

EU Code of Conduct for Responsible Business and Marketing Practices

Updated commitments submitted by Natural Mineral Waters Europe

In 2021, Natural Mineral Waters Europe (NMWE) made significant commitments to the EU Code of Conduct for Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices, focusing on four key areas: decarbonization, biodiversity, water efficiency, and packaging circularity. Over the past three years, we have made progress on these fronts and gained valuable insights which are now driving us to expand our efforts.

NMWE represents around 500 natural mineral and spring water producers, many of which are small and medium-sized enterprises. Through our updated actions we are deepening our support for our members. We will focus on providing tools, guidance, and resources to help these companies take meaningful actions across sustainability areas: water management, biodiversity, decarbonisation, and circularity. We will also foster greater dialogue with stakeholders, including scientific experts, to ensure our sector leads by example in protecting natural resources and promoting a circular economy.

By expanding both the depth and scope of our commitments, NMWE reaffirms its dedication to driving positive environmental, social, and economic impact, in alignment with the EU's overarching sustainability goals.

1. SUSTAINABLE WATER MANAGEMENT

Aspiration	Concrete action
Drive sustainable water management in the sector, on the one hand, by promoting efficient use of water in member operations and supply chain, and, on the other hand, by promoting water stewardship as engagement beyond factory gates. By this NMWE aims at positive impact on water balance, water quality, water-related ecosystems, extreme weather events mitigation, encompassing social, cultural, and economic value of water.	<p>NMWE will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support companies by facilitating collaboration and providing tools such as monitoring, benchmarking, KPI, guidance, or best practice database; • carry out a study at least every two years to measure and report on water usage in the sector's operations, gradually transitioning to a wider water stewardship context.

2. BIODIVERSITY

Aspiration	Concrete action
<p>Actively contribute to preserving and restoring biodiversity in catchments of our operations, with results reported using an accepted methodology by 2030, as part of our approach to water stewardship.</p>	<p>NMWE will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in dialogue with scientific experts and academia, define and test biodiversity indicators to be used by natural mineral and spring water producers, incl. SMEs; • promote the use of the developed indicators to measure and monitor the state of biodiversity by the companies in the sector; • put in place a reporting framework, establish a community of practice for exchange and capacity building, and develop tools to support national associations and companies; • support dialogue with relevant stakeholders to facilitate involvement of its member companies in nature preservation and restoration projects.

3. DECARBONISATION

Aspiration	Concrete action
<p>Drive the sector towards net zero by 2050 in all scopes, with decarbonisation of Scopes 1 and 2 by 2040. As a priority by 2030, support members in transition to low-carbon energy.</p>	<p>NMWE will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide companies in the sector with tools to measure their carbon footprint with a consistent robust methodology; • gather knowledge on the path to decarbonisation, collect and share good practices, identify enablers, and develop and regularly update non-binding decarbonisation guidance for the companies in the sector; • maintain dialogue with all types of relevant stakeholders in the form of meetings, workshops, and conferences.

4. CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Aspiration	Concrete action
<p>Strive towards full circularity for all sector's packaging (incl. glass, PET and aluminium) by using only recyclable packaging by 2025, by incorporating 50% alternative (e.g. recycled) materials in new plastic bottles by 2030 (30% by 2025) and deploying reusable packaging where it brings sustainability benefits.</p>	<p>NMWE will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue to actively promote well-designed deposit refund systems (DRS) alongside well performing EPRs, in collaboration with the whole value chain; • liaison with academia to leverage latest scientific developments for further improving the circularity of our packaging; • combat material downcycling and material losses alongside the whole lifecycle loop.

LEGISLATIVE ENABLERS

NMWE will undertake the concrete actions to facilitate that the sector attains the defined aspirations. However, for the aspirations to be attained, certain legislative enablers will play an important role.

For example, in order to fulfil the decarbonisation aspiration, policymakers will need to ensure existence of low-emission road freight infrastructure and efficient rail freight framework, as well as mechanisms enabling decarbonisation of extracting and pre-processing industries, including in third countries.

Additionally, to fulfill the circularity aspiration, sound deployment of DRS and priority access to sector-originating recycled material will be indispensable.