

Meeting with the CEO of Coca Cola

EC, Berlaymont, 08/155, 08/09/2023

Participants:

Coca Cola: [REDACTED]

Commission: Virginus Sinkevicius, Rozalina Petrova, [REDACTED]

The meeting was focussed on 2 topics:

1. Priority access

Coca Cola representatives highlighted to COM that priority access would be necessary to meet the 2030 and especially 2040 recycled content targets for food grade packaging made of PET.

The first enabling condition for the RC target is to improve collection, thus they are supportive of the DRS (with 90% collection target). The second enabling condition is the priority access where they pointed out that they compete with other industries, such as automotive, textile; they mentioned that materials that are sent to other sectors are downcycled as they cannot be brought back to food grade. The collection and ownership of such materials will ensure the lack of deficit of materials and make sure that the RC targets (specifically the 2040 RC targets) can be met. Coca cola will share data about the mass flows, to indicate where the losses of the materials occur. Coca cola representatives mentioned an example of priority access recently implemented in Slovakia.

COM took note of the Coca cola position. It further elaborated that establishment of priority access might cause market distortion; it is also a political topic, whilst practical questions have to be answered like, who defines the priority access rights, when there is a deficit on the materials who get the access, etc.? COM explained that it is thus not ideal to intervene in the internal market rules, but thanks to the scaling up of recycling infrastructure, the rPET supply will increase by 2030. In addition, COM highlighted the review clauses already foreseen in the proposal.

2. Reuse and refill

Coca cola representatives pointed out to COM that reuse definition should be expanded to refill systems. They argued that the PPWR is the best instrument to stimulate innovation and to allow refilling to be counted towards the reuse and refill targets. They presented their examples as regards refilling, and they also pointed out that they are investing in technologies to improve water efficiency. Overall, Coca cola pointed out that water use impacts because of reuse and refilling must be carefully assessed.

COM took note of those points and highlighted that one of the key objectives of the proposal is to reduce the packaging waste generation where reuse contributes significantly. COM also noted that for

reuse and refill there is no infrastructure yet deployed, but probably big companies would have the capacity to set up reuse and refill systems and it is likely they could scale up them. A systemic change is needed because with the same habit nothing will change.

In the end of the meeting, COM informed Coca cola representatives about the progress of the PPWR co-decision negotiations. Coca cola will send some additional information and data about mass flows of plastic materials and information about refilling systems.