VALUABLE INSIGHTS

OF THE SUPPLY CHAIN

A collection of 7 exclusive interviews with key industry players

MTYS

MATTERS TO YOU STUDIO

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INTRODUCTION

Matters to You Studio is a company with **an outstanding** vision of the supply chain founded in 2024 in Portugal. **Our mission** is to generate profitable **brand value for beauty brands, using packaging** intelligence to secure long-term sustainability across the value chain. We design circular, regulation-ready packaging and align strategy and materials to **deliver measurable environmental impact** and stronger brand equity. Our **360º innovative approach** connects every point of the supply chain, applying life-cycle analysis, impact measurement, traceability, design, and enabling tools that build clients' capabilities for the future and help brands use packaging as a competitive advantage.

This e-book grew out of a **series of interviews** published in 2025 in our **monthly newsletter**, A Matter of Change, where we explore the **packaging value chain** through the lens of sustainability, featuring i**nsights from industry leaders**. The response to these interviews and the strong interest in the topics made it clear we needed to delve deeper in an e-book.

Conversations with experts across every part of the supply chain make it clear there's no single, simple silver-bullet solution to a complex, hard-to-solve problem. Progress happens when we align material choices with legal requirements, industrial capabilities, consumer education, and viable end-of-life models. **Thoughtful packaging** development and early **cross-functional collaboration** reduce costs, prevent teams from reworking solutions, and unlock innovation.

Valuable Insights of the Supply Chain was created for **brand leaders, product and marketing teams, founders and entrepreneurs, and operations and sustainability professionals** who **need clear decision-making in complex contexts**. Its aim is to provide actionable guidance, strategic framing, and **real-world examples** to accelerate the transition to more sustainable packaging.

You can read it **cover to cover** to get an overview of the entire cycle and

identify dependencies between stages **or**, alternatively, **jump straight to the section** most relevant to you.

Regardless of how you do it, use it as a starting point to reflect on your current processes: where there's risk, where there's waste, and where there's opportunity. Treat the **7 takeaways to act** on as a **quick-action checklist.** And when you're ready to go deeper or co-create a tailored roadmap, get in touch! This e-book is designed to **spark decisions and conversations** that move sustainability off the page and into your packaging.

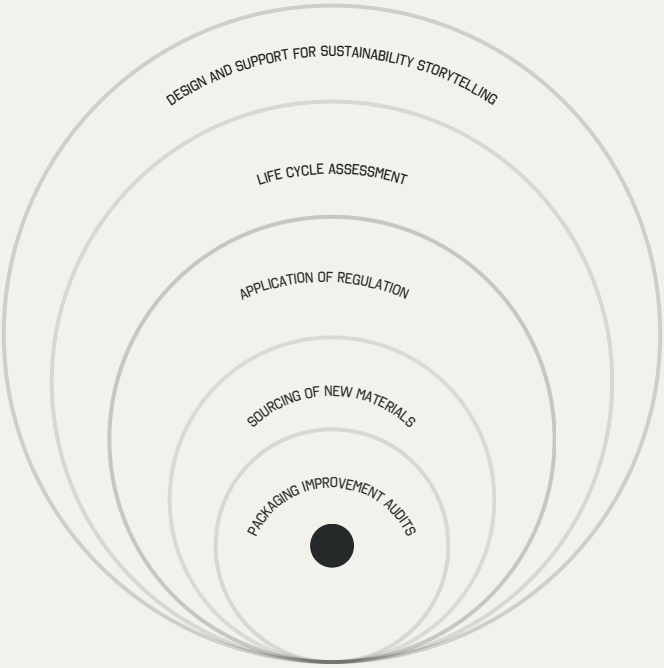
Teresa Vargas Matos
Co-Founder & Head of Sustainability
at Matters To You Studio

Cover picture: The Regenerative Box by Matters to You Studio, recognized with the Bronze Award in the sustainable packaging concept category by the renowned international Pentawards competition 2025.

THE SUSTAINABLE VALUE CHAIN

The value chain connects decisions from material origin to end-of-life, with each stage influencing the next. **Sourcing** sets the foundation (raw materials, certifications, and risk); **Regulatory & Product Safety** ensures compliance and consumer safety; **Manufacture** scales production with quality and efficiency; **Marketing & Communications** clarifies the value proposition and guides behavior; **Use** validates real-world experience and product protection; **Recovery** closes the loop with viable options for reuse, returns, and/or recycling; and **Regeneration** returns value to ecosystems and communities, informing the next cycle.

To make this work as a system, we adopt **multi-stakeholder governance** that integrates expectations from internal teams and external actors (consumers, suppliers, regulators, communities), reducing friction and accelerating **decisions. Execution** rests on **ESG pillars**, so objectives translate into metrics and action. In this way, positive impact stops being abstract and turns into **financial and non-financial ROI** shared across employees, customers, suppliers, communities, and shareholders.



SOURCING: WHERE IT ALL BEGINS

Sourcing sets the environmental, social, and cost baseline for everything downstream. Material origin, certification, and supplier practices determine carbon intensity, recyclability, and supply resilience long before design or manufacturing begin. Strategic sourcing enables credible sustainability claims and reduces risk across the chain.
At this stage, we share **3 challenges** that seem quite relevant to us:

01

First, the **transparency and data quality**, since companies often have limited visibility beyond their direct suppliers, making it difficult to trace the full chain of custody (where materials originated, through whose hands they passed, and who was responsible at each stage). This lack of transparency, combined with limited structured data from Scope 3 emissions, complicates efforts to make informed and accountable sourcing decisions.

02

Additionally, brands face **trade-offs** when selecting materials, as they must balance performance, cost, recyclability, and long-term availability, especially when considering recycled or renewable inputs.

03

Finally, sourcing is increasingly affected by **volatility and risk**. The prices and availability of key materials can shift rapidly due to geopolitical tensions, natural disasters, or sudden changes in market demand. Heavy reliance on a single supplier or region exposes companies to greater disruption, potentially causing delays, cost surges, or even production halts.

To discuss the risks and opportunities within this stage, we invited **Cory Connors** to the first interview in our series. Cory is currently the Sustainable Packaging Sales and Marketing Manager at Atlantic Packaging. He worked for over 23 years, developing a deep understanding and expertise in sourcing and developing sustainable solutions for companies of all sizes.

Could you briefly tell us about your role in sourcing and how sustainability has become part of your career?

I am a sustainable packaging consultant, which means I assist companies in finding and upgrading their packaging solutions to make them more sustainable. As a salesperson over the past 23 years at Landsberg Orora, now Veritiv Landsberg, I have had the opportunity to experience both sides of the sourcing process, purchasing from suppliers and providing materials to customers. This dual perspective has given me a deeper understanding of the buying process and taught me how to better serve clients based on their needs and expectations.

Do you feel your role in sourcing, and specifically in sustainable sourcing, has been more important and impactful for the people you work with?

Absolutely. Our clients truly rely on us as partners, seeking our assistance to become more sustainable and financially efficient.
With the introduction of new tariffs and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations, companies are looking to reduce costs wherever possible, even small savings of 1% or a few dollars can have a significant impact over time.

We work with businesses of all sizes, from small enterprises to multi-billion-dollar corporations, and it is exciting to contribute to such meaningful financial and environmental improvements. Sometimes, we achieve this impact by completely eliminating unnecessary packaging materials.

What role does sourcing play in a product's environmental footprint, and how can brands measure it?

