

The Global EPS Sustainability Alliance (GESA)



The Global EPS Sustainability Alliance (GESA) is an organization brought together to represent the expanded polystyrene industry on an international level.

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About UNEP-INC Plastic Pollution Treaty

In March 2022 at the UN Environment Assembly, a historic resolution was adopted to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution. The resolution requested the [UN Environment Programme \(UNEP\)](#) to convene an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop the instrument, which is to be based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastic, including its production, design, and disposal.

The INC began its work during the second half of 2022, with the ambition to complete negotiations by the end of 2024. The [fourth session \(INC-4\)](#) is scheduled from 23 to 29 April 2024, in Ottawa, Canada.

The treaty has the potential to dramatically improve the sustainability of the plastics industry. The challenge will be to reduce plastic pollution while also recognizing essential materials that manufacturers and consumers rely upon, on a global scale.

Why use EPS?



Low Carbon

Clean manufacturing technologies mean minimal energy & water inputs with no production waste.



Lightweight

EPS is 98% air, minimising weight impacts in transportation to achieve lower fuel consumption.



Waterproof

EPS is insoluble & non-hygroscopic.



Insulating

Unique insulation performance keeps perishables safe & eradicates food waste.



Recyclable

EPS is recycled in 55 countries & collectively meets the criteria for global recycling in-practice & at scale.



Durable

The 2% polystyrene cellular matrix gives outstanding impact resistance.



Economic

Highly efficient manufacturing & localized production units mean EPS is a cost-effective, proven solution.



EPS Transport Packaging



Not EPS



OPS



HIPS



GPPS



XPS

A Global Agreement Should Include:

1

Global product design principles based on life-cycle assessments that can lead to increased recycling & (where possible) reuse, plus national action plans that include country-specific "design-for-recycling" criteria.

2

Policy that supports robust sustainability evaluation protocols applied to plastics based on function not by polymer group. Scientific assessments should include material essentiality, good manufacturing practices, compliance with existing chemical safety requirements & end-of-life disposal using CE priority rankings.

3

National action plans requiring creation of waste management systems that enable circularity, appropriate to each country's situation. The agreement could provide guidance/toolkits to support governments' development of the action plan.

4

Public policy with circularity targets at the national level (such as recycled content requirements in packaging), based on minimizing resource utilization & maximizing recovered plastics as feedstock for new products. Smart policy can support investment in recycling infrastructure by creating demand for recycled plastics.

5

Guidance on maximizing the volume of plastics that can be mechanically recycled, plus guidance on the role of chemical/emerging recycling technologies in expanding circularity.



About GESA



The Global EPS Sustainability Alliance (GESA) (www.globaleps.org) is a collaboration between expanded polystyrene (EPS) manufacturers, extended producer responsibility PROs, recyclers, and others to advance the circular economy for EPS packaging in five continents, and works to support environmental policy solutions at local, regional and global levels. This collaborative effort brings together best practices in EPS resource management, sustainable manufacturing, life cycle impact reporting and worldwide recycling data to establish universal resources within the EPS supply chain. Member organizations the EPS Industry Alliance (EPS-IA), European Manufacturers of EPS (EUMEPS) and Expanded Polystyrene Australia (EPSA) are UNEP-accredited observers, holding consultative roles in the development of the treaty on plastic pollution.

Member Organizations



The EPS Industry Alliance (www.epsindustry.org) is a trade association representing the EPS supply chain in North America, promoting sustainable EPS practices and advancing innovation in manufacturing, circularity, and recycling.



Asian Manufacturers of Expanded Polystyrene (www.ameps.net) was formed in 1994 and has expanded to include 16 members across the Asia Pacific region. AMEPS is actively involved in the establishment of EPS recycling associations and has a strong focus on research and development, and technological innovation.



EPSbranchen-en del af Plastindustrien (<https://eps-airpop.dk/>) represents the EPS-producing companies and the rest of the EPS value chain in Denmark.



The association for European Manufacturers of Expanded Polystyrene (www.eumeps.org) is the voice of the Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) industry in Europe. Its members cover the entire EPS value chain and include individual companies as well as 23 European national EPS associations.



The African Polystyrene Industry Alliance (<https://www.apia.africa/>) symbolizes a collective commitment to champion the interests of the entire polystyrene industry across the African continent. Its scope encompasses expanded polystyrene, high impact polystyrene, and extruded polystyrene.



EPS Australia (www.epsa.org.au) is the national industry body for all manufacturers and distributors of expanded polystyrene (EPS) products in Australia, highlighting the valuable contribution that EPS can make to environmental sustainability.

GESA Environmental Policy Recommendations

The Global EPS Sustainability Alliance Supports a Global Plastics Agreement that Creates a Circular Economy for All Plastics and Eliminates Plastic Pollution

The GESA coalition of global EPS organizations, representing Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, and North America are actively participating in the United Nations Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (UN INC) on Plastic Pollution meetings.

GESA advocates for the following positions:

We support an ambitious plan to eliminate plastic pollution through an implementable agreement.

We support the position that an agreement should increase circularity that protects the environment and be sufficiently flexible to allow for different solutions to address other impacts at the various stages of the lifecycle, considering national circumstances. Prescriptive measures will not accommodate the diversity of consumer and social behaviors, production practices, waste management capacity, and environmental factors across countries. We also recognize the importance of using science- and evidence-based approaches in how parties take action on plastic pollution.

We support the creation of independent national plans of action.

We support a country-driven agreement that allows nations to set their own local action plans versus a one-size-fits-all approach to the issue of eliminating plastic pollution. We support an agreement that considers a country's unique legal, economic, and societal issues. We should have governmental action plans and enabling policies with national targets for reducing plastic waste, increasing the use of recycled content, and prioritizing high leakage applications. We believe a country-driven agreement can better produce meaningful solutions to plastic waste than an international top-down mandate that would disrupt the distribution of life-saving medicines and vital medical equipment, shorten the lifespan of fresh food, further reducing narrow profit margins and increasing distribution costs, and most critically, create barriers to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050.



