

Plastics in the spotlight in Tampere region

Plastics are a central theme in Tampere region, attracting considerable attention and innovation. The Interreg Europe PLASTIX project and the [Horizon2020 project STOPP](#) are both delving into the complex value chain of plastics. Additionally, a new Regional Development Center for Circular Economy is working to create a comprehensive overview of the regional plastic ecosystem. Launched in 2023, Circular Pirkanmaa (KIPI), a publicly funded Development Centre managed by Ecofellows Ltd., assists municipalities and businesses in making significant strides towards a sustainable circular economy.

Prioritizing Built Environment and Industrial Material Flows

KIPI's efforts focus on enhancing the economic and environmental benefits of circular economy solutions within the built environment and industrial material flows, with plastics being a critical component. A master's thesis in Risk Management and Circular Economy is underway to map the current state of the plastic ecosystem, identifying potential risks and obstacles in material flow. The objective is to pinpoint key stakeholders and develop strategies to improve the efficiency of the plastic ecosystem, ultimately working towards a circular model. We expect to present the findings of this thesis in Spring 2025.

Revolutionizing the plastic food packaging

Simultaneously, Ecofellows are actively involved in the Horizon2020 STOPP project (2024-2026), which aims to revolutionize plastic food packaging by implementing the "5 Rs": Refuse, Reduce, Redesign, Reuse, and Recycle. The goal is to drastically reduce the environmental impact caused by plastic waste in food packaging, aligning closely with the EU's Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive. Our collaborative efforts encompass every facet of the food packaging value chain.

STOPP project is committed to developing circular strategies that resonate with both plastic production and processing while fostering engagement through a multi-actor network. We warmly invite professionals across Europe in the plastic packaging sector to join our multi-actor network. Our strategic actions include analysing plastic waste impact, monitoring current usage, designing sustainable business models, boosting recycling efforts, and understanding consumer attitudes through comprehensive research. The project is led by VTT in Finland and involves 13 key partners across Europe, including industry leaders like Braskem, Veolia, and Remondis.

Our regional waste management company, Pirkanmaan Jätehuolto, is an affiliated member of this project, supplying biowaste end-product samples for analysis at the National Institute of Chemistry in Slovenia. This analysis aims to identify microplastics and packaging residues in collaboration with VTT.

Creating new markets for reusable food packaging

A specific focus of the STOPP project in the Tampere region is to facilitate the piloting of reusable plastic food packaging with local restaurants in 2025. Additionally, two social media campaigns are planned to promote the reuse and recycling of plastic food packaging. The reuse market of plastic food packages is quite new and at the moment not existing in Finland. Piloting the reuse with local restaurants creates a new market both for companies as well as for consumers. Consumers play a crucial role in reducing plastic food packaging waste. Therefore, Ecofellows will spearhead campaigns aimed at raising awareness and encouraging acceptance of reusable food packaging, as well as emphasizing the importance of recycling.

Reuse and better recycling of plastic food packaging holds a great potential to boosting the circular economy forward creating both demand and new innovative ways to consume.

The STOPP Multi-actor Community is a network open to anyone interested in being part of the transition towards a more sustainable, circular food packaging value chain.

Register here: <https://stopp-project.eu/multi-actor-community/>

