Deloitte Advisory (Hong Kong) Limited, together with Cistri Limited, to carry out a comprehensive study to identify and evaluate how to effectively manage waste from single-use sealed beverage containers in Hong Kong. The findings informed the development of a positioning paper published by the group.

The full study and executive summary are available on the Deloitte website:

<https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/cn/Documents/risk/deloitte-cn-ra-drink-without-waste-en-181204.pdf>;

<https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/cn/Documents/risk/deloitte-cn-ra-drink-without-waste-summary-en-181204.pdf>

The group's positioning paper, which outlines the strategies and actions in detail, is available at: <https://drinkwithoutwaste.org/resources/>.

Pledge your support to Drink without Waste by visiting: www.drinkwithoutwaste.org.

Photo captions



Photo 1 (from left to right): Mr. Herbert Yung, Director, Risk Advisory, Deloitte Advisory (Hong Kong); Mr. Edwin Lau, Founder and Executive Director, The Green Earth, Hong Kong and Spokesperson for Drink Without Waste; Mr. Paul Zimmerman, Chairman of the Single-Use Beverage Packing Working Group; and Mr. Neil Waters, President of the Hong Kong Beverage Association.



Photos 2 and 3: Representatives of the Single-Use Beverage Packaging Working Group pledge to work towards 70%-90% recovery rates for PET containers and liquid cartons in Hong Kong.



Photo 4: Mr. Paul Zimmerman, Chairman of the Single-Use Beverage Packing Working Group, delivers his opening remarks.



Photo 5: Mr. Edwin Lau, Founder and Executive Director, The Green Earth, Hong Kong and Spokesperson for Drink Without Waste, introduces the group's strategies and actions to reduce single-use beverage packaging.



Photo 6: Mr. Neil Waters, President of the Hong Kong Beverage Association, shares how the beverage industry is taking steps to meet the group's targets.

To download high resolution photos, members' commitments and presentation slides from the press conference, please click this link: [Drink Without Waste Attachments.zip](#).

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