There is a wide range of awareness among companies regarding Life Cycle Assessment (LCA). Some are unfamiliar with the concept, while others have integrated it deeply into their operations. I am continuously learning from both customers and suppliers about the life cycle analyses of different materials. My role involves educating and guiding them towards selecting materials that minimize their carbon footprint without negatively affecting their bottom line.

In your experience, how can brands balance the challenge of sustainability with the functional and technical requirements of their products when sourcing or selecting raw materials?

That is an excellent question. We often say, "there is nothing sustainable about damaged goods." Switching to a "more sustainable" material is counterproductive if the product arrives damaged or fails to perform properly.

Ensuring material performance is our top priority because failure results in increased carbon emissions from reshipping, additional costs for new packaging, and significant brand damage, which is especially detrimental to premium brands like those in the beauty industry.

Therefore, sustainable sourcing must always meet high standards of protection and presentation to preserve product integrity and the customer experience.

What promising trends do you see emerging in sustainable sourcing over the next few years?

It is encouraging to see Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws gaining momentum across several states, including Oregon, Washington, Maine, and soon, California, which alone ranks as the world's fifth-largest economy.

The impact of these regulations will be profound. Brands are optimistic because these laws will create a more level playing field, encouraging all businesses to invest in sustainable materials. Although these materials may initially be more costly, companies will avoid fines and fees associated with less sustainable options, ultimately lowering the total cost of doing business. It is a very exciting shift.

Which skills or technologies do you believe will be essential for more sustainable and efficient sourcing in the future?

Automation technologies are advancing rapidly, particularly in packaging. Innovations like right-sizing packaging machines, such as those offered by RAM Pack, are game changers. These machines produce boxes on demand or resize them in-line to minimize the need for void fill.

This approach not only reduces packaging material costs but also significantly lowers freight expenses and carbon emissions from transportation. We are seeing substantial cost savings and environmental benefits from implementing these technologies in the supply chain.

“The impact of these regulations will be profound. Brands are optimistic because these laws will create a more level playing field, encouraging all businesses to invest in sustainable materials.”

MYTHS UNCOVERED

More sustainable materials always reduce impact
Switching to eco-friendly materials doesn’t always make the packaging more sustainable: if the product gets damaged in transit, the total footprint may increase. As Cory puts it, *“There is nothing sustainable about damaged goods.”*

Sourcing is just about finding the cheapest option
Sourcing today plays a strategic role in both financial efficiency and sustainability. Even 1% savings can mean a major impact over time, and eliminating unnecessary materials altogether can deliver both cost and environmental wins.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Sourcing is where sustainability starts;
- Client education and partnership are essential;
- Regulations are accelerating change;
- Automation is a game changer.

REGULATORY & PRODUCT SAFETY: ENSURING COMPLIANCE

Compliance protects consumers and brands, shaping which materials, inks, and formats are even viable. It impacts labeling, claims, and market access across jurisdictions and missteps are costly, reputationally and financially.

01

One of the main challenges in regulatory and product safety is the constant **evolution of rules and market fragmentation**. Regulations differ widely from country to country, and are frequently updated, which means that a packaging solution compliant in one region may need to be altered to enter another. This creates complexity and demands ongoing monitoring, adaptation, and sometimes redesign.

02

Another key challenge is the **rigor of safety and testing**. Packaging materials, especially for food, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals must undergo strict assessments to ensure they do not release harmful substances into the product. This includes managing limits for contaminants and monitoring non-intentionally added substances, which requires careful coordination and documentation across multiple suppliers.

03

Lastly, claims and substantiation are under **increasing scrutiny**. As more brands communicate sustainability efforts, it's essential to back up environmental or safety claims with verified data, certifications, and traceability. Without this evidence, companies risk accusations of greenwashing, legal penalties, and damage to consumer trust.

For our second interview, we invited **Peyam Mirnejad**, a regulatory compliance and product safety expert at Albéa, specializing in the evaluation of raw materials for cosmetic packaging. In his role, he actively contributes to advancing the reliability and transparency of the plastics industry.

Could you briefly tell us about your role in Regulatory and Compliance and how sustainability has become part of your career?

My main objective is to ensure that the cosmetics packaging manufactured by Albéa are safe for people and the environment, and that they comply with several national and international regulations. This requires close collaboration with our raw material suppliers. Raw materials vary widely in their chemical composition. It is therefore always necessary to carry out in-depth compliance assessments and reasoning at the chemical substance level to guarantee the safety of the final packaging.

Sustainability automatically became a cornerstone of my career, and even before. My studies were in fact dedicated to the control of industrial risks, particularly chemical risks. Today, when we talk about sustainability, we must look at the global impact on the environment as well as on human health.

How have you seen cosmetic and packaging regulations evolve in the last decade? What are some of the most significant shifts? And what do you think that comes next?

I'm new to the packaging and cosmetics industry, but I already notice radical changes. The most significant one is the evolution towards a progressive circular economy. The Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) is a good illustration of the turn the cosmetics packaging industry needs to take, with the incorporation of recycled plastic, the new requirements about the substances of concern with the focus on PFAS.

I think that what will happen soon will be an acceleration in the traceability of the raw materials used. This traceability will provide information not only useful for regulatory expertise, but also for the end consumer, for whom this traceability is also a guarantee of quality.

How can regulatory compliance become a strategic advantage for companies rather than just an obligation?

Regulatory compliance is clearly one of the keys to a company's success, in all sectors, not only cosmetics packaging. First and foremost, it guarantees the reliability of the products sold to customers, end-users and even investors. A non-compliant article can easily be considered as “at risk”. Moreover, compliance with international regulations opens the door to international markets. By complying with regulations, companies avoid fines or legal action, which can be very expensive - more expensive than investment in compliance. Compliance can even spur companies to innovate, and this can lead to a significant competitive advantage.

The Digital Product Passport is set to change how product data is shared. From your perspective, what impact will this have on product development and compliance in the cosmetic/packaging sector?

Highlighted in the ESPR regulation, the Digital Product Passport will be

an essential tool in the implementation of a circular economy for items entering the European market. It will be very important because it will communicate information on the composition of the product, the origin of raw materials, and the end-of-life of the article. All this will encourage R&D to make efforts, for example on the recyclability of their product, on its chemical composition, and this information will be easily accessible. I think this will boost compliance with existing regulations on chemical substances, such as Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH). Companies will have to demonstrate greater transparency, and this will have to be justified. In return, this could improve consumer confidence, lead to more efficient supply chains and foster partnerships focused on sustainability and innovation.

How can businesses stay ahead of the evolving regulatory landscape without overwhelming their teams or resources?

I think it's vital to have part of the investment directed towards digitizing regulatory information; this makes compliance work more practical and speeds it up. The advent of AI will most certainly enable this acceleration in these tasks. Nor should we neglect specific training. In addition, regulatory monitoring is fundamental today, enabling us to anticipate changes as effectively as possible.

“First and foremost, it (regulatory compliance) guarantees the reliability of the products sold to customers, end-users and even investors.”

MYTHS UNCOVERED

Compliance is just a legal checkbox
In reality, compliance is a strategic asset. It ensures product reliability, opens access to international markets, protects the brand from legal and financial risk, and can even be a driver of innovation.

