

The EU Single Use Plastics Directive

WHAT IS IT?

New far-reaching EU guidance aimed at reducing plastic marine pollution. It is based on the 10 single-use plastic items and fishing gear which account for 70% of marine litter in Europe.

“The European Strategy for Plastics is a step towards establishing a circular economy in which the design and production of plastics and plastic products fully respect re-use, repair and recycling needs and in which more sustainable materials are developed and promoted.”



WHAT IS GOING TO BE BANNED?

OXO-DEGRADABLE PLASTICS

Common in cold cups, cutlery, straws, and carrier bags, and often labelled ‘degradable’ or mis-sold as ‘biodegradable’. These are conventional plastics with an additive to make it fragment into small flakes, but are not suitable for recycling or composting.

EXPANDED POLYSTYRENE

Food and drink containers – also known as Styrofoam. Very common material in cups, clamshells, plates and bowls.

ALL PLASTIC CUTLERY, PLATES, STIRRERS and STRAWS

That includes plant-based and compostable plastics, as the Directive is based on how materials behave in the marine environment. Compostable packaging breaks down in commercial composting conditions which provide a perfect balance of microbes, moisture and warmth; these are different conditions to the sea.

WHEN DOES IT COME INTO FORCE?

2021 at the earliest, with different deadlines to achieve various goals. Agreed upon in 2019, EU member states have two years to put the legislation into their own national laws. In England, plastic drink stirrers will be totally banned from April 2020 and there will be restrictions on plastic straw availability. Scottish and Welsh governments look to consider similar measures.

DOES IT APPLY TO VEGWARE?

	CANNOT SELL	CAN SELL	PAY HIGHER EPR*
CPLA CUTLERY	✓		
RCPLA CUTLERY	✓		
WOODEN CUTLERY		✓	
PLA STRAWS	✓		
ECOVIO STRAWS	✓		
PAPER STRAWS		✓	
BEVERAGE CUPS		✓	✓
LIGHTWEIGHT CARRIER BAGS		✓	✓
FOOD CONTAINERS including salad boxes, sandwich wedges & fast-food packaging for fresh or processed food that does not need further preparation.		✓	✓

*Extended Producer Responsibility - all packaging manufacturers, including Vegware, will pay more towards waste management and raising awareness.

REUSABLES PLUS VEGWARE

Environmentalists advise greater reuse,
but acknowledge disposables have a place.

“A reuseable cup for your beer, but for your falafels, you should probably have Vegware.”



- according to Richard Dixon, chief executive of Friends of the Earth Scotland.

Many clients now offer a reusable option and use disposables for situations where reusables aren't practical.

With our expert environmental support and ever-growing trade access to composting, Vegware is uniquely placed to help clients achieve their waste ambitions.

Where composting isn't possible, our plant-based materials perform well in incineration, producing energy but no volatile gases; in landfill PLA remains inert and does not emit methane.

