

LEADING THE CARPET INDUSTRY TOWARDS CIRCULAR ECONOMY

-A 2030 ACTION PLAN-

in a nutshell...

The European Commission's Circular Economy Action Plan 2.0 will accelerate the transition from a linear to a circular economy and constitutes an essential shift to a low-carbon industry. The European Carpet and Rug Association (ECRA) supports this transition and presents realistic objectives and adequate measures in its strategy paper "Leading the carpet industry towards circular economy: a 2030 strategic approach".

The change in mindset we see

Globally, across all business sectors as well as our own, and across society in general, we see common themes and trends.

There is ...

- ▶ a growing interest in greener products. This includes the use of materials which have a reduced environmental footprint such as bio-based, biodegradable, recycled and recyclable polymers. These can be used on their own or in combination with other materials.
- ▶ a growing interest in the circular use of materials which means that products, or components, are recycled into either identical products or other items. This trend includes the search for efficient techniques for mechanical and chemical recycling and feedstock regeneration.
- ▶ an overall goal to reduce the carbon footprint of products and processes.
- ▶ a willingness to develop EPR schemes which positively contribute to the circular economy.

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**EUROPEAN
CARPET and
RUG
ASSOCIATION**

Rue Montoyer 24
1000 Brussels
Belgium

phone: +32 2 358 16 74
mobile: +49 171 140 52 10
mail: ecra@ecra.eu
web: ecra.eu

EU-Transparency Register:
[690030131158-90](https://ecra.eu)

- ▶ a demand for transparent information regarding the environmental footprint of different products, and the creation of end-of-life solutions.
- ▶ a real concern regarding the presence of micro-plastics in the environment, and how to prevent them.
- ▶ the need to keep products affordable whilst transitioning to a circular economy.

How we have already set an example

- ▶ At GUT (Gemeinschaft umweltfreundlicher Teppichboden), we have developed industry specific rules on health and safety which ECRA members have complied with for over 30 years. These strict rules go far beyond EU regulations.
- ▶ At GUT, we have developed CRE (Carpet Recycling Europe, 2001-2004), the first post-consumer recycling activity for carpets.
- ▶ ECRA is a founding member of CPA (Circular Plastics Alliance).
- ▶ ECRA is currently developing the first European standard for the transparent definition and labelling of the recycled, bio-based and renewable material content of textile floor-coverings.

ECRA's strategy

Our strategy is built on 4 key principles:

- ▶ Develop our full potential for a robust and consistent shift to circular economy in a standardised way
- ▶ Ensure innovation is driving the change
- ▶ Make new technologies and circular materials permanent features of the future
- ▶ Increase sustainable and renewable products in the market, adhering to the circularity principles

In order to make an effective switch from a linear to a circular economy, the strategy is split in three tiers:

- ▶ Create optimal value when the products reach end-of-life
- ▶ Design for recycling
- ▶ Ensure the availability of investments into the most advanced technologies

The industry has the potential to play a leading role in achieving Europe's ambitions for a climate-neutral and circular economy but believes that it can only be achieved if it is fully supported by a well-functioning EU regulatory framework with adequate funding and financial incentives. Additionally, the active participation of all stakeholders is required to make these initiatives successful.

About ECRA (European Carpet and Rug Association)

Based in Brussels, Belgium, ECRA was established in 2004 and represents more than 40 leading carpet producers from six European countries. Together, our members account for approximately 90% of European textile wall-to-wall carpet production and 73% of EU consumption. As an international membership association, we actively participate in the CEN standardisation work and encourage the exchange of knowledge, ideas and experience between our members and stakeholders.

For further information please contact:

edmund.vankann@ecra.eu or adil.elmassi@ecra.eu