Regulations slow down innovation
On the contrary, evolving regulations like PPWR and the Digital Product Passport are pushing R&D teams to innovate more responsibly, with a focus on traceability, recyclability, and safer material choices.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Compliance is a competitive advantage;
- Traceability will become central;
- The Digital Product Passport will reshape product development;
- Technology and training are key to staying ahead.

MANUFACTURE: FROM RAW TO READY

This is where concepts become real at scale. Manufacturing is the stage where design decisions meet operational reality, and where the success of a sustainable packaging solution is truly tested. The materials chosen must run efficiently on existing machinery, maintain product integrity, and meet visual or branding requirements, all while minimizing environmental impact. Manufacturing choices directly influence yield, quality, cost, and environmental performance. Collaboration between design, sourcing, and production teams early in the process is essential to ensure feasibility and avoid costly adjustments later.

01

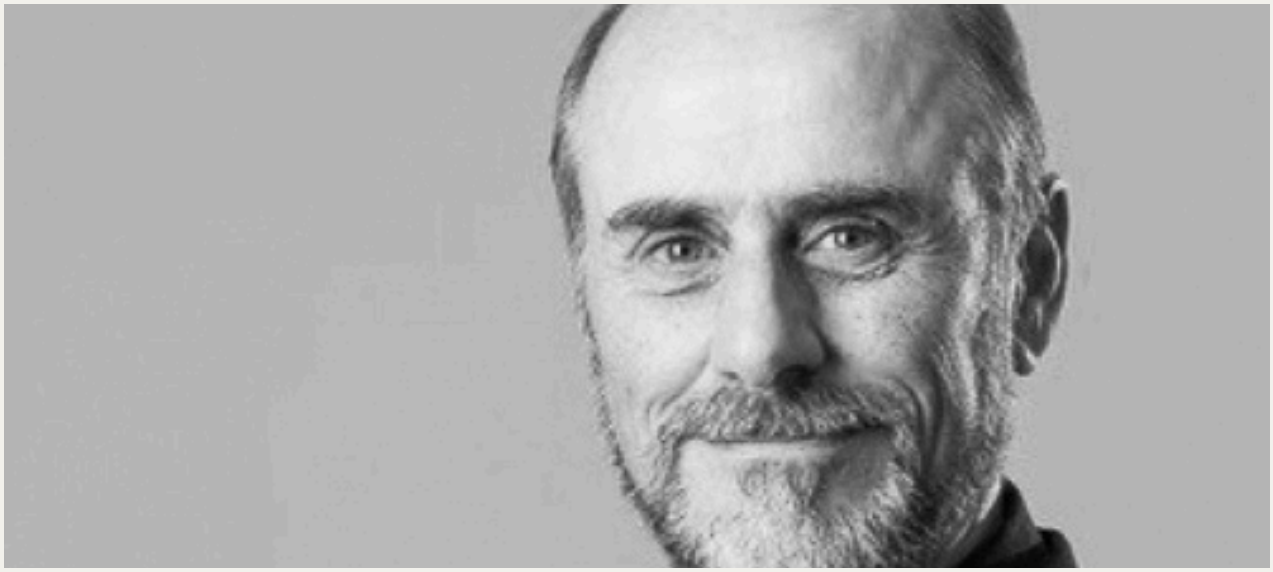
Manufacturing sustainable packaging comes with a unique set of challenges. One of the most common is **line compatibility and performance**, meaning whether a new material can run smoothly on the machines already used in production. Many sustainable materials behave differently from traditional ones, so they can slow down the entire process and can make sustainable options seem less efficient.

03

Lastly, there's the constant **need to balance agility and efficiency**. Brands often want to move fast, test new ideas, and launch updated designs, but smaller production runs, short lead times, and frequent changes can drive up costs and make operations more complex. Finding the right balance between being flexible and staying efficient is essential to scaling sustainable packaging without compromising performance or budget.

02

Another key issue is **quality consistency**, especially when using recycled materials. These materials can vary from batch to batch in texture, color, or strength, so manufacturers must manage that variability carefully and have strong quality control systems in place to avoid defects.



Our third interviewee is **Gerald Martines**. Founder and President of the consulting practice IN.SIGNES, former Director of Innovation at Groupe Pochet and Managing Director of RPC Beauté (now Berry), he has extensive experience in B2B environments, particularly within high-tech and luxury industries.

With your background bridging engineering, business strategy, and innovation, how do you see the role of manufacturing evolving in the beauty and luxury sectors, particularly when it comes to aligning with both brand vision and sustainability goals?

Beauty & luxury packaging manufacturers are facing an unprecedented challenge in their already hectic history. We are just at the beginning of the sustainable transition. Brands are trying their best to navigate between consumers' expectations (often contradictory – and even schizophrenic), increasing regulatory pressure and adverse economic prospects. And of course, packaging is a key driver (although not alone) in sustainability.

I would dare to say that current popular initiatives – from making packaging more recyclable, incorporating PCR and proposing reusable models, to cite only a few trends – are just scratching the surface of the issue. The inevitable major reconfiguration of the Consumer Society is yet to happen and will bring in-depth rethinking of all Business Models,

encompassing more frugality, built around reusable models and the economy of functionality.

The bad news for the manufacturing community is that this will mechanically translate into significantly lower volumes and lower revenues. Manufacturers are diversely positioned in this context, based on the materials they transform, their geography, the specificity of their technologies, etc., but all will need a profound re-invention of their Business Models, and it is predictable that not all will survive, unfortunately.

In your experience, how has the relationship between manufacturers and beauty brands shifted from transactional to strategic? What does true innovation partnership look like in today's market?

This shift is still happening on a small scale, timidly… But it will absolutely need to accelerate. Addressing the many challenges of the sustainable transition will require an unprecedented level of cooperation between all actors in the supply chain – no one will be able to 'win alone'.

Brands, more than ever, need packaging manufacturers to be able to innovate on a grand scale. And innovation is costly in time and resources, which is incompatible with squeezing profit margins, a situation that most manufacturers have endured for quite some time.

What trends or innovations do you believe are redefining excellence in manufacturing for beauty and luxury today?

I've seen some outstanding initiatives in reusable models. This is the 'Voie Royale' to combine desirability, brand differentiation AND sustainability. The dominant single-use paradigm is dying (not without a fight), it has amply proven its inefficiency and wastefulness. On the contrary, reusable models mean more freedom for Brands to 'invest' in higher value packaging, more desirable, more functional, supporting enhanced consumer experiences and driving loyalty – at a fraction of the cumulative cost and environmental impact of repeated single-uses.

But for this model to fully materialize it will require a major shift in consumer behavior that is still waiting to happen. Brands have the power to use their influence to accelerate that endeavor.

How do you view the role of transparency, traceability, and data sharing in building trust and collaboration across the supply chain?

This is indeed indispensable to build consumer trust, regulatory compliance and enhanced efficiency in cross-supply chain collaboration. The technology to make this happen is here, and DPPs, digital triggers, along with yet-to-be-invented applications of Big Data and AI will find a productive field of application here.

Finally, how can manufacturers use their position in the value chain to lead, rather than just follow, the movement towards circularity and long-term transformation?

Suppliers are ultimately the ones through which packaging innovation happens. Some have been actively anticipating the trend by imagining more sustainable packaging platforms and technologies. This has been met, so far, with mixed results, as Brands have sometimes been slow to adopt these innovations, but it will accelerate. Their individual level of technological readiness and trends awareness will be instrumental to win Brands' projects and allow them to accelerate their own transition. But again, this requires long-term, strategic, collaborative relationships to be established across the value chain.

