



PRESS RELEASE
Brussels, 3 December 2015

European retailers lead the way towards a circular economy

The new Retailers' Environmental Action Programme (REAP) mandate, confirming retailers' commitment to meet their environmental responsibilities, was launched in Brussels today.

REAP is a voluntary retailer initiative, in collaboration with the European Commission, aimed at improving the environmental performance of the sector, sharing of best practice and engaging with the whole supply chain. It has run for two previous mandates, and this new three-year mandate will involve initiatives for the Circular Economy, focusing particularly on products, operations and consumer awareness.

The launch brought together some 100 sustainability experts from business, civil society and the EU institutions. In addition to keynote speeches by Director-General of DG Environment, Daniel Calleja and by Mr Jocelyn Bleriot from the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, there was a lively discussion on how retailers can make an even greater contribution to the environment under the new mandate. The conference also looked at best practice cases from the previous two mandates of the REAP, which detailed the progress made by signatories through the programme in achieving their sustainability targets over the last six years.

Speaking of the event, Director-General of the European Retail Round Table (ERRT), Susanne Czech said *"The Circular Economy represents an ideal opportunity for retailers to move away from a linear, take-consume-waste, economy to become even more responsible in how we sell. Through the next REAP, our sector recognises that not only does it have to build upon previous sustainability targets, but also that by becoming circular, we can improve consumption behaviour, bringing important benefits to European consumers."*

Christian Verschueren, Director-General of EuroCommerce said *"The new circular economy package released by the European Commission yesterday provides retailers with a framework to make further progress in their sustainable practices. With REAP, retail companies and associations have, for a number of years, been leading the way with more sustainable operations, using renewable energy in stores, natural refrigerants in fridges, and pilot projects with trucks running on biogas. Through their daily interaction with consumers, they are also encouraging them to live more sustainable lives."*

For further information, please contact:

Susanne Czech
ERRT
+32 2 808 48 78
s.czech@errt.org

Neil McMillan
EuroCommerce +32 2 737
05 99
mcmillan@eurocommerce.eu

European Retail Round Table (ERRT)

ERRT brings together the CEOs of Europe's leading retail companies who share their collective experience and ideas with policy makers in view of giving Europe's consumers better access to the benefits of the Single Market and to promote delivery of a sustainable consumption model. Collectively, ERRT members employ more than 2.3 million people in over 40,000 stores. ERRT Members are: Asda Walmart, Auchan Group, C&A, Carrefour Group, Dansk Supermarked, Delhaize Group, El Corte Inglés, H&M, ICA, IKEA, Inditex, Jerónimo Martins, Lidl, Marks & Spencer, Mercadona, Metro Group, Royal Ahold and Tesco.
www.errt.org

EuroCommerce and the retail and wholesale sector

EuroCommerce is the principal European organisation representing the retail and wholesale sector. It embraces 5.4 million companies, both leading multinational retailers such as Carrefour, IKEA, Tesco and REWE and many small family operations. Retail and wholesale provide a link between producers and 500 million European consumers over a billion times a day. It generates 1 in 7 jobs, providing a varied career for 29 million Europeans, many of them young people. It also supports millions of further jobs throughout the supply chain, from small local suppliers to international businesses.
<http://www.eurocommerce.eu>