



A circular multilayer plastic approach for value retention of end-of life multilayers films

D7.5: REPORT ON CLUSTERING ACTIVITIES

**WP7: Pre-normative studies, dissemination,
communication, and exploitation**

Project Information

Grant Agreement n°	101003864
Dates	1st June 2021 – 31st May 2024

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Document status

Document information

Deliverable name	D7
Responsible beneficiary	EuRIC
Contributing beneficiaries	All partners
Contractual delivery date	30/11/2024
Actual delivery date	/2024
Dissemination level	Public

Document approval

Name	Position in project	Organisation	Date	Visa
Céline Chevallier	Coordinator	IPC	08/11/2024	OK

Document history

Version	Date	Modifications	Authors
V1	16/09/2024	Document created	María VERA-DURAN (EuRIC)
V2	08/11/2024	Review partners	María VERA-DURAN (EuRIC)
VF	08/11/2024	Final review	C. Chevallier

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Executive summary

This deliverable D7.5 “Report on clustering activities” describes the joint actions, workshops and conferences that have been carried out by CIMPA with other EU-funded projects aiming at increasing the circularity of the plastic value chain.

Potential collaboration opportunities and synergies were identified with other projects that were funded under the same H2020 call “Improving the sorting, separation and recycling of composite and multi-layer materials”, but also with other EU-funded projects that share the same objectives towards a circular economy of plastics.

This report includes the activities organized with specific projects, such as meetings to discuss developments and share knowledge, dissemination on social media, websites or newsletters, online workshops, etc., but also clustering events organized by the Commission or jointly by projects.

Moreover, this document describes the “Circular Plastic Cluster”, a clustering initiative launched in 2023, that brings together 7 EU-funded projects to promote innovative solutions to advance plastics recycling and reusable packaging.

Examples of successful collaboration are shown under this report, highlighting the importance of sharing knowledge and practices to tackle the plastic waste challenge and drive the transition towards the circular economy.

1. Clustering activities

Since the beginning of the CIMPA project, several links have been established with other EU-funded projects on plastics circularity in order to share knowledge and maximize the project results' impact.

Through different meetings, events and activities, CIMPA could bring together experts working on complementary or interrelated aspects of the circular economy of plastics. Most of the time, CIMPA has collaboratively worked with EU-funded projects that share the same objective of making multilayer plastic films more circular (e.g. TERMINUS, CircularFoodPack or MERLIN), but also with other projects that share one specific objective, such as closing the loop in food contact applications (e.g. PRIMUS) or reducing plastic packaging waste (i.e. BuddiePack). Communication with these projects, through bilateral discussions or clustering activities is not only a great opportunity to discuss and find solutions to the same challenges together, but also necessary in order to prevent duplication of efforts and gain new and fresh approaches to the ongoing research.

The commitment of the collaboration has been formalized in the launch of the "Circular Plastic Cluster", a clustering initiative that brings together 7 EU-funded projects. This initiative has been an excellent platform to share knowledge, exchange best practices and identify potential new synergies. Members of the cluster have shared efforts to be active in the most important events on plastics circularity and recycling (e.g. Ecomondo, Plastics Recycling World Expo), dissemination project results to a wider audience and elevating the project's visibility and impact.

Moreover, different clustering events have been organized (e.g. Innovation Forum 4 Plastics). Clustering events have served as a powerful tool to increase project's visibility and impact.

Last but not least, all these activities have been widely supported by the European Commission – the Research Executive Agency, CINEA and other executive agencies – not only organizing activities but also contributing to those organized individually by the projects. Notable among these is the EU stand in Ecomondo, which allows EU-funded projects to showcase their results every year at the international fair in Rimini. This gives visitors the chance to hear directly from successful projects and companies about how European funds helped bring their innovative ideas to life. It is also a unique occasion to discuss with peers, create potential partnerships and have a first-hand account of their experience with EU funding.

2. Collaboration with “sister projects”

Bilateral collaboration with other EU-funded projects, such as TERMINUS and PRIMUS:

This not only helps to disseminate the project results but also strengthens the links between the partners and researchers to set further collaborations.