"This shift is still happening on a small scale, timidly… But it will absolutely need to accelerate."

MYTHS UNCOVERED

Recyclable or refillable packaging is enough to be sustainable
Gerald challenges this idea, arguing that popular solutions like recyclability or PCR use only scratch the surface. Real sustainability in beauty and luxury will require a full reconfiguration of business models, embracing frugality, reusability, and functionality over volume.

Manufacturers are passive players who simply execute brand demands
In reality, manufacturers are key drivers of innovation, especially in the transition to more circular packaging systems. Gerald emphasizes that suppliers often lead on new technologies, even if brands are slow to adopt them.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- The beauty & luxury sectors are at a breaking point;
- Manufacturing must reinvent itself;
- True innovation depends on deep collaboration;
- Manufacturers can (and must) lead.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS: AWARENESS & EDUCATION

Packaging is a trust signal and an educational touchpoint. Clear, credible communication helps consumers choose, use, and dispose correctly, turning sustainability from an internal feature into an external advantage.

01

Communicating sustainability through packaging is more complex than it may seem. One of the main challenges is **achieving clarity without overclaiming**, meaning that brands must explain the environmental benefits of their packaging in a way that is simple, truthful, and supported by facts. Overpromising or using vague terms like “eco-friendly” without evidence can lead to greenwashing, which damages consumer trust and may result in legal issues.

02

Another key challenge is **ensuring consistency across all communication channels**, from what’s printed on the packaging, to what’s shown online, to what salespeople say in stores. If the message is different in each place, it confuses the customers and reduces the chance of them acting correctly.

03

Finally, brands need to **encourage the right behavior**, such as sorting, reusing, or returning packaging. To do this, they might use icons, QR codes, or tools like the Digital Product Passport (DPP). However, there’s very limited space on a package, especially in beauty and luxury sectors, and too much information can overwhelm or be ignored. The challenge is to guide people clearly and effectively, without compromising the design or functionality of the pack.

To talk about this stage, we interviewed **Lucie Le Flanchec**. With a strong background in marketing and a deep passion for the packaging industry, Lucie plays a key role in shaping the narrative around innovation, sustainability, and collaboration within one of Europe's most influential packaging events — Paris Packaging Week.

Could you briefly tell us about your role in awareness and education about packaging and how sustainability has become part of your career?

Sustainable development has always been a major concern for me, playing a key role in my professional choices. As part of my involvement with Paris Packaging Week, I had the opportunity this year to organize a conference aimed at tracing the history of packaging, from its origins to the emergence of capitalism, while also examining new approaches and regulations.

My aim was to provide a global perspective, enabling everyone to become fully aware of these issues and, I hope, to deepen the audience's understanding in order to raise collective awareness and inspire changes in practice. Education and awareness-raising about sustainable packaging are central to our approach. When developing the conference programme, it is important to stay informed about the latest trends in packaging, while also prioritizing the need to engage and

educate our audience. This audience is made up of brands, suppliers and consumers, all of whom represent the future of the sector.

From your experience, how big is the role of trade shows in building awareness around sustainability in packaging and how can they contribute to educating the stakeholders?

Trade shows play a fundamental role in raising awareness of sustainable development. As events that bring together key players in the sector, such as the major cosmetics and drinks groups and aerosol manufacturers, they provide an opportunity to address crucial issues. We don't limit ourselves to just one part of the packaging value chain, but look at the whole of it, which allows us to take a global and comprehensive approach. What's more, the show offers an opportunity to acculturate not only professionals, but also the younger generation, who will be the future leaders of change. They can play a major role in the transition to a more sustainable industry.

What kind of messaging or brand storytelling do you believe resonates most with audiences at trade shows when it comes to sustainability?

The message that resonates most with the trade show public is one based on concrete action. Not just statements about sustainable development, but real demonstrations of commitments and measurable results. This message must include the impact of products' end-of-life on the environment, as well as tangible solutions proposed by brands to reduce this impact. The public, made up of well-informed professionals, is particularly sensitive to visible and measurable actions, and less so to general speeches.

What do you believe makes a brand stand out as a sustainability leader at these events? Is it data transparency, innovation, visual storytelling, or something else?

In my view, there's no magic formula for standing out from the crowd. What makes the difference is action. Data transparency, innovation and visual storytelling are important, but they have to be backed up by real

action. A brand that takes real action on environmental issues and can prove the positive impact of its actions will always be seen as a leader. The key is to show that the commitments made are followed by real, measurable effects, and to ensure that the message is authentic and tangible.

How can brands use these moments not only for visibility but also to build trust and encourage behavioural change among clients, partners, or consumers?

Brands can take advantage of these moments to establish a genuine relationship of trust with their customers, partners and consumers. At trade fairs in particular, the emphasis should be on authenticity and transparency. Brands come not just to make themselves known, but to meet exhibitors and partners who meet their specific needs, as defined in their specifications. However, these moments are also opportunities to demonstrate a sincere commitment to sustainable development. By establishing a dialogue around their actions and raising awareness of the environmental impact of products, they can encourage a positive change in behaviour among all stakeholders.

"A brand that takes real action on environmental issues and can prove the positive impact of its actions will always be seen as a leader."

MYTHS UNCOVERED

Sustainability communication is just about branding
Lucie argues that effective communication goes far beyond aesthetics or storytelling. Concrete messages, visible actions, and measurable results are what truly create impact — especially with a professional and informed audience.

Trade shows are only for visibility and sales
On the contrary, events like Paris Packaging Week play a crucial role in industry education, connecting brands, suppliers, and the next generation to build collective awareness and accelerate behavioral change.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Education is a powerful driver of change;
- Concrete actions speak louder than promises;
- The next generation matters;
- Trade shows are catalysts for industry transformation.

USE: HOW CONSUMERS INTERACT

Real-world use determines satisfaction, safety, and waste. Ease of opening, dosing, resealability, and durability affect product protection and whether refill/reuse models work.The way packaging is used in real life plays a major role in whether it's successful, both for the consumer and the environment. Factors like how easy it is to open, how well it pours or dispenses, whether it can be resealed, and how durable it is all affect not only the user's satisfaction but also the product's safety and shelf life. If the packaging is frustrating or confusing to use, it can lead to waste, damage, or even safety issues.

01

One challenge is **ensuring good user experience and accessibility**, meaning the packaging should be intuitive and usable for people of all ages and abilities, without compromising on safety.

02

Another key concern is **product protection**. When companies reduce the amount of material used or shift to reusable formats, they must ensure that the packaging still keeps the product fresh, uncontaminated, and secure.

03

Finally, the adoption of new formats, such as refill or returnable packaging, depends heavily on **consumer behavior**. People are more likely to participate if the system is convenient, easy to understand, and offers some form of incentive. So, for reuse models to work at scale, the packaging must not only be well-designed — it must fit seamlessly into everyday life.

To discuss these challenges, we invited **João Ova Lopes**. He is Senior Global Sponsorship Manager at HEINEKEN, combining brand strategy, sports marketing, cultural engagement, and consumer experience. His cross-industry career gives him a unique perspective on how brands connect with people across platforms.

With your background in global sponsorship and consumer engagement, how do you see the role of brands in educating consumers about responsible product use and disposal?

