

**Question for written answer E-001268/2022  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Henna Virkkunen (PPE)**

Subject: Biodegradable materials in the context of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive

The Commission has rightfully made combating plastic waste a priority of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive. All conventional plastic made from fossil oil or bio-based materials will, as waste, contribute to the aggregating mass of microplastics threatening our ecosystems.

Unfortunately, even a massive uptake of conventional mechanical recycling can do no more than slow down the torrent of microplastics in the oceans. Mechanically recycled plastic has to be mixed with virgin oils and can go through recycling cycles only a limited number of times, after which it also becomes plastic waste and degrades into microplastics.

Improving existing recycling systems is therefore only an intermediary step towards circularity. Pathways to new effective recycling methods and sustainable innovative materials are needed. In particular, novel sustainable materials entering the markets for which sufficient waste streams are yet to be developed need to be carefully considered.

1. Given that chemical recycling is the method that is closest to creating a closed recycling loop for both conventional plastics and novel biodegradable and bio-based materials and keeping the circulating carbon sequestered in products, how will the Commission promote the uptake of chemical recycling in the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive?
2. How will it support the development of recycling streams for fully biodegradable bio-based and non-hazardous packaging materials?