



PRESS RELEASE

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Sectors: Industry / Household Packaging / Green Technologies
Supermarkets / Wholesalers / Distributors /
Small Shops / Grocery Shops

**THE SPHERE GROUP WELCOMES THE ADOPTION BY THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL
OF THE DIRECTIVE ON THE REDUCTION OF THE IMPACT OF
CERTAIN PLASTIC PRODUCTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT.**

The Council of Ministers of the European Union of Wednesday 21 May 2019 has just adopted the Directive on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products unanimously with one abstention.

For the SPHERE group, this is a strong measure.

The new Directive recognises the crucial role of scientific research and innovation in combating marine and terrestrial pollution from plastics.

It opens the door to innovative solutions, such as biodegradable plastics in the marine environment, which are a complementary solution to existing solutions to achieve the objectives of the circular economy.

Indeed, the Directive provides for the monitoring of scientific and technical advances in biodegradable materials research in the marine environment, and stresses, with a desire to oversee the development of this innovative technology in a harmonised way, the need to develop a European standard on marine biodegradability.

Such a standard will contribute not only to distinguishing truly biosourced and biodegradable materials from oxo-degradable materials, but will also certify what products really are biodegradable in the marine environment within a short timescale and without a negative impact on the ecosystems.

The SPHERE group welcomes the ban on products manufactured using oxo-degradable plastic, which disappear from view but do not ever really biodegrade, leaving microplastics in the environment forever.

SPHERE welcomes the first definition in a Community legislative text of “biodegradable plastic”.

However, the SPHERE group would have liked the Directive to go further by banning certain single-use products unless they are biosourced, biodegradable and compostable at home, in the spirit of the Agriculture and Food Act and Energy Transition for Green Growth Act.

About SPHERE

SPHERE is a family-owned French group founded in 1976. It is the European leader of household packaging and operates in three markets: general public, professionals and local authorities and it is a producer of bioplastic resins.

SPHERE, since its creation, has always aimed to:

- Reduce the volume of virgin plastic materials used in its products and replace them with recycled materials;
- Develop new biodegradable and compostable materials;
- Use biobased raw materials.

It is an actor which has been engaged for over 20 years in the research and development of materials that are increasingly respectful of the environment.

With 15 production sites in Europe, of which 8 are located in France, the group has an annual production of 150,000 tonnes. In 2019, turnover is forecast to be 600 million euros with more than 1,450 employees.

The SPHERE group markets and produces: bin liners, fruit and vegetable bags, freezer bags, food-safe films and papers, aluminium trays and foils.

PRESS CONTACT

SPHERE - Marielle Cayron - Communications Director

P. +33 (0)1 53 65 23 00 – M. +33 (0)6 88 06 62 61 - m.cayron@sphere.eu

Agence LJ Corporate - Agnès Le Dréau

P. +33 (0)1 45 03 89 97 - a.ledreau@ljcom.net