

Drinks sector could serve up a cool 10 mtCO₂e climate savings

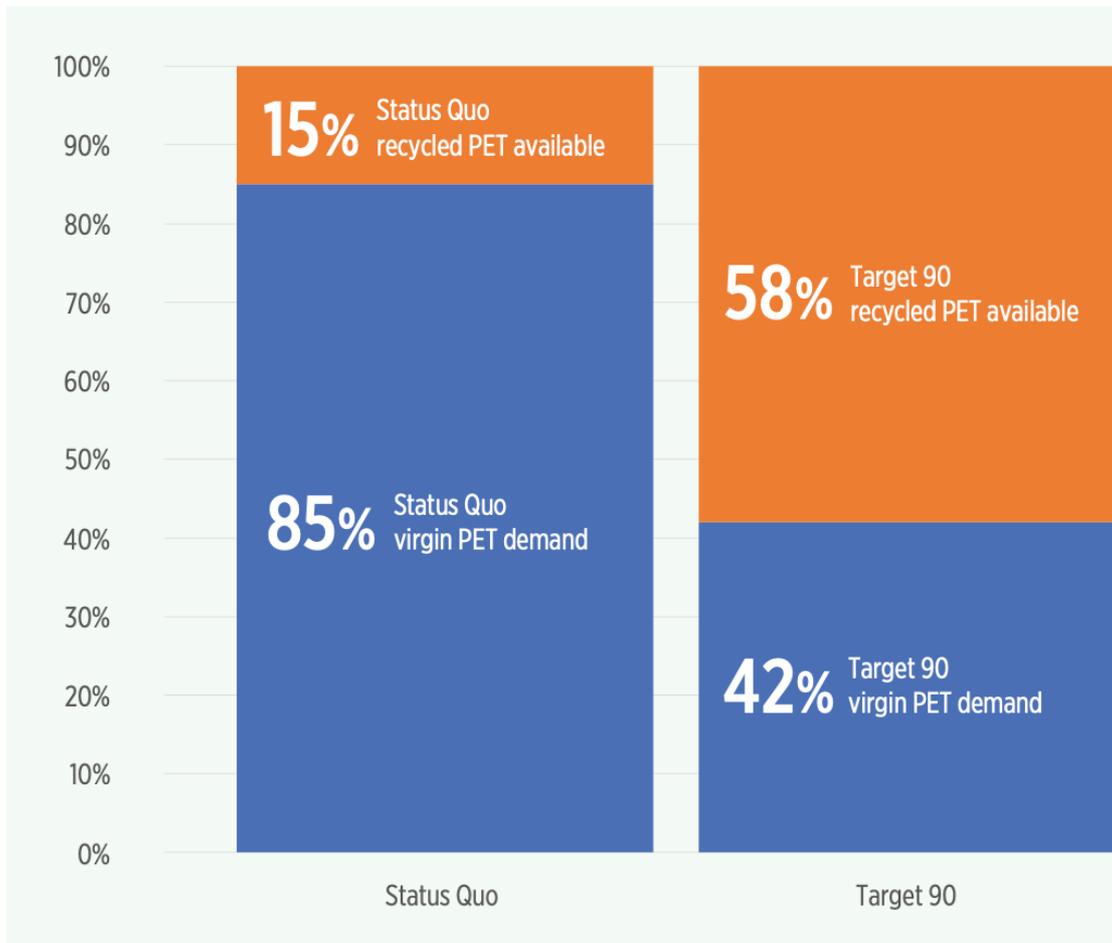
Materials supply crunch by 2030 without policy change, report warns

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Saving the billions of empty cans and other drinks containers that Europeans waste every year will deliver significant climate benefits and solve a growing materials supply crunch, according to a report from waste non-profit [Reloop](#).

As the European Commission prepares to revise the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive, Reloop's Target 90 report calls on officials to extend [rules](#) requiring 90% separate collection of plastic bottles to all other recyclable drinks packaging, mostly glass and metal.

Deposits should be applied to all metal, glass and plastic drinks containers to boost recovery, the group said. Without such Deposit Return Schemes (DRS) rooted in EU law, supplies of used PET plastic will not meet demand and, by 2030, the average new bottle will contain just 15% recycled plastic, half the amount required by [EU law](#). Shortages would also threaten environmental [pledges](#) for multiple sectors.



Firms face a recycled PET supply crunch by 2030 without policy change.

Hitting the 90% target will cut consumption of 1.6 million tonnes of virgin PET, almost 400 thousand tonnes of virgin aluminium and over 10 million tonnes of virgin glass, the report estimates. That would offset 10 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent by 2030. In 2030 alone, the savings amount to 2.7 mtCO₂e, equivalent to 1.4% of the EU's 2030 target, although the savings realised globally. DRS would take time to ramp up, but will avoid an estimated 170 billion wasted drinks containers by 2030, it predicts, while also cutting vast amounts of litter, boosting closed-loop recycling and greatly enhancing the quality of recycling streams. Once DRS and closed-loop recycling are the norm, the benefits are significantly higher, it concludes.

Despite the EU having some of the world's best waste rules, an estimated third of drinks containers will be lost in 2022, amounting to 830,000 tonnes of plastic, 140,000 tonnes of aluminium and 9 million tonnes of glass, materials

worth nearly €900 million. France, Italy, Poland and Spain have the most to gain, accounting for 60% of expected savings.

An ambitious upgrade of EU waste rules is on the cards. The Commission has a [mandate](#) to make all packaging reusable or recyclable by 2030 and is expected to propose rule changes towards the end of the year. Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, and Lithuania already meet Reloop's 90% target, while 18 EU states, covering 45% of the EU population, will have DRS in place by 2026. After some industry [opposition](#), large industry players are now openly [supporting](#) DRS.

Reloop CEO Clarissa Morawski said: *"It is madness to be wasting billions of drinks containers in the face of our growing climate and resource crises. Reaching Target 90 would end this, deliver sizeable climate savings and push the drinks sector into a 'waste nirvana' of closed-loop recycling meeting most of the EU's PET, glass and aluminium needs. We expect the Commission to set this course in November and EU level action is sorely needed to push laggard member states in the right direction."*

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