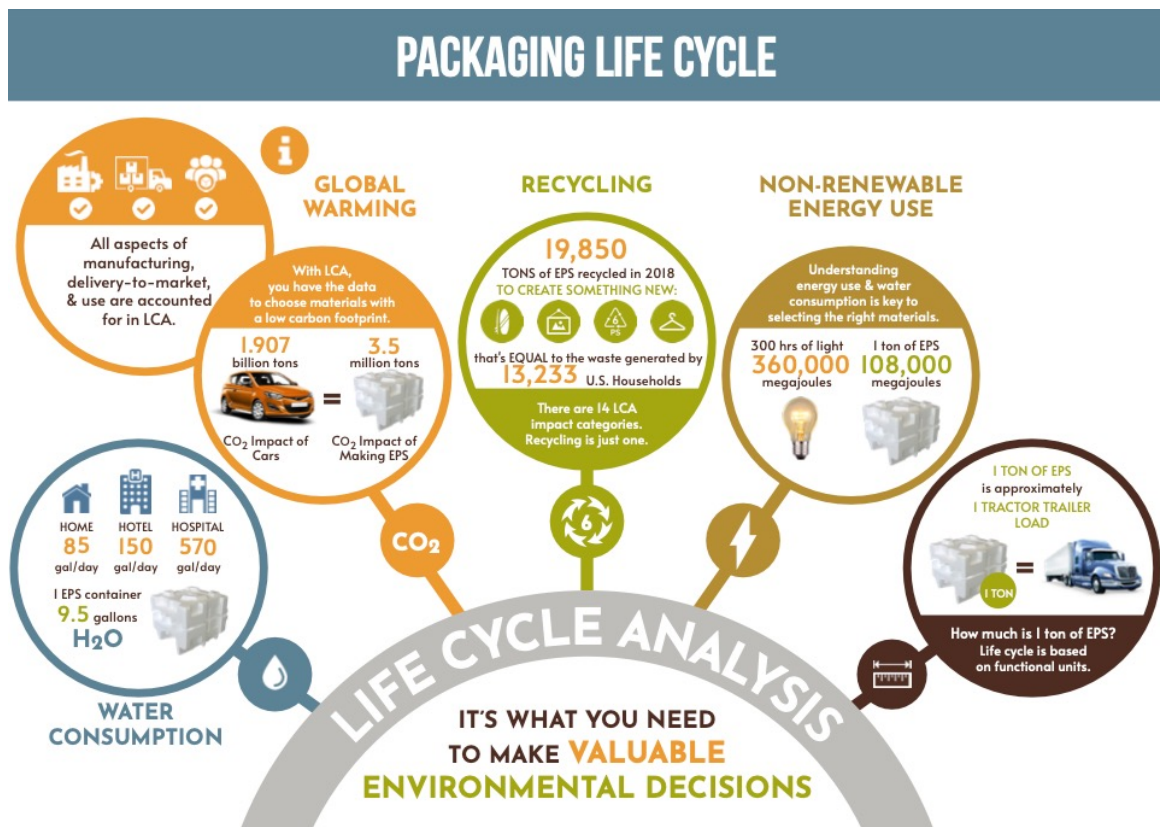
GESA Environmental Policy Recommendations (Continued)

We support flexibility to achieve circularity and oppose lists of banned or restricted polymers, ingredients, and products.

Broad bans and restrictions would lead to undesirable outcomes that are counterproductive to climate goals, forcing consumers to use products with a worse environmental profile, often with less tested performance properties. Any global agreement claiming EPS as hazardous or problematic would also contradict many existing global government positions. For example, EPS is approved for food contact within most of the food and drug safety agencies throughout the world, contradicting the notion it is harmful to human health.

We support the adoption of science-based tools including life cycle analysis.

It is essential that checks and balances are established when addressing material substitutions. Any criteria to evaluate plastic materials must be conducted for individual polymer formulations, not an entire polymer family. We support the development of robust sustainability evaluation protocols that include essentiality, good manufacturing practices, compliance with existing minimum chemical safety requirements and end-of-life disposal using CE priority rankings.



GESA Environmental Policy Recommendations (Continued)

We support policies that accelerate the implementation of UN SDGs.

Any agreement must not harm the ability of nations to also achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). It is vital to understand that the elimination of plastics products that have critical uses is not necessary to achieve the goal to eliminate plastic waste. In fact, plastic product applications can contribute to the advancement of certain SDGs. As such, we encourage private companies, foundations, and governments to accelerate SDG 2 Zero Hunger, SDG 9 Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure, SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production, and SDG 13 Climate Action. For example, EPS packaging ensures food reaches those who need it most without perishing, thereby advancing SDG 2. EPS insulation and construction materials make buildings and transportation more resilient to weather, more cost-effective, and energy efficient, helping to advance SDG 9 and SDG 11. EPS requires less materials and energy for manufacturing, while also being recycled into new products supporting SDG 12. Last, EPS insulation reduces energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, supporting SDG 13.

Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) is an essential packaging material that plays an important role in sustainable society today and in the future.

Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) Transport Packaging Role in Advancing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



EPS packaging extends the life span of fresh food in worldwide distribution chains. EPS containers maximize vitamin retention & prevent spoilage to reduce food waste.



The EPS industry works with communities to create and improve EPS recycling. EPS is used for emergency homeless shelters, green roofs and geofoam for civil engineering projects.



EPS packaging is the industry standard for pharmaceutical and organ transplants to guarantee accurate temperature control. It prevents injury and fatalities with children's car seats, helmets, and automotive components.



EPS manufacturing facilities recapture air emissions and proactively manage pellet containment. Periodic life cycle assessments demonstrate reduced energy and water consumption over time.