TERMINUS H2020

TERMINUS and CIMPA target the challenge of multilayer plastic recyclability and share some of the partners (IPC, BENKEI). Thus, the collaboration with this project started from the beginning. TERMINUS has been introduced in CIMPA newsletter, website, social media of CIMPA. Same for CIMPA in TERMINUS Channels.

CIMPA organized a workshop in Brussels in 2022 where TERMINUS was invited, and they presented a poster with results. Additionally, CIMPA was invited to the TERMINUS final event.

Another important collaboration between projects have been the exchange of knowledge through the participation in the Advisory Board. The TERMINUS' coordinator was designated as expert and member of the CIMPA's Advisory Board.

PRIMUS

CIMPA joined forces with PRIMUS, a Horizon Europe project, to inform about the new European regulations having impacts on the packaging and plastics recycling sectors. In this webinar, that took place on 23 February 2023, the partner experts on legislation (PRE in PRIMUS and EuRIC in CIMPA) presented the new rules for food packaging and packaging waste. More info [here](#).

One objective of PRIMUS's project is to find an EU accepted definition of recyclates. For that, EuRIC through CIMPA, has participated in interviews with PRE (PRIMUS partner) to study the plastic waste to product interface.

CIRCULAR FOODPACK

CIMPA and the Circular FoodPack project organized a webinar on sorting technologies for multilayer packaging, which took place on 29 June 2023. After a brief introduction of both projects, the two sorting technologies (Tracer-Based-Sorting Technology in Circular FoodPack and Digital Watermarking in CIMPA) where presented and some of the preliminary results were shared. More info on the event [here](#).

Moreover, both promotional project videos have been shared respectively in [CIMPA's](#) and [CIRCULAR FOODPACK's](#) newsletter.

HOLYGRAIL 2.0

The Digital Watermarks Initiative HolyGrail 2.0 – driven by AIM - European Brands Association and powered by the AEPW - Alliance to End Plastic Waste – is a pilot project with the objective to prove the technical viability of digital watermarks for accurate sorting of packaging waste as well as the economic viability of the business case at large scale. As the HolyGrail 2.0 is in line with CIMPA's objectives, CIMPA partners Pellenc ST and Filigrade has reported the work done on NIR+DW prototype to AIM and AEPW, and CIMPA results were followed carefully by the project Holygrail 2.0. Moreover, AIM and AEPW attended a demonstration of the joint prototype, on 26 April 2023.

3. Clustering initiatives

EC's CLUSTERING MEETING IN ECOMONDO (2022)

CIMPA participated in the 25th edition of ECOMONDO- The Green Technology Expo, which was held in Rimini (Italy), from 8 to 11 November 2022. Ecomondo is an international event with an innovative format that brings together all sectors of the circular economy: from the recovery of materials and energy to sustainable development. The expo attracts over 100,000 visitors and 1,000 exhibitors.

In this edition, the European Commission, through three Executive Agencies (CINEA, EISMEA and REA), organized several activities including thematic sessions, clustering meetings and the EC stand which hosted several EU-funded projects to show how European funds help to bring innovative ideas to life. For this purpose, the CIMPA project was selected to showcase its products and solutions towards a circular economy for plastics.

On 8 November, the European Research Executive Agency (REA) organized [a Cluster meeting: Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe projects contributing to the EU Plastic Strategy](#). Brief presentations of H2020 and HE projects, with a special focus on their contribution to the EU Plastics Strategy and opportunities for projects clustering, were given by project representatives. Skander Mani, R&D Circular Economy Program Manager at IPC France, introduced the CIMPA project and how it contributes to increase the recycling rate for plastics and to boost the EU market of recycled plastics.



Figure 1. Presentation of the CIMPA project (left) and participants in the EU booth at Ecomondo (right)

CIMPA was also selected to showcase its innovative solutions at the EC booth on 9 November, together with other EU funded projects.