In today's landscape, responsible marketing is no longer optional. Consumers are increasingly aware of the environmental and social impact of their choices, and they look to brands not just for products, but for their values and approach to sustainability. Whether it's promoting moderation in alcohol consumption or encouraging proper recycling and reuse, responsible marketing helps build trust, drive positive behavior, and ensure that brand influence contributes to long-term, sustainable change.

Therefore, I believe it's essential that brands and businesses help educate consumers on responsible product use and disposal as brands have the power to shape everyday behaviors. With our scale and visibility, we can bring sustainability to life on multiple touchpoints and drive change.

From your experience, how can experiential marketing and sponsorships influence consumer habits in a way that promotes more sustainable behaviors?

Brand activations and sponsorships are more than brand exposure and entertainment; they're strategic platforms to promote responsible consumption and sustainability.

At Heineken, through high-profile events like Formula 1 and the UEFA Champions League, we engage millions of fans at peak emotional moments, making our messaging around “Enjoy Heineken Responsibly” and alcohol-free options like Heineken 0.0 more impactful.

At multiple sports and cultural events, we've introduced (together with promoters) reusable cups and visible recycling systems, not just to reduce waste, but to educate and nudge fans toward better habits in a seamless, enjoyable way. In some cases, we even integrate gamification (like digital reward systems or recycling challenges) to make participation fun and drive higher engagement.

How do you think packaging and product design can enhance user experience while also encouraging moderation and reducing overconsumption?

Packaging is one of the most important marketing touch points and a key driver of conversion in the point of sale. It not only attracts attention on crowded shelves but also communicates the brand’s value, quality, and purpose instantly. If managed effectively it can influence purchase decisions by clearly differentiating the product from competitors, and building trust through transparency and authenticity.

Consumer needs are central to promoting moderation because when brands offer convenient, portion-controlled options and clear, personalized information, they make balanced consumption easier and more natural. By addressing consumer needs, brands can encourage moderation in ways that feel supportive and positive rather than restrictive.

What role does storytelling play in helping consumers understand their impact and feel empowered to make better choices?

In my opinion storytelling is of growing importance for brands. In a crowded and competitive marketplace, product features alone rarely inspire conversion and even less loyalty. However, storylines create emotional connections, build trust, and differentiate a brand's positioning. They allow brands to communicate their values, mission, and impact in ways that feel authentic and relatable, making it easier for consumers to connect with.

Moreover, storytelling helps brands educate consumers by simplifying complex topics like sustainability, making them accessible and actionable - illustrating how their choices can make a difference. It empowers consumers by making them feel part of a bigger journey that requires less effort on a personal/individual level as it is shared with others.

Looking ahead, what are some of the most promising strategies you see for brands to drive meaningful interaction with consumers around sustainability?

I believe experiential marketing plays a crucial role in how we connect with consumers today, it turns brand values into real, memorable experiences. Whether it's engaging fans through immersive sustainability zones, gamified recycling stations, or alcohol-free product tastings, these experiences deepen brand connection while reinforcing responsible behavior. It's about creating moments that not only entertain but also educate and inspire action.

Secondly, I think that pairing these efforts with transparent and clear information on product and packaging, such as QR codes on-pack or digital platforms that show environmental impact, helps build trust and deepen consumer understanding.

Overall, brands can drive real impact by making sustainable choices easy and accessible, but it is also their responsibility to continue focusing on research and investigation that allows for low-impact alternatives and circular models to be implemented.

"I believe it's essential that brands and businesses help educate consumers on responsible product use and disposal as brands have the power to shape everyday behaviors."

MYTHS UNCOVERED

Sustainability is a backstage issue, not part of brand experience
João argues that brands have an active responsibility in educating consumers. Especially at scale, brands can (and should) make sustainability visible and experiential whether by promoting moderation, introducing reuse systems at events, or placing clear messages directly on packaging.

Sponsorships and brand activations are just for visibility
Sponsorships and brand experiences are powerful tools for changing behavior. When tied to emotional moments, like a football final or a Formula 1 race, messages like "Enjoy Responsibly" or recycling become more memorable and impactful.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Responsible marketing builds trust and drives change;
- Packaging is a frontline educator;
- Simplicity, convenience, and transparency are key;
- Innovation must go hand-in-hand with accountability.

RECOVERY: END-OF-LIFE

End-of-life outcomes, recyclability, compostability, or energy recovery, depend on design, local infrastructure, and consumer action. Getting this right reduces leakage and increases circular value. What happens to packaging after it's used - whether it gets recycled, composted, burned for energy, or ends up as waste, depends on three key things: how it was designed, the local waste management systems, and what the consumer does with it. Getting this final stage right is essential to avoid pollution (like plastic leaking into the environment) and to keep valuable materials in circulation. However, there are several challenges.

01

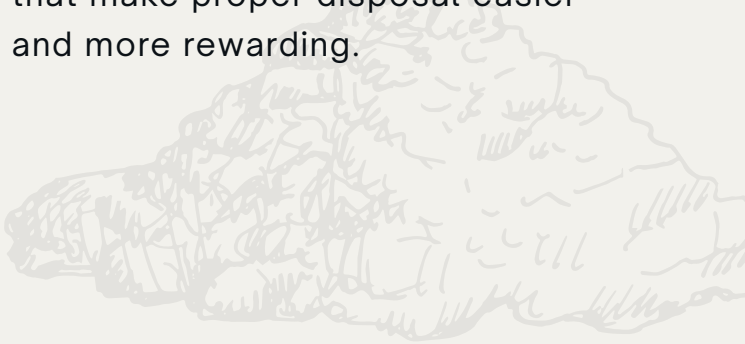
First, **design-for-recycling** can be complicated. Many packages are made from a mix of materials (like plastic and foil) or use glues, labels, or coatings that make them hard to sort and recycle.

02

Second, **infrastructure varies greatly** between countries, and even between cities. What's recyclable in one place may not be accepted in another, which confuses consumers and reduces recovery rates.

03

Finally, **economic factors** play a big role. The cost of recycling, the market demand for recycled materials, and rules like EPR fees all influence whether a package is truly recyclable in practice. For recovery to work, packaging must be designed with the real world in mind (not just ideal scenarios) and supported by clear systems and incentives that make proper disposal easier and more rewarding.



To reflect on the specific demands of this stage, we interviewed **Jake Inglis**, the Founder of EZ Beverages UK Ltd, a company focused on making circularity a reality in the drinks and packaging industry. He works at the intersection of design, material science, and systems thinking to create solutions that reduce waste, valorize resources, and restore ecosystems.

As the founder of a brand that embraces both convenience and sustainability, how did you initially approach the "end-of-life" stage of your product's packaging?

As the founder of EZ Beverages, a brand centred on sustainability and convenience for active lifestyles, I knew from day one that the end-of-life stage of our packaging had to be designed in, not tacked on. All the drinks (pre, intra, and post-workout), come in 150ml aluminium cans because aluminium is one of the few materials that can be endlessly recycled without degrading in quality. It fits perfectly with our mission of circularity.

Being from Scotland and part of Gen Z, I have grown up with a real awareness of both the climate crisis and the systems trying to address it and sometimes falling short. Scotland has been vocal in its ambitions, with initiatives like the Circular Economy Bill and strong advocacy from organisations like Zero Waste Scotland. These efforts are pushing in the

right direction, but they also highlight the complexity of turning policy into impact. For example, the Deposit Return Scheme, which could drastically reduce waste, has faced delay after delay. It shows that good intentions are not enough, brands need to build sustainability into the business model from the start, not rely on infrastructure that might not be there yet.