EPS insulation used in the built environment reduces energy demands, heating and cooling costs and contributes to reduced greenhouse gas emissions.



EPS packaging protection reduces in-transit damage, preventing the re-manufacture and re-shipping caused by breakage. By minimizing damage, avoidable CO2 emissions and fuel consumption are prevented.



Building & Construction



Packaging



Sustainability

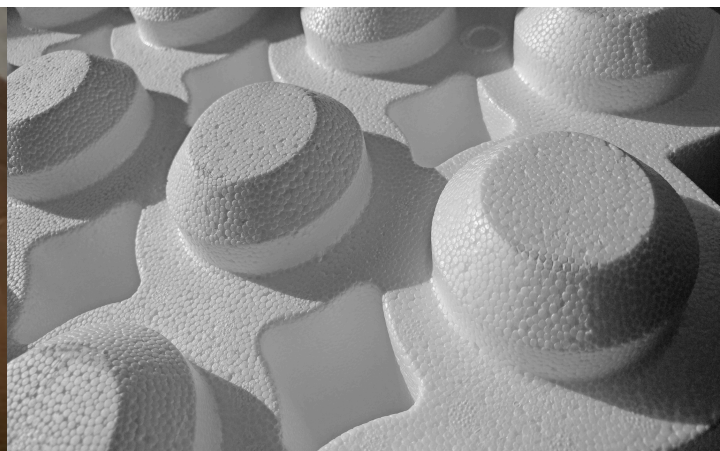


Technical Resources

What is EPS?



Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) is a sustainable solution that can be used to keep us warm, safe, and healthy while remaining cost-effective and recyclable. This [video](#) offers insights into the world of EPS, highlighting the positive contributions EPS makes in our lives.



EPS Uses

Touching your life in so many ways.

In your home, in your community and in business, state-of-the-art EPS manufacturing technologies create products with reliable performance.

EPS delivers fresh food to your dinner table, safely ships important medical treatment and keeps your home and other buildings cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.



Essential Uses



Appliances



Pharmaceutical



Fresh Food Distribution



Electronics



Automotive

EPS TRANSPORT PACKAGING ESSENTIAL USES

98% AIR
*EPS Transport
Packaging Moves
Product Around the
Globe*



VACCINES



FISH BOXES



HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES



Global EPS
SUSTAINABILITY
Alliance

DESIGNED FOR RECYCLING



Post-Use
Recycling
Above 30%

Post-Use
Recycling
10 - 30%

Information
Unavailable

EPS Transport Packaging Recycled In Practice & At Scale

EPS TRANSPORT PACKAGING & INSULATION EMISSIONS

Chemical	Emissions $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^2\cdot\text{hr}$	Details
Pentane	13-130	Fully dissipates after molding.
Styrene	32-80	Residual amount from EPS raw material.
Acetophenone	47-150	By-product of EPS raw material with flame retardant. <i>Only used in insulation building applications.</i>
Ethylbenzene	3-53	Unreactive styrene impurity.

**ALL EMISSIONS BELOW PUBLISHED
NO SIGNIFICANT RISK LEVELS**

EPS SAFETY

WORKER SAFETY

HUMAN HEALTH SAFETY

CHEMICAL SAFETY

EPS Uses

EPS offers a unique combination of performance characteristics including high shock absorption, high thermal resistance and high compressive strength. These properties are further enhanced by the ability to customize EPS into unlimited shapes and sizes enabling it to meet specifications for hundreds of highly engineered applications.

EPS insulation promotes faster construction times and contributes to significant energy savings. Cold chain shipping, radiant floor heating, highway bridge abutments, automotive safety components, and life-saving sports helmets are just some of the important ways EPS contributes to a safer, healthier and more energy efficient society.



- EPS provides effective, safe, and secure protective packaging for consumer goods, including appliances, electronics, pharmaceuticals, furniture, and other products.

- EPS foam insulation is used in building and construction – improving energy efficiency and offering unprecedented strength to withstand severe weather conditions.



- There is no substitute for expanded polystyrene in harsh distribution environments when transporting essential pharmaceuticals, fresh food and other valuable goods.



- Beyond packaging, EPS offers incredible physical properties that make it an ideal material choice in hundreds of applications. From highway infrastructure to roofing insulation to sports helmets and surfboards, EPS is an extremely versatile plastic.

- EPS packaging reduces damage rates and, subsequently, environmental impacts from transportation emissions & manufacturing.

EXPANDED POLYSTYRENE (EPS) IS NOT A HEALTH OR SAFETY RISK

Scientific data demonstrates EPS is a chemically safe material

Most EPS foam consists of 98% air and only 2% plastic.

Expanded polystyrene (EPS) is a lightweight, rigid, cellular plastic composed of carbon and hydrogen. EPS foam products are made from expanded polystyrene resin beads impregnated with a blowing agent. The resin beads are expanded and fused with steam in a mold cavity.

EPS protective packaging does not present an inherent health and safety risk. It is widely approved for direct food contact by the most rigorous food safety regulatory authorities.

When evaluating EPS, it is important to recognize the chemical elements and their function in the manufacturing process to produce finished foam products.

Pentane

Polystyrene resin beads contain small amounts (3-6%) of the blowing agent pentane, a saturated hydrocarbon with low global warming impact. The residual pentane in finished foam products dissipates within a short time and is replaced with air.

