

Coca-Cola Company pledges to cut plastic packaging waste

The Coca-Cola Company has announced a commitment to become more environmentally friendly by reshaping its approach to packaging. As part of the pledge, the company has stated a global goal to help collect and recycle the equivalent of 100% of its packaging by 2030.



This goal is the centerpiece of the company's new packaging vision for a World Without Waste, which the Coca-Cola system intends to back with a multi-year investment that includes ongoing work to make packaging 100% recyclable. This begins with the understanding that food and beverage containers are an important part of people's modern lives but that there is much more to be done to reduce packaging waste globally.

"The world has a packaging problem – and, like all companies, we have a responsibility to help solve it," said James Quincey, President and CEO of The Coca-Cola Company. "Through our World Without Waste vision, we are investing in our planet and our packaging to help make this problem a thing of the past."

Key goals

The company and its bottling partners are pursuing several key goals:

- **Investing in the planet:** By 2030, for every bottle or can the Coca-Cola system sells globally, it aims to help take one back so it has more than one life. The company is investing its marketing dollars and skills behind this 100% collection goal to help people understand what, how and where to recycle. They will support collection of packaging across the industry, including bottles and cans from other companies. The Coca-Cola system will work with local communities, industry partners, our customers, and consumers to help address issues like packaging litter and marine debris.

- **Investing in packaging:** To achieve its collection goal, The Coca-Cola Company is continuing to work toward making all of its packaging 100% recyclable globally. It is building better bottles, whether through more recycled content, by developing plant-based resins, or by reducing the amount of plastic in each container. By 2030, the Coca-Cola system also aims to make bottles with an average of 50% recycled content. The goal is to set a new global standard for beverage packaging. Currently, the majority of the company's packaging is recyclable.

The Coca-Cola Company says it will work to achieve these goals with the help of several global partners: the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's New Plastics Economy initiative, The Ocean Conservancy/Trash Free Seas Alliance and World Wildlife Fund (The Cascading Materials Vision and Bioplastic Feedstock Alliance). Coca-Cola will also launch efforts with new partners at the regional and local level and plans to work with its key customers to help motivate consumers to recycle more packaging. These efforts are part of the company's larger strategy "to grow with conscience, by becoming a total beverage company that grows the right way".



Reduce Reuse. Recycle

Speaking about the announcement locally, Kelvin Balogun, president of Coca-Cola Southern and East Africa said: "The company has already taken great strides in reducing, reusing and recycling our packaging. We have worked closely with our bottling partners, local and national authorities, and recycling partners to improve the collection and local recycling rate of our cans, plastics and glass bottles."

Reduce: We have reduced our dependence on fossil fuels by introducing the PlantBottle packaging in 2012. It is the first fully recyclable PET plastic bottle made with up to 30% plant-based materials.

Reuse: Our system with partners, has invested in two bottle-to-bottle recycling facilities at Extrupet and MPact, to create recycled PET for use in the beverage industry. Forty-five thousand tonnes of PET bottles are diverted from landfills each year for reuse in the beverage industry. An estimated 288,000m³ of landfill space has been saved and 82,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions is reduced each year. It is reported that more than 1,500 new jobs have been created due to these two investments.

Recycle: In South Africa Coca-Cola, its bottling partners and other members of the PET value chain helped to set up PETCO, the PET Recycling Company, which in 2016 achieved a recovery and local recycling rate of 55% of post-consumer PET bottles – one of the highest in the world, similar to Uganda, where our bottling partner Century Bottling Company (CBC) and subsidiary Plastics Recycling Industries (PRI) in 2016 collected 58% of all the PET it sold to the market. Through partnerships with municipalities and suppliers, the PRI initiative employs over 1,200 people, with the majority being women.

Additionally, the company's bottlers in South Africa (Coca-Cola Beverages South Africa and Coca-Cola Peninsula Beverages), collectively run the biggest schools recycling programme in the country. Since its inception six years ago, R20 million has been invested in the programme resulting in 2,034 tonnes of waste collected. By selling recyclable waste to collectors, schools raise funds to develop their own infrastructure.

Wrapping up the announcement, James Quincey said: “Bottles and cans shouldn’t harm our planet, and a litter-free world is possible. Companies like ours must be leaders. Consumers around the world care about our planet, and they want and expect companies to take action. That’s exactly what we’re going to do, and we invite others to join us on this critical journey.”

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