That mindset really resonates with Gen Z consumers. We see through greenwashing, we are asking: "Is this really sustainable?", "Will it actually be recycled?" or "How easy are you making it for people to do the right thing?". That is why I have made sure our packaging works with existing recycling infrastructure and why I am exploring more circular solutions like take-back options through our subscription model.

I do not treat packaging as waste, I treat it as a resource. The end-of-life is seen as the beginning of a new cycle, a belief that deeply shapes the perspective of both my ethos and my generation.

How did you strike a balance between attractive design, functionality, and recyclability when it comes to packaging?

Striking the balance between attractive design, functionality, and recyclability has been one of the most rewarding challenges for me as a solo founder at EZ Beverages. From the very beginning, I knew that packaging couldn’t just be about how the product looked, it had to serve a clear purpose, perform reliably, and align with my values around sustainability and circularity. That’s why I chose 150ml aluminium cans for the EZ range: they’re lightweight, highly functional, and one of the most recyclable materials out there.

Working previously at Crown Holdings Inc. during my industrial placement year whilst at university, I was able to gain experience in their innovation, design engineering, and metals team, giving me a real grounding in the technical side of packaging. It taught me to think beyond the surface, to consider barrier properties, structural integrity, and how different finishes affect both branding and recyclability. That experience shaped how I

approached packaging for EZ, helping me make smart, informed choices that balance consumer appeal with circular design principles.

From a branding standpoint, cans offer incredible creative flexibility. The full-wrap printable surface will allow me to use bold visuals, clean typography, and storytelling elements that resonate with my target audience, people who live active lives but care deeply about their impact on the planet. The 150ml form factor also reflects the brand's ethos: efficient, intentional, and designed for performance.

As an entrepreneur based in Scotland, I'm very aware of how quickly consumer expectations around sustainability are evolving, and how much scrutiny there is around packaging. People want products that look great, but they also want to feel confident they're making responsible choices. With aluminium cans, I didn't have to compromise; they offer visual impact, portability, and genuine recyclability. That balance is at the heart of what EZ Beverages stands for.

What do you see as the biggest challenges in implementing reuse or real recycling systems in your industry?

One of the biggest challenges I see in implementing reuse or true recycling systems in the beverage industry is the disconnect between what's technically possible and what's actually happening on the ground. Aluminium cans are often seen as the gold standard for recyclability, and rightly so. They're lightweight, endlessly recyclable without quality loss, and already have high recycling rates globally. But even with a great material, the system around it has to work, and that's where the real friction lies.

For me, the challenge isn't just making a sustainable product, it's ensuring that product fits into a functioning circular system. And right now, the infrastructure and policy support for that kind of circularity still has a long way to go, especially in Scotland. The Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) has been in discussion for years, and while it's a promising concept, the repeated delays and lack of clarity around implementation have created confusion for brands, retailers, and consumers.

As a small business, it’s hard to prepare for a system that keeps shifting in scope and timeline.

Zero Waste Scotland and the Circular Economy Bill are both pushing for real change, and that’s encouraging. But the transition to a circular economy needs more than just policy, it needs coordination, education, and investment in infrastructure. Even the most recyclable packaging is only as good as the system it enters. If cans are thrown in the wrong bin or end up in general waste, their value is lost. There’s still a big gap in public awareness and in the consistency of recycling access across regions.

For reuse systems, particularly in the functional beverage space, the challenge is often logistics and consumer behaviour. Our drinks are designed for convenience and performance, for people grabbing something before, during or after a workout. Getting them to return packaging models requires real incentives and a cultural shift that’s still in progress. That’s why I’m exploring options like returnable packaging within gym networks or closed-loop systems for subscribers, where I can build that behaviour and habitual attitude into a specific, motivated community.

Ultimately, it comes down to systems thinking. You can design the most sustainable packaging in the world, but if the end-of-life system is broken or confusing, your impact is limited. At EZ Beverages, I’m trying to bridge that gap, designing for circularity while also pushing for systems that make it real.

What promising trends do you see emerging regarding end-of-life over the next few years?

Looking ahead, the industry is on the edge of some promising shifts in how the end-of-life stage is approached, especially in the functional beverage market. One of the biggest changes I see is the growing demand for accountability, both from brands and consumers. Shoppers are no longer satisfied with vague claims like "eco-friendly" or "recyclable", they are looking for proof, simplicity, and systems that

work. This is particularly true in supermarkets, where more consumers are making split-second decisions based on both product benefits and environmental impact.

In the next few years, I expect to see a big rise in clear labelling around recyclability and packaging lifecycle, not just "Can this be recycled?" but "Will it be, and how easily?". This is where aluminium continues to lead. It is already one of the most recycled packaging materials globally, and thanks to its infinite recyclability, it fits perfectly into emerging circular economy models. In the functional beverage space, where single-use packaging has traditionally dominated, that kind of material advantage is becoming a key differentiator.

I am also starting to see real momentum around traceability, people want to know not just where ingredients come from, but where packaging ends up. There is a real opportunity for brands to lead here, offering transparency about our materials and how they flow through the system. I think we will see more digital integration too, tools like QR codes linking to recycling instructions, carbon footprint data, or even return schemes. On a systems level, Scotland and wider UK regions are moving in the right direction with frameworks like the Circular Economy Bill and efforts from organisations like Zero Waste Scotland. This should not be a passing trend. It represents a fundamental shift toward better, more responsible practices that move sustainability from aspiration to action. While implementation, especially with the Deposit Return Scheme, has been slow and complex, the direction of travel is clear: make packaging more accountable, more circular, and more compatible with real-world infrastructure. Once those systems are up and running, they will help raise the baseline for what is expected across the whole sector.

Finally, one of the most exciting trends is the shift in consumer mindset. Particularly in the Gen Z and Millennial demographics, there is a deeper awareness that sustainability is not a bonus, it is a baseline. People are now factoring end-of-life into their buying choices, even in categories like functional drinks where performance has traditionally been the main selling point.

If your packaging is not part of the solution, consumers are starting to walk away, and I think that will only accelerate in the next few years.

> *"Good intentions are not enough, brands need to build sustainability into the business model from the start."*

MYTHS UNCOVERED

End-of-life is something to think about later
Jake shows that the end-of-life stage of packaging must be considered from the very beginning of design, not added as an afterthought. Circularity needs to be built into the business model, not left to external systems that may fail.

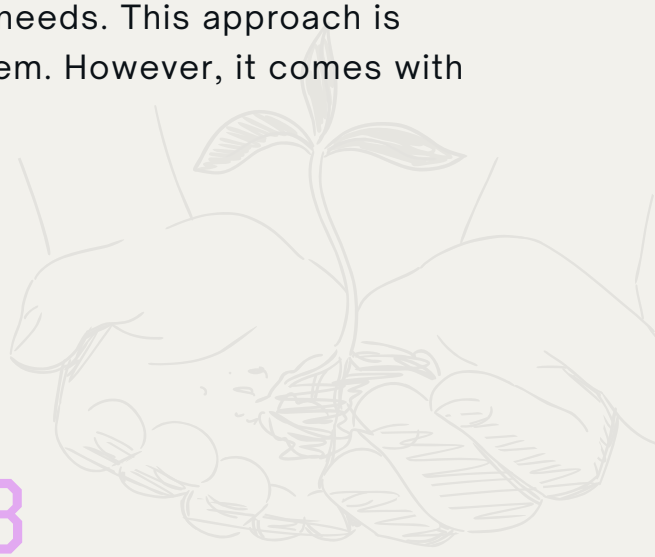
Attractive and functional design doesn't go with sustainability
Jake proves the opposite. It is possible to create packaging that is appealing, practical, and sustainable, especially when backed by technical knowledge and strategic vision.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Circularity starts with design;
- Systems matter as much as materials;
- Design, functionality, and sustainability can coexist;
- Consumer expectations are shifting fast.