Styrene

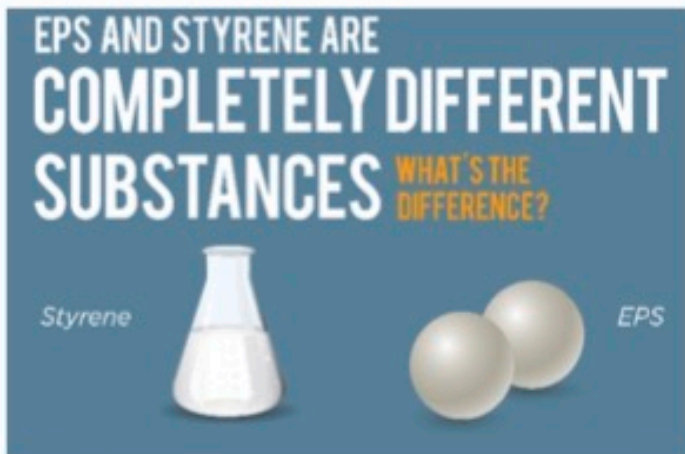
Styrene is a liquid building block chemical used to polymerize polystyrene plastics. It is a naturally occurring chemical found in many common plants and foods, including strawberries, coffee, and cinnamon. The residual styrene in finished EPS products is very low.

Flame Retardants

Flame retardants are used in EPS building insulation to reduce the risk of fire.

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) Emissions

Results from an Underwriters Laboratory (UL) environmental emissions screening of EPS chemical compounds are shown in the following table.



EPS Packaging & Insulation Foam Emissions - 24-hrs Post-Manufacture

Chemical	Emissions µg/m ² •hr	Notes
Pentane	13-130	Fully dissipates after molding.
Styrene	32-80	Residual amount from EPS resin manufacturing.
Acetophenone	47-150	By-product of EPS resin manufacturing with flame retardant. Used in insulation building applications.
Ethylbenzene	3-53	Unreactive styrene impurity.

POLYSTYRENE IS NOT LISTED UNDER PROPOSITION 65

"We clearly stated that polystyrene is not the subject of a proposed listing under Proposition 65, The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement."

– Sam Delson, Deputy Director for External & Legislative Affairs, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHA)

PAPER INCLUDES STYRENE

"Disposable Paper Based Food Packaging – The False Solution to the Packaging Waste Crisis" which lists chemicals of concern used in paper and board, specifically names styrene among others.

– Profundo Research & Advice, 9/12/23

Human Exposure & Risk Versus Hazard

Regulatory agencies set exposure limits to determine a safe threshold to various chemicals. When exposure to a chemical is below those thresholds, there is no hazard. Although trace amounts of styrene are found in EPS foam products, it is not a concern, as concluded by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

After listing styrene as a chemical of concern, the California Environmental Protection Agency Office of Environmental Health issued a report acknowledging that polystyrene is not the same as polystyrene. It published a no significant risk level for styrene. A UL test report concluded that potential inhalation and dermal exposures for EPS foam resulting from residual styrene are well below the safe threshold

Environmental Exposure

EPS products are inert and non-toxic in land and water. While EPS will not biodegrade readily in the environment, prolonged exposure to sunlight causes the material to break down over time. EPS does not break down into hazardous gases or other toxic compounds.

EXPANDED POLYSTYRENE (EPS) IS NOT STYRENE

While styrene has been listed as a chemical of concern by various regulatory agencies and organizations, **styrene is not the same as EPS.**

Styrene and EPS are very different substances with very different chemical makeups: Styrene, a clear liquid, is the monomer that becomes EPS, a white solid.

Trace amounts of styrene are found in EPS foam products; **however**, reports published by the FDA and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services indicate that the **minute amount of styrene found in polystyrene – including EPS – is not a concern.**

STUDIES AFFIRM THAT POTENTIAL EXPOSURES FOR EPS FOAM FALL BELOW APPLICABLE LIMITS:

ORGANIZATION	REPORT	RESULTS
Dept. of Health & Human Services, Center for Disease Control, National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health	NIOSH Health Hazard Evaluation Report 2005-0243-3016, 2006	EPS manufacturing plant employees were not exposed over applicable occupational exposure limits to carbon monoxide, pentane, styrene, acetophenone, ethylbenzene, xylene or respirable dust.
Aarhus University	Limited Evidence That Styrene Causes Cancer in Humans, 2017	A study of >72,000 employees exposed to styrene has not found an increase in a wide range of cancer types.
U.S. Food and Drug Administration Food Additive Master File	The Safety of Styrene-Based Polymers for Food Contact Use, 2013	The calculated estimated daily intake is more than four orders of magnitude less than the acceptable daily intake.

"Styrene should not be confused with polystyrene. Although styrene, a liquid, is used to make polystyrene, which is a solid plastic, we do not believe that people are at risk from using polystyrene products."

-National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)

EPS Recyclability & The Circular Economy

EPS is recyclable. EPS saves energy. EPS saves resources. GESA members are vested in product stewardship that supports a circular economy, thriving on innovation to support ecological advantages. Versatile, reliable and available in a wide range of applications, EPS ensures safe transportation of the things we value and delivers maximum comfort and efficiency at home and work. The EPS industry is constantly working on new approaches to improving its protection, its recyclability and its insulation properties even more. Numerous innovative systems have been developed to efficiently reuse expanded polystyrene (EPS), contributing to a sustainable approach to working with this versatile material.