Not only the activities and results of the project were widely disseminated, but also the CIMPA team could network and establish links with other EU funded projects that have the potential to contribute to EU policy developments in the area of circular and sustainable plastic. As result of this activity, some of the projects present in Ecomondo decided to keep further collaboration and set up a cluster on projects contributing to plastics circularity “the Circular Plastic Cluster”.

CIRCULAR PLASTICS CLUSTER

Under this clustering initiative, named “Circular Plastics Cluster”, seven EU-funded projects are joining forces to promote the innovative solutions being developed to boost plastics recycling and circularity: CIMPA, BuddyPack, CIRCULAR FoodPack, MERLIN, REMADYL, R3PACK, and SOLREC.



Figure 2. Circular Plastics Cluster logo

The Circular Plastics Cluster was launched in 2023, and it aims to boost the collection, sorting, cleaning, recycling, and manufacturing, and reuse of plastic products, including complex and multilayer materials.

The main proposed solutions by this cluster are the following:

- Development of reuse schemes that optimize economic and environmental factors
- Innovative technologies to improve the sorting, cleaning, separation, and recycling of mono and multi-layered plastics
- Novel mono-material packaging
- Drivers to stimulate consumer adoption of new consumption habits
- A comprehensive sustainability assessment of the developed value-chains
- Profitable and sustainable business models

The Circular Plastics Cluster has received communication support from ICONS as part of the Horizon Results Booster services. As a result, [a factsheet, a poster and a video](#) have been made available (annex I).

Some of the activities that this cluster have carried out are the following:

1. The cluster shared a stand during the **Plastic Recycling World Expo**, which took place in Essen (Germany) on 14-15 June 2023. The project partners were able to present their project results as well as the cluster and the upcoming joint activities to the visitors.
2. Cluster decided to share a booth in **Ecomondo** in November 2023, where the initiative started. Project coordinators and representatives travelled to Rimini to present the different solutions to make plastics more circular. Some of them also participated in the booth from the European Commission.
3. CIMPA, together with partners from the Circular Plastic Cluster, was present at the **Plastics Recycling World Expo** in Brussels on 11-12 September 2024. Cluster partners shared a booth where the project's results were showcase. More info [here](#).
4. During the **CIMPA final event**, in Brussels on 20 November 2024, different projects from the cluster participated in a short session when they discussed the importance of clustering, sharing knowledge and results to move forward with innovation on plastic recycling and circularity.





Figure 3. Circular Plastics Cluster booth in Essen and Rimini.

4. Clustering events

Innovation Forum 4 Plastics (2022 & 2023)

[H2020 Innovation Forum](#) is an on-going clustering initiative, bringing together H2020 projects with policy makers, end-users, industry representatives, investors, start-ups and SMEs. This initiative aims to continue with the objective of the Plastics Circularity Multiplier Initiative (PCMI), launched by the European Commission.

CIMPA has participated in the last two editions, in [Mallorca 13-14 October 2022](#) and in [Brussels 15 March 2023](#)

In these events, short presentations of the projects and its main results were made and discussions on how to collaborate within the ongoing projects and future EU-funding calls were held.

IPC webinar « Le défi des emballages : les dernières recherches et innovations » (April 2023)

On 31 January 2023, IPC organized a webinar to showcase innovative solutions for plastic packaging circularity, from recycling to reuse, from different EU-funded projects: CIMPA, Buddie-Pack, FF2S and INN-PRESSME.

World Circular Economy Forum (2024)

On 16 April 2024, CIMPA was present in the EU funding booth, organized by the European Commission, during the World Circular Economy Forum (WCEF), to inform about the Circular Plastic Cluster, how was created, what are their objectives and how to engage with projects on plastics recycling and reuse.



Figure 4. CIMPA's participation in the Innovation Forum 4 Plastics (left) and the EU booth at the WCEF (right).

Innovation Forum 4 Plastics (2024)

The 2024 edition of the “Innovation Forum 4 Plastics” was held in Brussels on 19 April and showcased different innovative solutions of EU-funded projects aiming at reducing plastic waste and boosting plastic recycling and circularity.

