



**Regional Activity Centre  
for Sustainable Consumption  
and Production**

**Regional Activity Center for  
Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP/RAC)**

**UNEP - Mediterranean Action Plan**

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**Terms of Reference (ToR) for the selection of consultants to assess  
business options and best practices for companies to tackle food and  
beverage plastic packaging to be promoted Albania, Bosnia and  
Herzegovina and Montenegro.**

**In the framework of the SCP/RAC activities to tackle Food and Beverage Plastic  
Packaging in the Western Balkans, supported through the European Bank for  
Construction and Development (EBRD)**

## Background

The Cooperation Agreement between UN Environment and IMELS (hereinafter referred to as the Cooperation Agreement) was signed in September 2016 providing for a framework of cooperation in support of the UN Environment/MAP mandate implementation, focusing on 4 main Components, one of which is the enhancement of marine litter management. In this respect, financial support has been provided by IMELS for the implementation of a number of activities included in the UN Environment/MAP Programme of Work (PoW) 2018-2019, adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in their COP 20 (Tirana, Albania, December 2017).

In this context, under the PoW Activity 2.1.1.2 “to promote the use of relevant instruments and incentives to reduce/forbid the single-use of plastics, reduce the use of plastic bottles etc.” SCP/RAC will undertake in the current biennium and with support from the Cooperation Agreement, a guidelines document defining and listing concrete actions for businesses to adopt and replicate in order to take forward or expand activities and best practices that tackle plastic packaging.

This activity is part of the overall portfolio of activities led by SCP/RAC with support from both IMELS and EBRD<sup>1</sup>, with the objective of *Improving the policy framework and engaging with the food & beverage industry in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro for tackling plastics packaging value chains in a circular economy*. This set of activities aims at contributing to the identification and prioritization of preventive measures that tackle plastic packaging in the food and beverage (F&B) industry<sup>2</sup>, by:

- Improving the relevant policy framework
- Strengthening the engagement of businesses and business support organizations (BSOs).

Plastics and plastic packaging are a valuable resource that brings numerous benefits to modern society and they have become an integral and important part of the global economy.

According to the Ellen McArthur Foundation, plastic production has exponentially increased, from 15 million tons in 1964 to 311 million tons in 2014, and it is expected to double over the next 20 years. Today, plastic packaging is the largest application of plastics - it represents 26% of the total volume of plastic used. Globally, 95% of plastic packaging material value, estimated at EUR 70-105 billion annually, is lost to the economy after a very short first use-cycle.

Each year, at least 8 million tons of plastics end up in the ocean. Marine litter is a growing problem that has attracted significant public attention over recent years. In the Mediterranean sea, the concentration of marine litter is comparable to that found in the 5 gyres, and plastic comprise up to 95% of the waste accumulated on shorelines, the sea surface or the sea floor.

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<sup>1</sup> European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this assignment, the definition of “F&B industry” shall include the chain from primary food/beverage processing, distribution, wholesale and retail.

According to Eunomia, nearly 60% of the plastic waste generated in the EU in 2015 came from packaging, out of which a very high proportion is food and beverage packaging. The trend is towards a significant increase, for example, Smithers Pira estimates that Europe will consume more than 900 billion items of packaged food and drink annually by 2020. In particular, the retail sector is seeing strong packaging penetration rates, growing from 63.0% in 2010 to 66.0% in 2014, with key areas including fresh fruit and vegetables, fresh meat and fish, chilled foods and baked products.

It is therefore of utmost importance to include policy makers, industry and business community in a multi-stakeholder dialogue to identify challenges and specific actions on the issue of plastics ending up as marine litter. The F&B industry is a key stakeholder in providing innovative and transformational solutions to the problem of plastic waste, while also affecting the policy set-up within and around their operations. Moreover, it is an aggregator and multiplier for best practices, in view of its working with supply chain partners and industry associations to explore different packaging solutions that create a circular economy for plastic packaging.

### **Food and beverage sector and related plastic packaging in the region**

The food and beverage sector in the target countries, and related packaging sector, is being involved through consultation activities in order to engage them in the reduction of single-use plastic packaging. For this, interviews are being held to identify barriers/challenges affecting market for re-design, reuse or recycling of plastic packaging, feasibility of implementing best-practice solutions and innovations in plastic packaging, as well as technical assistance needs.

Generally, according to the initial project studies and consultation with stakeholders, the F&B producers in the target countries is structured through SMEs operating mostly in the domestic market due to high competition at the regional market and difficulties to export. This makes difficult for companies to invest in optimizing processes, increasing resource efficiency or marketing, among others. Despite these obstacles for growth, in terms of packaging it has a positive effect since shorter production and distributions chains require less packaging.

There is low representation and organization within the F&B sector, and when this exists, it's mostly focusing on support to export. As for type of F&B production and companies, the most relevant ones in the countries correspond to:

- Bread, pastry, cakes and confectionery products
- Meat processing
- Alcoholic beverages (mostly beer)
- Soft-drinks (including bottled water)
- Dairy products
- Fruits and vegetables

Plastic packaging sector does not seem well developed in the countries, and most packaging products are being imported. In addition, there is little production of non-plastic or reusable packaging for F&B products.