REGENERATION: SEEDS OF THE FUTURE

Beyond circularity, regeneration aims to restore ecosystems and resources, considering biodiversity, soil health, and community value while meeting performance and compliance needs. This approach is about leaving things better than we found them. However, it comes with its own challenges.



01

One is **evidence and metrics** since it is relatively easy to measure carbon, but much harder to quantify benefits like restored habitats, improved soil, or community value.

02

Another is **feedstock and land use**. Renewable or bio-based materials must be sourced carefully so they don't displace food crops or damage sensitive ecosystems.

03

Finally, there's the issue of **certification and infrastructure** fit. Claims like "compostable" or "biobased" only matter if the infrastructure actually exists to process these materials. Otherwise, the environmental benefits are lost. True regeneration requires credible measurement, careful sourcing, and systems that support new materials in real-world conditions.

To close the loop on our series of interviews, we invited **Elena Didrigkeit**, the Founder of The EcoLeader Magazine, a bold editorial and strategic platform reshaping leadership and capital for the 21st century through a regenerative, emotionally intelligent, and systemic lens.

How did the inspiration to create The EcoLeader emerge, and in what way does this project reflect a regenerative vision?

The idea for The EcoLeader came from a simple observation: that too much of what passes for “sustainability” in business is reactive, performative, and oftentimes too complex for most people to engage with meaningfully. Seeing how far we are behind on the Sustainable Development Goals made it clear that we need a different approach – one that moves beyond reporting and trends, and activates leadership that regenerates systems, communities, and cultures, showing what we can do today to make real progress. It was equally important to me to avoid finger pointing, and instead inspire through emotional intelligence in articles, podcasts, and conversations. I envisioned The EcoLeader Magazine as a curated lens into leadership that is rooted, conscious, and systemic.

Every story, interview, and collaboration reflects regenerative thinking, showing that growth does not have to come at the expense of what we care about, whether that’s people, ecosystems, or long- term

resilience. In essence, The EcoLeader is a space where clarity meets conscience, and where stories and opportunities can ripple outward, shaping the future of leadership today.

What competencies or qualities do you consider fundamental in a leader who aims to guide their company through sustainable and consistent leadership, preserving what is essential to grow?

A regenerative leader operates with clarity, courage, and care, understanding that true growth is not just about scale or expansion, but about nourishing what already exists: trust, culture, values, and vision. They combine systemic thinking, seeing how every decision affects people, communities, and the planet with emotional intelligence, guiding with empathy, curiosity, and humility.

This leader is in action, aligning promises, metrics, and communication seamlessly, while remaining flexible enough to adapt and evolve without losing the organization's core essence. Ultimately, a regenerative leader sees themselves as a steward of both today and tomorrow, cultivating resilience while inspiring momentum.

In your experience, what are the main cultural or organizational barriers that still prevent this shift in mindset?

The biggest barrier is often comfort with the status quo and the fear of the unknown. Organizations are designed around efficiency, predictability, and short-term returns, while regenerative thinking requires patience, experimentation, and systemic awareness. Other challenges stem from a fragmented understanding of impact, as too many leaders treat sustainability as a separate function rather than integrating it into every decision.

From fear of vulnerability, since admitting what doesn't work or where gaps exist can feel risky yet is essential for learning; and from narrative disconnects, where the story a company tells internally and externally often fails to reflect its actual practices. Shifting culture means creating safe spaces for reflection, valuing long-term thinking, and rewarding

leaders who steward rather than merely scale.

What role should suppliers, manufacturers, and brands take on in this process?

They are partners in regeneration, not just cogs in a supply chain. Every supplier, manufacturer, and brand touches the system in ways that can either deplete or renew it. Their role is to align with purpose, letting values guide choices as much as cost. They share transparency, offering clear visibility into sourcing, impact, and labour practices, and they collaborate beyond contracts, cocreating solutions that elevate both business and ecosystem health. They champion innovation, daring to test new materials, processes, or circular models that others might fear. True regenerative leadership extends outward, where every touchpoint in the value chain becomes an opportunity to amplify positive impact.

Your work with The EcoLeader highlights the importance of knowledge sharing. How can education accelerate the adoption of regenerative practices within companies?

Education is the connective tissue of transformation. Knowledge alone is not enough but when shared thoughtfully, it sparks curiosity, accountability, and action. At The EcoLeader Magazine, we focus on insights that are accessible, actionable, and measurable: clear metrics, proof points, and practical pathways rather than abstract theory. We tell stories that inspire, featuring interviews and case studies of real leaders already navigating complexity with courage and clarity. Our community learning will grow, fostering dialogue where leaders, investors, and innovators exchange practices and amplify impact. When education is curated with care: reflective, hands-on, and intentional, it transforms aspiration into tangible steps. Leaders don’t just know what to do, they see what’s possible and are empowered to act with confidence.

“The biggest barrier is often comfort with the status quo and the fear of the unknown.“

MYTHS UNCOVERED

Sustainability is a separate department or strategy
One of the biggest barriers to progress is treating sustainability as something isolated. Regeneration is not a function, it's a mindset that should be embedded in all decisions, across every level of a business.

Suppliers and manufacturers just execute. The brand leads
In a regenerative system, every actor in the value chain is a co-creator of impact. Suppliers, manufacturers, and brands share responsibility, collaborating through transparency, shared values, and innovation.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Regeneration starts with mindset;
- Cultural transformation is essential;
- The value chain is a shared responsibility;
- Education fuels action.

7 TAKEAWAYS TO ACT ON

01

Sourcing is where sustainability starts
It's not just about selecting materials, it's about making decisions that ripple through cost, compliance, performance, and environmental impact.

02

Compliance is a competitive advantage
It builds trust with customers, regulators, and investors. It reduces risk and opens up new markets, making it an investment, not just a cost.

03

True innovation depends on deep collaboration
The sustainable transition can't be done alone. Manufacturers and brands must move from transactional relationships to strategic, long-term partnerships to share risk, investment, and reward.

04

Trade shows are catalysts for industry transformation
These events bring all players together, offering a comprehensive view of the packaging ecosystem and creating a shared space to exchange knowledge, inspire innovation, and build cross-sector solutions.

05

Packaging is a frontline educator
More than a sales tool, packaging can drive moderation and sustainability through portioning, clear messaging, and interactive tech like QR codes that explain impact.

06

Circularity starts with design
Packaging must be seen as a resource, not as waste. Choosing materials like aluminium that retain value and fit existing infrastructure makes circular models feasible from day one.

07

The value chain is a shared responsibility
Regeneration demands collaboration across brands, suppliers, and manufacturers. When aligned in purpose and transparency, these relationships become sources of innovation and positive ripple effects.

