

The sustainable plastic challenge

Plastic has become an integral part of modern day life. The many applications for plastics is a tribute to its adaptability: it is durable, flexible in nature, strong yet light weight.

Since its use in industry, plastic has played an integral role in reducing the overall environmental impact of products. For example, it helps to reduce product damage in transit, greatly reduces food waste levels by protecting produce and extending shelf life and reduces the net weight of products and packaging, therefore reducing the environmental impact of transportation.

Yet for all its benefits, consumers are increasingly concerned about its impact on the wider environment, with NGOs and consumer groups campaigning for a more sustainable approach to plastics. From the production of plastics using fossil fuels, to the unsustainable disposal at its end of life there are real issues to address throughout the whole supply chain.

Consumers are now, more than ever, taking action through changes in buying habits, the use of social media and online petitions to demand change and even de-packaging items at supermarket checkouts.

As a result, national governments and international bodies are implementing and developing both strategies and legislation to tackle plastics. These are focusing on single-use plastics or specific products, such as microbeads, plastic stemmed cotton buds, plastic coated paper cups and plastic straws.

For example, the EU plastic waste strategy includes ambitions for all plastic packaging on the EU market to be recyclable by 2030, the consumption of single-use plastics to be reduced and the intentional use of microplastics to be restricted.

Business response

Since the end of 2017 there have been a wave of pledges and position statements released by manufacturers and retailers around their plastic reduction ambitions. It is now time to put actionable strategies into place to tackle the challenge.

The plastic challenge is complex with many competing factors that need to be considered when developing action plans. It also presents real business opportunities to innovate, develop new USPs, secure customer loyalty and safeguard supply chains, all of which make excellent business sense.

Our approach and services

At Anthesis, we understand the importance of plastic packaging and the role it plays in protecting and ensuring the safe delivery of a product. We also understand the necessity of reducing plastic waste and littering, especially of single-use plastics, and ensuring sustainable end of use and handling.

We have a global team of experts who can provide advice and pragmatic support across these issues, at all points within the supply chain; from product design to end of life management. We can also help you start the journey, define your strategy and mobilize your team by supporting you to:

- **Understand** how the current political landscape, consumer concerns and other disruptive factors could impact on your business models.
- **Undertake** a plastic packaging inventory and/or hot spot analysis to identify the volumes, types and formats of plastics used within your business to identify potential risks and opportunities.



Our approach and services continued

- **Develop** your company's priorities in relation to plastic reduction and what it aims to achieve. These could be tied to Sustainable Development Goals or other existing sustainability targets.
- **Identify** priority areas of focus and potential solutions to develop using prioritization processes, informed through the initial three actions.

Packaging solutions

Once on your journey in responding to the plastics agenda we can continue to provide support to your organization, enabling you to:

- Carry out sustainability reviews and reporting on packaging, using recognized analytics.
- Work with manufacturers and their suppliers to enhance packaging by making it more fit for purpose.
- Support decisions around raw material substitution, using our software based tools to assess changes in sustainability outcomes.
- Support producers to understand how to increase recycling of their packaging after its principal use.
- Ensure worldwide compliance in an increasingly complex regulatory environment.

Our clients

The Paper Cup Recovery and Recycling Group • Unilever • Coveris • Belu • Costa Coffee • Huhtamaki • AkzoNobel • Avaya

About Anthesis

Anthesis is a global sustainability services and solutions provider, which believes that commercial success and sustainability go hand in hand. We develop financially driven sustainability strategies, underpinned by technical expertise and delivered by collaborative teams across the world.

The company combines the reach of big professional services groups with the deep expertise of boutiques.

Anthesis has clients across industry sectors from corporate multinationals such as Reckitt Benckiser, Cisco, Tesco, The North Face and Target. The company brings together expertise from countries around the world and has offices in the U.S., Canada, the UK, Ireland, Italy, Germany, Sweden, Finland, China, the Philippines and the Middle East.

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