Hosted by EuRIC on behalf of the CIMPA project, supported by the European Commission's Research Executive Agency (REA) and as a side event of the World Circular Economy Forum (WCEF), the event attracted approximately 70 participants.

The event introduced the Circular Plastics Cluster, a coalition of 7 EU-funded projects, and results from partner projects CIMPA, Circular FoodPack, SOL-REC2, and Merlin, focusing on multilayer plastic recycling, were highlighted. Additionally, presentations on sustainable food plastic packaging were provided by recently funded projects STOPP, MANGO, VISS, and REBIOLUTION. The event also showcased project outcomes on circular technical plastics, including PRIMUS, Green3D, Circular Flooring, and PLAST2BCLEANED.

Concluding the event was a panel discussion addressing the role of R&I projects in EU policy. Panellists from Groupe Comet, Plastics Europe, the European Commission (DE ENV, DG GRWO and DG RTD) shared insights on legislative developments and challenges in advancing plastic circularity.



By bringing together project leaders, researchers, entrepreneurs, and stakeholders, the Innovation Forum 4 Plastic promoted opportunities for collaboration, knowledge exchange, and partnership building, encouraging cooperation and collective problem-solving.

Moreover, an internal workshop for EU funded project on R&I gaps took place after the public event. Participants could provide feedback to policy and specifically to the programming of Horizon Europe work programmes 2025-2027 and beyond.

Innovation Forum (2024)

The Innovation Forum took place on 21-22 May in Brussels, to showcase a permanent cluster of projects aimed at revolutionizing Sustainability and Circular Economy. The event was committed to creating synergies with other impactful H2020 and HORIZON EUROPE projects to deliver proven solutions that address the most pressing environmental challenges of our time.

In a session on plastics recycling, moderated by CIMPA partner EuRIC, the project and results from the CIMPA project were presented by TNO.

More than 20 projects were introduced in this event on topics such as plastic and composite recycling, aerospace, energy, sustainable living and green recovery for Ukraine.

ANNEX I. Circular Plastics Cluster communication materials

The Circular Plastics Cluster factsheet can be downloaded [here](#).

A promotional video of the cluster is available [here](#).

CIRCULAR PLASTICS

In Europe, 35% of plastic waste is recycled, but still, 23% goes to landfill. Moreover, the average of recycled content in plastic products is less than 10%

The Circular Plastics Cluster aims to boost the collection, sorting, cleaning, recycling and manufacturing of plastic products, including complex and multilayer materials.

Thus, it will turn this waste stream into a fully safe and sustainable circular model.

DISCOVER OUR INNOVATION TO BOOST PLASTIC RECYCLING AND CIRCULARITY

BOOSTING THE CIRCULAR USE OF PLASTICS

In Europe, 35% of plastic waste is recycled, but still, 23% goes to landfill. Moreover, the average of recycled content in plastic products is less than 10% (PlasticsEurope, 2022). To accelerate the transition to a circular, climate-neutral economy, the European Commission is setting ambitious targets to increase reuse of plastic products, the plastic recycling rate (to 55% by 2030 for plastic packaging) and the use of recycled plastics (via minimum recycled content targets).

To this end, the Circular Plastics Cluster aims to boost the collection, sorting, reuse, cleaning, recycling and manufacturing of plastic products, including complex and multilayer materials.

Thus, it will turn this waste stream into a fully safe and sustainable circular model.

DISCOVER OUR INNOVATION TO BOOST PLASTIC RECYCLING AND CIRCULARITY.

CIRCULAR PLASTICS

CIRCULAR FoodPack
circular-foodpack.eu

MERLIN
merlinproject.eu

cimpa
cimpa-h2020.eu

buddle pack
buddle-pack.eu

R3PACK
r3pack.eu

SOL REC 0
solrec2.eu

REMADYL
remadyl.eu

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Figure 5. Circular Plastic Cluster roll-up and factsheet