In the three countries there are important retail companies. However, sales through small shops and open markets are very significant, especially when compared with EU countries.

Regarding waste management, there are important shortfalls due to different issues. As for packaging, EPR is being developed in BiH while in Montenegro is being planned, and in Albania the process has not been started. Separate collection and recycling of plastic packaging is low, although there is some basic ground for this. It seems both separate collection and recycling facilities should be equally boosted to enhance a circular economy for plastics in the region.

## Objective

The aim of the consultancy is to identify concrete business options and best practices to tackle plastic packaging in the F&B sector that can be replicated in the region: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro. The list will be compiled into a guide or set of guidelines in which each option will be analyzed, detailed and complemented by specific business examples and replicability options. This best practices report or guidelines will support upcoming SCP/RAC activities in the region in terms of technical support to companies and promotion of voluntary commitments.

## Description of work

The consultant shall undertake the following work:

Review of existing options that tackle the use of plastic in the food and beverages packaging sector and come up with a list of 25 best practices that can be applicable to the local circumstances. The notion of “tackling” should include all possible actions as listed in the categories below. The study should include primary and secondary packaging and clear measures that contribute to transitioning towards a Circular Economy in order to reach the UN Sustainable Development Goals and following the EU Plastics Strategy. These practices should respond to the best extent possible to current issues in the three target countries (this activity is ongoing and consultant(s) will be briefed on the progress, so it is considered for the selection of cases).

### ***Content of the report***

The Consultant may use the following Circular Economy Business approach for the selection and categorization of case studies. It should be noted that the potential contribution to abating plastic packaging waste would increase the higher the category is.

1. **Resource efficient plastic packaging.** In this case, the packaging does not really change but it would use fewer raw materials in it (like less weight or volume), less water and energy was used while manufacturing and transporting it, leading to less water and air emissions. The review shall include cases about:

- Resource efficient and cleaner production applied by plastic manufacturers at the process (factory) level.
  - Eco-design of packaging by plastic producers supplying agricultural producers and F&B processors, particularly in the beverages, cereals, dairy and meat sectors at the product chain level, including resource efficient production and transport.
2. **Single-use, plastic recyclable packaging.** Once the packaging is discarded, it can be taken back for recycling, keeping the packaging material away from the landfill (for a certain number of cycles). Initiatives under this category to be included:
- Eco-design of packaging for easier recycling by plastic manufacturers, including polymer compositions simplification.
  - Reward systems for consumers to increase collection.
  - Collaboration across the value chain to increase recycling rates.
3. **Single-use, alternative packaging material.** The company uses completely different packaging material that is made of renewable, less impactful materials. This shall include:
- Replacement of the plastic packaging material with a more environment-friendly alternative using eco-design and LCA methodologies by agricultural producers and F&B processors, particularly in the beverages, cereals, dairy and meat sectors.
4. **Reuse, refill & rewash packaging.** The packaging is simply reusable (regardless of the material) so the service life is extended. Once produced, it can be used over and over again and the company needs to either design it in a way that it can be reused for another purpose or it can be refilled. Thus, the producer or retailer sells the product including the packaging and the ownership passes to the consumer at the point of purchase. Additionally, this approach can be considered for secondary, non-consumer packaging. The review shall include cases about:
- Packaging manufacturers offering the consumer, once purchased, reusable packaging.
  - Good practices in the retail sector offering refillable or reusable packaging.
5. **No-need/zero-waste packaging.** The company provides the service of F&B delivery and does not sell the product in small units. The ownership model has fully shifted and the company takes full responsibility of the product material flows including the packaging. A good example can be vegetable box delivery systems. Other example are consumer cooperatives and outdoor markets that don't use packaging material or utilise some reusable packaging only for transport, or supermarket chains without any packaging material. The review shall include:
- Business models by agro-food producers, processors, retailers and associations (among others) that avoid use of any kind of packaging and/or have the ownership of the packaging material by taking it fully back once used by the consumer.

In addition, an extra category could be included related to **consumers' awareness raising and corporate social responsibility (community engagement) by companies** to reduce plastic packaging use and waste. It should be noted that this would relate only to companies, and not to public administration awareness programs.

### ***Structure of the report***

The report shall contain the following chapters:

1. A state of the art introduction (not more than two pages), including current European and International policies, a summary of current initiatives and organisations working on the subject, and a snapshot of the problematic of plastic packaging<sup>3</sup>.
2. Methodology and sources for the selection of best practices. This should include the criteria considered for the selection of cases. It should be noted that options involving high technology and investment should be carefully considered given the national contexts.
3. Business options to reduce plastic packaging the F&B Sector. This should be the core of the report containing examples of initiatives listed above. The report shall identify companies and businesses playing a role in the production, distribution, and management of food and beverages packaging, and the best practices of these to reduce the use of plastic, improve its recyclability and address resource efficiency. Options shall be described in detail and analyzed in a clear and precise manner, in no more than 2 pages, containing the following elements:
  - Short summary of the best practice
  - Challenge addressed
  - Initiator and collaborators
  - Technical aspects
  - Financial aspects
  - Replicability

The consultant shall design and propose a template for description of the business options (to submit in the offer).