ICECATCH EPS REUSE SYSTEM



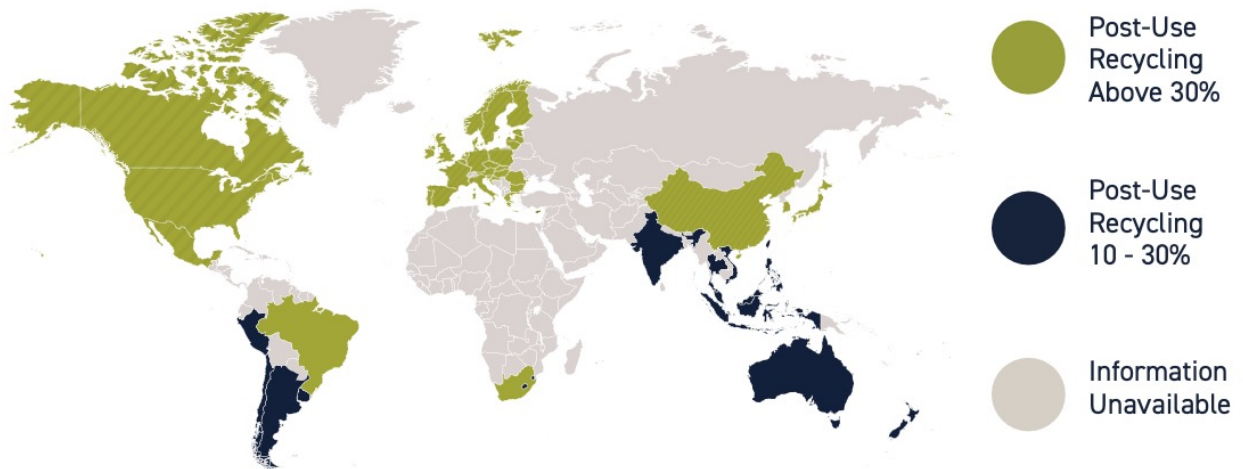
SUBARU EPS REUSE SHIPPING CONTAINER

EPS manufacturing uses resources such as water and raw materials – 2% polystyrene from fossil sources or from recycled EPS – efficiently in production. The steam consumed in the EPS manufacturing process is then condensed back to liquid water and is reused many times over in the EPS production process.

Innovations in manufacturing technologies ensure EPS production minimizes energy consumption with mold cavities that cool more quickly and processes that recycle water and recapture air emissions. Newer manufacturing processes use radio frequency instead of steam to mold EPS.

EPS Recyclability & The Circular Economy

The EPS industry supports recycling in more than 50 countries. Numerous recycling solutions, including mechanical, chemical, microwave and other processing technologies ensure a strong foundation for consistent growth.



EPS Transport Packaging Recycled In Practice & At Scale

EPS

RECYCLING



IT BEGINS

WITH YOU

Year-to-Date Observer Submissions on Behalf of the EPS Industry & GESA

The European Manufacturers of EPS (EUMEPS), the EPS Industry Alliance (EPS-IA) and Expanded Polystyrene Australia (EPSA) are accredited observers of the UNEP Plastics Pollution Treaty and are actively engaged in the proceedings.

[GESA Position Paper – Why EPS Matters](#)

[GESA Position Paper – Fostering A Circular Economy](#)

[January 2023 – Proposed response on the potential options for elements toward an international legally binding instrument – EPS-IA & EUMEPS](#)

[January 2023 – Proposed response on the potential options for elements toward an international legally binding instrument – EPS Australia \(EPSA\)](#)

[Response Submission — Part A](#)

[Response Submission — Part B](#)

PRESS RELEASES



The Expanded Polystyrene Industry Alliance (EPS-IA) Commends Biden-Harris Administration's \$100 Million Investment in Recycling Infrastructure to Promote Circular Economy

Summary: *The Expanded Polystyrene Industry Alliance (EPS-IA) applauds the Biden-Harris administration's recently announced \$100 million investment in recycling infrastructure projects. Key business industries that utilize EPS will benefit from the funds, which also come at an opportune moment amidst EPS-IA's efforts to introduce new recycling facilities for the widely-used material.*

Crofton, MD., September 15 – The [EPS Industry Alliance \(EPS-IA\)](#), the North American trade association leading the expanded polystyrene (EPS) industry, commends the Biden-Harris administration's recently announced \$100 million investment supporting recycling infrastructure projects.

"EPS Industry Alliance applauds the Biden-Harris administration's \$100 million investment in recycling infrastructure projects," stated Betsy Bowers, Executive Director of EPS-IA. "Vital business sectors that rely on EPS as a recyclable and sustainable material will benefit from this prudent investment. The newly announced funds come at an opportune moment, with EPS-IA's partners working to install polystyrene recycling systems at solid waste facilities across the United States."

Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) plays an essential role in many key industries including packaging, construction, manufacturing, insulation, automotive and food service among others. Products like medical packaging, protective gear, electronics, life preservers, water heaters, car seats and more are all made using EPS.

Despite common misperceptions, long standing efforts demonstrate EPS recycling efficacy through a network of more than 375 community drop-off locations and over 100 curbside collection programs in North America. In 2020, expanded polystyrene recycling for transport packaging exceeded 65,000 tons representing a 42.6% recycling rate.

As part of the investment, the EPA has chosen 25 communities to receive over \$73 million in grants under the newly created Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling [program](#). The funding will help put the EPA's National Recycling Strategy into action, working toward a circular economy where materials, products, and services are used for as long as possible.

PRESS RELEASES

The timing of the investment could prove to be pivotal, as the initiative coincides seamlessly with ongoing efforts within the EPS industry. EPS-IA, in collaboration with [Foam Cycle](#), has been actively working alongside municipal waste agencies in various communities to introduce polystyrene collection and densification systems at numerous local solid waste facilities.

This newly patented polystyrene recycling system offers landfill operators a turnkey solution to include expanded polystyrene into its hard-to-recycle drop-off programs. Foam Cycle demonstrates an established presence with more than 30 locations, with more scheduled for installation in 2023. Existing locations now serve a population of more than 11 million people in 13 states, showing a 200% increase in pounds collected from 2020 to 2021.

This growth trend is gaining momentum and has the potential to grow exponentially with additional grant funding. In recent years, the recycling system has grown to include non-profit agencies, counties, municipalities, and public-private partnerships that have committed to recycling foam packaging and food service foam.

"This investment could make a real difference for many of these communities," said Betsy Bowers. "Including EPS in community recycling can bring quick benefits, like saving landfill space and reducing disposal costs. By dedicating a portion of the grants to this effort, the communities can demonstrate progress quickly, and add new materials to their recycling portfolio, which can then bring long-term benefits, both environmentally and economically."

