

Side Event at the 2024 Our Ocean Conference : Unlocking the potential of reusable beverage packaging to tackle the marine plastic pollution crisis.

Lead Organization: Oceana

Other Organizations: Dutch Association of Investors for Sustainable Development (VBDO)

Date and Time: April 16 2024, 3-4pm local time (Greece)

Location: Multifunctional Room 1, Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center, Athens, Greece

Event Description:

Scientists have found plastic bottles to be the second most common litter item found in surveys across aquatic environments globally. Oceana's research from 2023 found that just a 10-percentage point increase in reusable packaging globally by 2030 can eliminate over 1 trillion single-use plastic bottles and cups. This shift has the potential to prevent up to 153 billion of these containers from entering the world's oceans and waterways. Replacing single-use plastic with reusable packaging is one of the most effective ways that the beverage industry can reduce plastic waste – and the impact of this waste on the marine environment. Current trends indicate steady growth in sales of beverages in single-use plastic packaging, which continues to put our ocean at risk. To reverse this trend and protect our ocean from this growing tsunami of plastic waste, beverage and bottling companies must pivot to prioritize reuse through investment and marketing efforts, and countries must level the playing field through mandating reuse and setting legally binding targets.

This side event aims to highlight the enormous potential for reusable beverage packaging to reduce plastic waste, and the flow of this waste into our oceans. The event will feature a panel discussion by business leaders from the worlds of beverage packaging, and finance. The discussion will inform the audience about efforts that are currently being made – at scale – to increase reusable beverage packaging, and how this solution makes sense not only for the oceans, but for business also. Finally, plans will be shared on upcoming efforts to grow and expand reusable beverage packaging.

Moderator:

Dr. Dana Miller, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Oceana

Panelists:

Ryan Everton, CEO, TURN Systems

Carlos Laboy, Managing Director, HSBC (Head of Global Beverage Research)

Angélique Laskewitz, Executive Director, The Dutch Association of Investors for Sustainable Development (VBDO)

Please see below the agenda for the side event which will take place on April 16, 2024, at 3-4pm local time (Greece), in Multifunctional Room 1, Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center, Athens, Greece.

1. Introduction (5 minutes, moderator)
 - Welcome and objective of the event
 - Introductions
 - Scene setting

2. Panel discussion (max. 40 minutes)
 - How reuse systems work

- Technological innovations in reusable packaging
- The business case for reuse
- Investor demand for plastic reduction and growth of reusable packaging
- Scaling up reuse systems
- Efforts to grow and expand reusable beverage packaging

3. Questions from the audience (time permitting)

4. Closing remarks (5 minutes, moderator)