GLOSSARY

Digital Product Passport (DPP) is a tool for collecting and sharing product data throughout its entire lifecycle used to illustrate a product's sustainability, environmental and recyclability attributes. Recorded product data from across the supply chain including raw material sourcing and manufacturing process is captured on the DPP and shared amongst a number of stakeholders and participants – unlocking benefits, use-cases and value across entire ecosystems.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a policy approach that makes producers responsible for their products along the entire lifecycle, including at the post-consumer stage.

Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) is a powerful and essential sustainability tool that evaluates the environmental impacts of a product or service across its entire life cycle, from raw material extraction to the end of life.

PCR (Post-Consumer Recycled Content) generally refers to plastics such as PET, PP and HDPE which are widely recycled and then reprocessed into a resin that is used to make new packaging.

Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) is the European Union regulation for Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation, and Restriction of Chemicals, which came into force in 2007. Its purpose is to protect human health and the environment from the risks of chemicals by shifting the burden of proof onto the industry to ensure their safe production, import, and use within the EU.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We extend our sincere thanks to all the interviewees for their generous contribution of time, insight, and experience. Their perspectives have been essential in shaping this e-book and inspiring more informed, strategic, and regenerative decisions across the packaging value chain. A heartfelt thank you to Ana Vargas Santos, whose thoughtful curation of this e-book added immense value through her ability to connect perspectives, distill insights, and bring clarity and structure to complexity.

Cory Connors

Cory Connors is an experienced sustainable packaging consultant with over 23 years of expertise in sourcing and developing sustainable solutions for companies of all sizes. He currently works as Sales and Marketing Manager at Atlantic Packaging, where he leverages his background in both purchasing, sales and marketing to provide a unique and strategic perspective to his clients.

In addition to his professional work, Cory is the creator and host of the Sustainable Packaging Podcast, available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and other major platforms. With over 350 episodes released, he shares weekly insights on the latest trends and innovations in sustainable packaging, helping to educate and inspire the industry toward more responsible practices.

Peyam Mirnejad

Peyam Mirnejad is a regulatory compliance and product safety expert at Albéa, specializing in the evaluation of raw materials for cosmetic packaging. His commitment to environmental sustainability and regulatory excellence has earned him recognition as a member of the Paris Packaging Week Future Leaders Class of 2025.

In his role at Albéa, Peyam actively contributes to advancing the reliability and transparency of the plastics industry. He emphasizes the importance of regulatory compliance as a key factor in ensuring the industry's sustainability. Peyam's passion for creating a healthier

environment through meticulous regulatory assessments positions him as a forward-thinking professional committed to shaping a more sustainable future for cosmetic packaging.

Gerald Martines
Founder and President of the consulting practice IN.SIGNES, former Director of Innovation at Groupe Pochet and Managing Director of RPC Beauté (now Berry), Gerald has extensive experience in B2B environments, particularly within high-tech and luxury industries. He has led projects across marketing, R&D, strategic partnerships, and IP management.

Having worked in 11 countries and being fluent in French, English, Italian, and Spanish, he brings a deeply multicultural perspective to supply chain dynamics and the evolving role of manufacturing in value creation. His work is rooted in identifying trends and weak signals, fostering open innovation, and building ecosystems that drive strategic transformation. Gérald's insights are especially valuable at a time when sustainability, innovation, and adaptability are reshaping the beauty and packaging industries.

Lucie Le Flanchec

With a strong background in marketing and a deep passion for the packaging industry, Lucie plays a key role in shaping the narrative around innovation, sustainability, and collaboration within one of Europe's most influential packaging events, Paris Packaging Week.

Her journey began in brands like Nuxe and Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts. Currently, as Marketing Executive at Paris Packaging Week, she connects brands, suppliers, and thought leaders, facilitating important conversations that drive the industry forward.

João Ova Lopes
João Ova Lopes is a Senior Global Sponsorship Manager at HEINEKEN, where he brings together brand strategy, sports marketing, cultural engagement, and consumer experience on a global scale. With a strong

background in marketing, branding and innovation, João's career has spanned diverse industries' contexts, giving him a unique lens on how brands interact with people across different platforms. In his current role, he explores how brand activation can inspire more conscious behavior.

Jake Inglis

Jake Inglis is the Founder of EZ Beverages UK Ltd, a company focused on making circularity a reality in the drinks and packaging industry. With a deep passion for sustainable business and entrepreneurial innovation, Jake has led initiatives that challenge traditional linear models and replace them with smarter, regenerative systems.

His journey began with a customer-facing role in metal packaging, where he worked closely on design, technical limitations, and expectation management, all while launching EZ Beverages as a parallel entrepreneurial project. This hands-on experience helped shape his pragmatic and forward-thinking perspective on the end-of-life stage of the packaging supply chain.

Elena Didrigkeit

Elena Didrigkeit is the Founder of The EcoLeader Magazine, a bold editorial and strategic platform reshaping leadership and capital for the 21st century through a regenerative, emotionally intelligent, and systemic lens. At the intersection of sustainability, storytelling, and strategic impact, Elena curates movements, voices, and high-quality opportunities that transform values into measurable outcomes.

Before founding The EcoLeader, Elena built a diverse career across human resources, organizational development, and strategic consulting in both corporate and service-driven environments. These experiences shaped her sharp ability to cut through green jargon and elevate leadership that is as conscious as it is effective.

FURTHER READING

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ABOUT MATTERS TO YOU STUDIO

Matters To You Studio (MTYS) is a creative and strategic consultancy based in Portugal, founded in 2024, dedicated to transforming sustainability into tangible brand value. We believe packaging can be a bridge between environmental impact and business performance. With our core service, 360° Packaging, we are able to connect every point across the value chain, from sourcing to life cycle assessment, regulatory compliance to traceability, circular design, and team empowerment about sustainable approach. The company's first anniversary was marked by the bronze award in the sustainable packaging concept category from the renowned international Pentawards competition.

Every month, MTYS shares practical and strategic insights on leadership, innovation, and sustainability across the value chain. A Matter of Change is a curated newsletter featuring interviews, trends, tools, and best practices for brands ready to act with purpose.

Meet the Team
Teresa Vargas Matos
Co-Founder & Head of Sustainability
Named one of the Future Leaders at Paris Packaging Week 2025 for her promising contribution to the future of the sustainable packaging industry, Teresa holds a degree in Sustainable Leadership from Imperial College Business School and in Luxury Brand Management from INSEEC Bordeaux, with a background of 10 years of experience in multinational companies in the cosmetics industry and developing sustainable strategies. In her day-to-day work, she helps companies transform their packaging, business and marketing efforts into powerful tools for growth and positive change.

Diogo Matos
Co-Founder & Operations Manager
Drawing on a solid background in luxury aviation, Diogo combines a trained eye for detail with a genuine passion for well-executed processes. Over the past decade, he has worked in multicultural environments where precision and tailor-made experiences are essential. Focused on efficiency, he is passionate about studying processes that help brands become more efficient in their value chain.

Mónica Maurício
Head of Design
A product design specialist, Mónica doesn't just create visual resources, she creates identities with storytelling. With a deep passion for sustainable packaging and design, she dedicated the last years of her career to an innovative mono-material packaging design project. With a precise and sensitive eye, she combines aesthetics with purpose, and design with impact.

FOR QUESTIONS RELATED TO SUSTAINABLE DESIGN, PACKAGING DESIGN, PACKAGING IMPROVEMENT AUDITS, LCA, SUSTAINABLE STORYTELLING SPEAK WITH US:

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