ABOUT EPS-IA

The [EPS Industry Alliance](#) (EPS-IA) is the North American trade association for the expanded polystyrene (EPS) industry. Our members – more than 50 small businesses located in 44 states – manufacture EPS foam insulation used in building and construction and EPS protective packaging for consumer goods including appliances, electronics, pharmaceuticals, furniture, and other products. EPS is a versatile, lightweight material — 98 percent air — that supports a diverse range of industries and significant sectors of our national economy.

###

PRESS RELEASES



The EPS Industry Alliance (EPS-IA) to Attend the Global Plastics Summit 2023 in Bangkok, Thailand on Oct 11-12

Summary: *The EPS Industry Alliance (EPS-IA) will attend the Global Plastics Summit 2023, taking place in Bangkok, Thailand. The Summit brings together policymakers, sustainability experts, environmental advocates, and industry leaders for vital discussions ahead of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) INC-3 session, as the UNEP considers an international legally binding treaty on reducing plastic pollution.*

Crofton, MD., October 4, 2023 – The [EPS Industry Alliance \(EPS-IA\)](#), the North American trade association leading the expanded polystyrene (EPS) industry, will join policymakers, sustainability experts, environmental advocates, and industry leaders at the upcoming [Global Plastics Summit 2023](#), taking place October 11-12 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Summit holds particular significance as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is in the process of developing an international legally binding treaty (ILBI) on the reduction of plastic pollution, and has just released the first iteration of the treaty text, otherwise known as the [Zero Draft](#) of the ILBI.

Hosted by [Economist Impact](#), the Global Plastics Summit will bring together stakeholders from around the world to hold crucial discussions and collaborate on sustainable initiatives. The goal of these discussions will be to gain alignment with various stakeholders on the robust UNEP treaty that addresses the reduction of plastic pollution.

The EPS-IA Executive Director, Betsy Bowers, and the Director of Advocacy and Regulatory Affairs, Walter Reiter, will attend the Global Plastics Summit and have issued the following statement:

“With the release of the zero draft before the Summit, participants will have the opportunity to engage in more concrete discussions on the outlined policy options, facilitating a more meaningful exchange of ideas and opinions, and moving the process into a feasibility analysis stage.

Plastic pollution is a serious issue that requires innovative solutions that can be successfully implemented within the complex need set of the UN member states. With the breadth of policy options proposed, we will be encouraging stakeholders to begin looking at the application and use of recognized sustainability assessment tools like life cycle impact studies, recycled content certification, and greenhouse gas equivalencies.

PRESS RELEASES

EPS-IA is looking forward to learning more about how plastic pollution policies can be applied at the global level. Our industry hopes to bring forward ideas on how these policies can be embraced with a scientific approach that enhances outcomes and avoids unintended consequences.”

The Summit is taking place in advance of the UNEP Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastics Pollution’s (UNEP-INC) [third session](#) in November 2023. During these sessions, member states, environmental groups, and industry organizations will engage in discussions and may offer input on what should be taken into the UNEP’s consideration as the ILBI is further developed, and subsequently voted on in 2024.

EPS applications maintain an essential role in key industries including packaging, construction, transportation, manufacturing, automotive, and food service, among others. Applications such as medical packaging, protective gear, refrigeration components, and car seats are all made using EPS. The integrity of these functions to meet global distribution needs and support community infrastructure must be maintained while ensuring minimal environmental impacts and optimized end-of-life management.

Despite common misperceptions, the EPS industry has maintained long standing efforts which demonstrate the high recycling efficacy for EPS applications, that continue to show consistent growth and strong market support. In 2020, recycling for EPS transportation packaging applications exceeded 65,000 tons, representing a 42.6% recycling rate for residential and commercial waste in North America.

EPS-IA advocates for the responsible use of EPS, as well as research-backed solutions and policies that will positively benefit the environment and the economy.

For more information about EPS-IA, visit www.epsindustry.org.

View EPS-IA’s informational video, “What is EPS?” [here](#).

ABOUT EPS-IA

The [EPS Industry Alliance](#) (EPS-IA) is the North American trade association for the expanded polystyrene (EPS) industry. Our members – more than 50 small businesses located in 44 states – manufacture EPS foam insulation used in building and construction and EPS protective packaging for consumer goods including appliances, electronics, pharmaceuticals, furniture, and other products. EPS is a versatile, lightweight material — 98 percent air — that supports a diverse range of industries and significant sectors of our national economy.

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PRESS RELEASES



Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) Industry Advances Sustainability with \$185M Investment in Recycled Content Resin Technologies

Summary: *The EPS Industry has collectively invested over \$185 million in technology to integrate recycled content from used EPS packaging into various applications, with 79 million pounds of capacity already operational and an additional 150 million pounds planned. These advancements, powered by chemistry innovations, are enabling the production of recycled content resin, which can be used in the manufacturing of new materials, fostering increased sustainability in many sectors.*

Crofton, MD., November 6, 2023 – Expanded polystyrene (EPS) resin producers in North America have collectively invested more than \$185M in technologies for recycled content EPS feedstock, advancing sustainability in many sectors. Leading resin producers [RAPAC](#), [Epsilyte](#), [Styropek](#), [Nexkemia](#) and [BASF](#) have all developed proprietary formulas that will allow EPS fabricators to incorporate ≥30% recycled content in the manufacturing of many applications. Seventy-nine million pounds of online capacity is already serving North American markets, with projections for an additional 150 million pounds of capacity. Three of the resin producer's recycled content products are third-party certified and some are looking at traceability technology to be used in next-generation formula iterations.

Chemistry-driven innovations have made these advancements possible. Recycled content resin offers equal performance properties to virgin materials, thereby reducing the use of virgin materials and reducing environmental impact. The recycled content will be used in the manufacturing of many products including protective packaging, bicycle helmets, construction, drainage and septic aggregate and more. Some EPS molders have conducted successful trials with the recycled content resin and are planning to be market-ready by 2024.