4. Conclusions and recommendations

The consultant(s) should gather the information through desk work and interviews.

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<sup>3</sup> Information from this chapter shall be extracted from previous project activities, hence there is no need for the Consultant to research on these issues.

### **Promotion of the report**

In addition, a member of the consultant's team will be **requested to attend a regional meeting** in one of the 3 countries to explain the report. The date and venue are to be determined; tentatively October or November 2019.

## **Deliverables and calendar**

The Consultant's team will start the work after the validation of their offer by the contractor.

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<b>#1. Draft list of the identified 25 practical cases, draft template for description of the case studies and plan of interviews</b>	4 weeks after notification
<b>#2. First draft of the report including all chapters</b>	12 weeks after notification
<b>#3. Final report including graphical material as separate files (and rights to be published with required credits)</b>	16 weeks after notification
<b>#4 PowerPoint explaining the report</b>	3 days before the attended event

All the deliverables will have to be presented in English and validated by the Contractor, within 1 week after the submission, before moving to the next step of the assignment. Failure in submitting deliverables or not reaching enough quality may result in a reduced budget allocation. In addition, regular calls will be organized with the contractor.

## **Means of work and eligible costs**

This work should be conducted through literature review and consultation with stakeholders. Equipment, consumables, travel should be included in the financial offer as a lump sum. The consultant(s) travel and accommodation expenses to attend one national/regional event will be covered by SCP/RAC and thus should not be considered in the offer.

## **Eligibility**

Applicants must fulfill the following requirements:

- Be an individual consultant, firm or association. Note: This ToR is not a subvention but a provision of services.
- Be able to comply with national fiscal context and rules for receipt of international funds.
- Have a bank account whose holder name must be the same as the applicant.

- Partnership and subcontracting are allowed, provided that the legal applicant entity has a substantial role in implementing the assignment. The applicant will be the only legal entity with which the contract relation will be established.
- Academic background in industrial engineering, environmental science, business administration or similar
- Fluent communication in English and excellent writing skills
- Extensive experience in resource efficiency, circular economy and eco-design
- Desirable experience in the Western Balkans region

## How to apply and selection process

Candidates should submit the following documents:

- 1) **Technical and financial offer** (maximum 5 pages, see form as Annex): the Consultant should elaborate a specific methodology to conduct the work based on the content suggested in section “Description of work”, elaborating it further, and proposing a template for description of the business options. An implementation calendar should be delivered, including planned consultation with key stakeholders.  
Financial offer: the consultant(s) should state the personnel dedication expressed in days (1 day = 8 working hours) as well as a lump sum for other costs related to the implementation of work.
- 2) **Profile and project references** (maximum 2 pages): the consultant(s) should submit a brief explanation of the candidate (CVs shall be included as annex) and project references on the topic.
- 3) **Bank form** filled in, signed and stamp by the bank (see form as Annex).

Offers must be sent to [pfernandez@scprac.org](mailto:pfernandez@scprac.org) with the subject “business options Balkans” before **3<sup>rd</sup> July, midnight (CET)**.

**Important :**

- The header of the **technical and financial offers** must clearly note the candidate data (Name, address, country, telephone, email and fiscal identity number or other official number) and those of the Contractor: « Regional Activity Center for Sustainable Consumption and Production / Agència de Residus de Catalunya / Carrer Dr. Roux nº 80 / 08017 Barcelona, Spain / NIF: **Q-5856373-E** ».
- **The maximum amount per offer (per country) is 14.000 euro (excl VAT).**

All candidates will be notified the reception of the offers.

Offers will be assessed according to the following criteria and scores:

Points	Criteria
Maximum 40 points	Quality of the technical offer to meet the work objectives
Maximum 30 points	Financial offer
Maximum 30 points	Profile and project qualifications

The Contractor may contact candidates to convene an interview to facilitate the evaluation

If you have questions concerning these ToR, please contact: [pfernandez@scprac.org](mailto:pfernandez@scprac.org).

## Selection and payments

The winning candidate will be notified by email and post on the selection of the offer. From that moment on work can start according to the calendar.

Payments will be done as it follows:

- Communication of the selection: 50%
- Submission of deliverable 3: 50%

Payments will be done in a period of 60 days after reception and validation of the invoice. The Contractor is not responsible for banking costs that might be applied by the consultant(s) bank, neither for changes in currency exchange.

## Annex: Offer template and bank form

**From:**

**Name: XXXXXX**

**Address: XXXXXXXXXXXXX**

**Country: XXXXXXXXX**

**Phone:**

**VAT nº or Tax ID: xxxxxx**

**To:**

**Regional Activity Center for Sustainable Consumption and Production**

**Agència de Residus de Catalunya**

**C/Dr. Roux núm. 80**

**08017 Barcelona, Spain**

**NIF: Q-5856373-E**

**1) Tasks description**

- a. Description of methodology**
- b. Template for description of business options**
- c. Potential stakeholders to be consulted**

**2) Implementation schedule**

**3) Financial offer**

