

# Verslag - content

**Event:** World Circular Economy Forum

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**Plaats:** The Square Brussels

**Aanwezigen:** Luk Umans (OVAM), Saskia Walraedt (essenscia), Iris Catteeuw (Codecrea), , Werner Annaert , Els Herremans , Els Du Bois , lotte krekels , Tine De Pooter , Tom Domen , Evelien Kieckens , Ann Van Den Bosch , Nick Sablon , Astrid De Man

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## LinkedIn Post

We were honoured to moderate a Pioneering Session about reuse of plastics at the World Circular Economy Forum WCEF. Werner ANNAERT kicked off the session by highlighting the vital role of plastics within the circular economy. Here are the takeaways from the keynote speakers and moderators @Els Herremans - @Cmartlife & @Luk Umans - @Werkagenda Chemie-Kunststoffen 📌

🗂️ Strategic importance of upscaling and an integrated chain approach : Achieving a significant impact requires getting retail giants on board for a successful transition to more sustainable packaging and increased reuse. It's crucial to integrate all stakeholders within the chain, including less obvious ones, to maximize the leverage effect.

📦 Logistics challenges : An essential bottleneck to tackle is optimizing internal and external logistics to ensure minimal application barriers.

♻️ Design for reuse is all about costs, convenience and time efficiency: The @REuseLab showed why the shift toward making reuse the norm involves balancing design costs with convenience and time efficiency. Practical implementations, such as @DW Reusables and @Carrefour Belgium returnable six-packs, demonstrate the value of this approach and the necessity for broader adoption .

🔍 Overcoming information gaps and embracing experimentation : We need better information on material technical aspects and reuse/recycling possibilities. @Made. embraces the mantra "not knowing does not mean it is not possible" and advocates for standards that facilitate experimentation and showcase the practical and profitable implementation of reuse. This includes the importance of digitalization, forming coalitions among stakeholders, training and new approaches to realise behavioural change.

📄 Navigating legal frameworks : A robust legal framework for waste is essential, ensuring it supports the shift to a circular economy and aligns with regulations on products, health and safety. Contributions from @EnAdvS bv, @Roche Diagnostics Belgium and @UZ Gent highlighted the healthcare sector's role in reducing single-use materials and navigating complex regulations like the Medical Device Regulation.

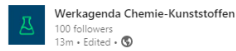
Our session not only underscored Flanders' transition from experimental to established circular practices but also highlighted the essential collaborative effort with civil society and specific sectors to forge pathways towards a sustainable and circular future.

Special thanks to our keynote speakers and the participants for making this session memorable! 🙌

@OVAM @essenscia @Circular Flanders @Cmartlife @Green Deal Samen werken aan duurzame zorg @Green Deals in Vlaanderen

@Werner ANNAERT @Luk Umans @Els Herremans @Els Du Bois @lotte krekels @Tine De Pooter @Tom Domen @Evelien Kieckens @Ann Van Den Bosch @Nick Sablon @Astrid De Man

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Werkagenda Chemie-Kunststoffen

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# Verlag

Session Report: Mastering High-R Strategies for Plastics in the Circular Economy

Introduction:

Werner Annaert from OVAM opened the session by underscoring the significant and diverse uses of plastics in industrial, commercial, and household contexts. He emphasized the crucial role of plastics within the circular economy and pointed to the effectiveness of partnerships demonstrated by initiatives like the Flemish Green Deals “Anders Verpakt” and “Circulaire Zorg” and Circular Flanders with its Work Agenda Chemical-Plastics from OVAM and Essenscia.

## Keynote speakers:

### 1. Els Dubois from the University of Antwerp’s ReuseLab:

Els Dubois discussed the complexities of integrating reuse practices within industries, emphasizing the need for a design shift that balances cost, convenience, and efficiency. She explored psychological and systemic obstacles to change, advocating for a comprehensive strategy to foster reusable practices.

### 2. DW Reusables and Carrefour’s Returnable Six-Packs:

These organizations showcased their joint project on returnable six-packs, named CORNET, demonstrating reuse principles in retail packaging. They highlighted how such initiatives establish new sustainability standards and promote wider adoption of reusable practices. Key aspects include organizing in-store processes, setting up a return system, convincing consumers, and persuading all other chain partners (from floor staff to executives).

### 3. Tom Domen from Made:

Tom Domen shared insights on evolving from the perceived impracticality of reuse to its feasible and profitable application. He emphasized the role of digitalization, coalition-building among stakeholders, and the need for supportive legislation to scale up and economically sustain reuse systems.

### 4. Evelien Kieckens of UZ Gent:

Evelien Kieckens addressed the challenges and advancements in minimizing single-use materials in healthcare, providing five examples of non-packaging materials currently used as single-use. She underscored efforts to train staff and deploy sustainable materials, noting the substantial environmental benefits.

### 5. Ann Van Den Bosch of EnAdvIS and Nick Sablon from Roche Diagnostics Belgium:

They discussed their contributions to the circular transition in healthcare, focusing on overcoming regulatory hurdles and enhancing sustainability. They shared details on managing complex legal environments and adopting effective recycling and reuse strategies in healthcare, with specific examples like “blue cloths” and pipette tray materials. Nick Sablon noted, “It’s already complex to shift from incineration to recycling in the medical sector, let alone scaling up certain applications for reuse,” viewing these recycling steps as initial progress.

## Panel Discussion and Q&A:

The session included an interactive panel discussion where speakers addressed questions about consumer behavior, regulatory challenges, and the practical implementation of circular economy principles across various sectors. The discussion emphasized the importance of extensive stakeholder involvement and the development of new business models to support circular practices.

## Conclusion by Moderators Luk Umans and Els Herremans:

Luk Umans and Els Herremans concluded the session by summarizing the discussions and stressing the importance of collaboration, innovation, and supportive frameworks to scale up circular economy initiatives effectively. They emphasized the need for ongoing experimentation and adaptation to overcome current and future challenges.

## **Key Takeaways:**

### **Strategic Importance of Upscaling and Integrated Chain Approach:**

The session highlighted the necessity of involving major commercial players and integrating diverse stakeholders to significantly impact sustainable transitions in packaging and reuse.

### **Logistics Challenges in Packaging:**

Optimizing both internal and external logistics is crucial for minimizing barriers to the application of circular economy principles in packaging.

### **Design for Reuse is All About Costs, Convenience and Time Efficiency:**

Effective design for reuse must strike a balance between cost-effectiveness, user convenience, and efficiency to ensure wider adoption.

### **Overcoming Information Gaps and Embracing Experimentation:**

Addressing the lack of detailed information on material properties and recycling possibilities is essential for advancing reuse and recycling initiatives. Encouraging experimentation in technology and business models is crucial for discovering viable solutions.

### **Navigating Legal Frameworks are Essential but Need to Accelerate:**

A robust legal framework for waste is essential, ensuring it supports the shift to a circular economy and aligns with regulations on products, health and safety.