Recycled content EPS has been technically achievable for some time, but historically end users have not been motivated to use it. That trend is changing. With more stringent policy recommendations stemming from national governments, there is mounting pressure for the private sector to take a second look at recycled content capabilities.

EPS resin producers are prepared to meet recycled content mandates and extended producer responsibility (EPR) legislation. This commitment to the development of sustainable solutions reinforces environmentally responsible EPS production and positions them well to comply with future regulations.

PRESS RELEASES

“In response to the surging global demand for recycled content resins, we’ve witnessed remarkable technological innovations across various industries. Notably, the green building sector has embraced using recycled content resin for insulation, offering an eco-conscious solution without sacrificing quality. With a promising growth forecast, recycled content resins are making a substantial impact on sustainability worldwide,” said David Wilson, Purchasing Manager at RAPAC.

“This new product offering has the potential to be a game-changer for the EPS industry”, said Betsy Bowers, Executive Director of the [EPS Industry Alliance \(EPS-IA\)](#), the North American trade association leading the expanded polystyrene (EPS) industry. “Recycled content resin will further reduce EPS’ environmental impacts with even lower energy use, and a smaller carbon footprint. Despite long standing misconceptions, EPS recycling has a strong track record that will now see even more growth.”

In March 2022 at the UN Environment Assembly, a historic resolution was adopted to develop an international legally binding treaty on plastic pollution, which could have a global impact on many of the day-to-day products used by consumers and manufacturers. The UN Environment Programme (UNEP)’s Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC), which is developing the treaty, will hold its [third session](#) (INC-3) from November 13-19, 2023 at the UNEP Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya.

“As we look towards INC-3, decision makers and NGOs should take notice of this excellent news and the EPS Industry’s continued progress for increased sustainability” added Bowers, who will attend the session.

[EPS-IA](#) advocates for the responsible use of EPS, as well as research-backed solutions and policies that will positively benefit the environment and the economy. For more information about EPS-IA, visit www.epsindustry.org.

ABOUT EPS-IA

The [EPS Industry Alliance](#) (EPS-IA) is the North American trade association for the expanded polystyrene (EPS) industry. Our members – more than 70 small businesses located in 44 states – manufacture EPS foam insulation used in building and construction and EPS protective packaging for consumer goods including appliances, electronics, pharmaceuticals, furniture, and other products. EPS is a versatile, lightweight material — 98 percent air — that supports a diverse range of industries and significant sectors of our national economy.

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PRESS RELEASES



Global EPS Sustainability Alliance (GESA) Launches LinkedIn Discussion Forum for United Nations Environment Programme Plastic Pollution Treaty Stakeholders Ahead of INC-4 Session in Ottawa, CA

Summary: *The Global EPS Sustainability Alliance (GESA) has announced the launch of a new LinkedIn discussion forum to facilitate international dialogue on sustainability and innovation within the expanded polystyrene (EPS) industry and related sectors. This timely platform enables professionals, stakeholders, and advocates to share insights, foster collaboration, and discuss the development of the United Nations Environment Programme's international treaty on plastic pollution.*

Crofton, MD., April 2, 2024 – The [Global EPS Sustainability Alliance \(GESA\)](#), an organization brought together to represent the expanded polystyrene (EPS) transport packaging industry on an international level, is announcing the launch of a new LinkedIn group discussion forum. As the conversation around plastic pollution gains momentum, with significant steps being taken toward establishing an international legally binding agreement, the importance of this dialogue and collaboration between policy makers and industry has never been more crucial.

The GESA discussion forum aims to provide a robust platform for stakeholders involved in the development of the United Nations Environment Programme's [treaty](#) on plastic pollution, brand owners, journalists, advocates, and more to engage in meaningful discussions on sustainability and innovation at an international level.

“This forum is not just another online community; it is a dedicated space to exchange ideas, perspectives, and knowledge aimed at improving sustainability and tackling pressing environmental challenges,” said GESA spokesperson Betsy Bowers, Executive Director of EPS-IA. “We want to explore topics like recycling, chemical transparency, mismanaged waste remediation and more, to understand what’s working and where there are knowledge gaps.”

Through fostering open communication and collaboration, the forum seeks to be at the forefront of driving meaningful and actionable solutions for increased EPS sustainability.

To access the forum and submit a request to join, visit:

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/9802140/>

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EPS maintains an essential role in key industries including packaging, construction, transportation, manufacturing, automotive, and food service, among others. Applications such as packaging for the safe and effective transportation of food and vital medicines and vaccines, protective gear to prevent injury, refrigeration components, insulation for housing, and car seats are all made using EPS. The treaty could have a significant impact on these day-to-day products that many rely upon.

GESA's recommended environmental policy, observer submissions and position papers can be read in full [here](#).

GESA advocates for the responsible use of EPS, as well as research-backed solutions and policies that will positively benefit the environment and the economy. For more information about GESA, visit globaleps.org.

ABOUT GLOBAL EPS SUSTAINABILITY ALLIANCE (GESA)

The Global EPS Sustainability Alliance is a collaboration between EPS manufacturers, extended producer responsibility PROs, recyclers and others to advance circular economy for expanded polystyrene (EPS) packaging in five continents that are working to support environmental policy solutions at local, regional and global levels. This collaborative effort brings together best practices in EPS resource management, sustainable manufacturing, life cycle impact reporting and worldwide recycling data to establish universal resources within the EPS supply chain.

ABOUT UNEP-INC PLASTICS TREATY

In March 2022 at the UN Environment Assembly, a historic resolution was adopted to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution. The resolution requested the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) to convene an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop the instrument, which is to be based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastic, including its production, design, and disposal. The INC began its work during the second half of 2022, with the ambition to complete negotiations by the end of 2024. The [fourth session \(INC-4\)](#) is scheduled from April 23-29, 2024 at the Shaw Center in Ottawa, Canada.

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PRESS RELEASES



Global EPS Sustainability Alliance (GESA) Delegation to Attend UN Environment Programme (UNEP) INC-4 Negotiations on Plastic Pollution Treaty in Ottawa, Canada on April 23-29

***Summary:** Members of the Global EPS Sustainability Alliance (GESA) will attend next week's United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) INC-4 session on the development of an international legally binding treaty on plastic pollution. The members will attend as accredited observers, holding consultative roles in the negotiations taking place in Ottawa, Canada.*

Crofton, M.D. April 16, 2024 – Members of the [Global EPS Sustainability Alliance \(GESA\)](#), an organization brought together to represent the expanded polystyrene (EPS) industry on an international level, are attending the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastics Pollution's [fourth session \(INC-4\)](#), taking place next week in Ottawa, Canada. The GESA coalition represents the EPS industry in North America, Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia. Member organizations the [European Manufacturers of EPS \(EUMEPS\)](#), the [EPS Industry Alliance \(EPS-IA\)](#) and [Expanded Polystyrene Australia \(EPSA\)](#) are accredited observers of the UNEP Plastics Pollution Treaty, holding consultative roles in the negotiations on its development.

GESA spokespersons Betsy Bowers, Executive Director of EPS-IA, Chresten Heide-Anderson, Project Manager at EPSbranchen – en del af Plastindustrien and Vice President of EUMEPS, and Becher Townsend, Executive Director of EPSA, have issued the following statement:

“While the proposed treaty presents a pivotal moment to tackle plastic pollution with fresh perspectives and innovative problem-solving strategies, we must also remain mindful of the practical challenges that lie ahead in implementation. It's imperative that we harness the expertise of both packaging science and environmental science to navigate these complexities and prevent unintended negative environmental consequences.

Central to our policy recommendations is support for Environmental Producer Responsibility (EPR), a well-established policy mechanism that has amply demonstrated its efficacy. Its implementation could be made even more effective through the support of globally coordinated oversight.

We also strongly support chemical transparency, including for potential alternative materials. The clear disclosure of chemical compositions is crucial for ensuring that global consumers

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can trust the safety of these materials. In the case of EPS, it has demonstrated its safety for use across a wide range of applications.

EPS packaging is essential in the global distribution of essential goods. We hope that the plastic pollution treaty incorporates novel solutions and proven policies.

Our delegation looks forward to attending the forthcoming negotiations, providing critical information, and supporting the treaty's development. We entrust the United Nations member states to engage in dynamic negotiations, prioritize these aspects of the treaty, and move us closer to a world free of plastic pollution."

EPS maintains an essential role in key industries including packaging, construction, transportation, manufacturing, and automotive, among others. Applications such as packaging for the safe and effective transportation of food and vital medicines and vaccines, protective gear to prevent injury, refrigeration components, insulation for housing, and car seats are all made using EPS. The treaty could have a dramatic impact on many of these day-to-day products that many rely upon.

The Global EPS Sustainability Alliance Supports a Global Plastics Agreement that Creates a Circular Economy for All Plastics and Eliminates Plastic Pollution

Despite common misperceptions, the EPS industry has maintained long standing efforts which demonstrate the high recycling efficacy for EPS transport packaging, that continue to show consistent growth and strong market support. In November 2023, several leading resin providers [announced](#) their development of proprietary formulas to help fabricators incorporate at least 30% recycled content in the manufacture of many applications, following a collective EPS industry investment of \$185M.

GESA advocates for the following positions as part of its environmental policy recommendations:

- We support an ambitious plan to eliminate plastic pollution through an implementable agreement.
- We support the creation of a scientific advisory board to determine the best course of action to address potentially problematic plastics.
- We support chemical transparency for materials. Data from reports on EPS' chemical composition and emissions demonstrate that EPS is a safe material.
- We support the creation of independent national plans of action.
- We support flexibility to achieve circularity and oppose lists of banned or restricted polymers, ingredients, and products.
- We support the adoption of science-based tools including life cycle analysis (LCA).

GESA's recommended environmental policy, observer submissions and position papers can be read in full [here](#).

PRESS RELEASES

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The [Global EPS Sustainability Alliance \(GESA\)](https://globaleps.org) is a collaboration between EPS manufacturers, extended producer responsibility PROs, recyclers, and others to advance the circular economy for expanded polystyrene (EPS) packaging in five continents, and works to support environmental policy solutions at local, regional and global levels. This collaborative effort brings together best practices in EPS resource management, sustainable manufacturing, life cycle impact reporting and worldwide recycling data to establish universal resources within the EPS supply chain.

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SPOKESPERSONS



Chresten Heide-Anderson is Project Manager at EPS-branchen (Danish EPS Association) and Vice President of EUMEPS (European EPS Association). He has 20 years of experience in Public Policy. For the past 5+ years, he has effectively advocated circular policy solutions for EPS packaging and construction materials throughout Europe.

He is involved in European standardization work on Sustainable packaging, and has guest lectured on CSR, sustainability and Circular Economy at several colleges in Denmark.



Betsy Bowers serves as the Executive Director of the EPS Industry Alliance (EPS-IA), the leading North American trade association for the expanded polystyrene (EPS) industry. With a background as Director of Environmental Affairs for the Polystyrene Packaging Council, she has extensive experience in EPS life cycle analysis, toxicity evaluations, and recycling infrastructure development.

Ms. Bowers' leadership has extended globally, representing EPS-IA in 33 countries, and collaborating with international corporations like Samsung, SONY, and Walmart. Her strategic approach has been pivotal in fostering collaboration among industry stakeholders, government agencies, and environmental advocates.



Becher Townshend is the Executive Director of Expanded Polystyrene Australia and the Managing Director of Font Public Relations, drawing together more than three decades as an award-winning state political reporter and public relations professional.

Primarily focused on strategic communications in business, the community sector, government business enterprises and local government, Becher is one of Tasmania's leading advisors for government relations.

CONTACT

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Additional info and resources are available at:
<https://globaleps.org/>

