

## Compostable Coalition assembles heavyweight Advisory Board

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

*TESCO, MARKS & SPENCER and WWF* among first names to be unveiled as Compostable Coalition UK advisory board members.

As part of its UK Research & Innovation funded 'Closing the Loop for Compostable Packaging' research project, Compostable Coalition UK has assembled an advisory board of industry and packaging experts.

Funded by UK Research & Innovation's (UKRI) flagship £60 million Smart Sustainable Plastic Packaging Challenge, the research project examines the practicality of effectively collecting, sorting and recycling compostable packaging via the UK's existing collection and treatment streams. With 1.2 million tonnes or 50% of the UK's plastic packaging not currently recycled, the project addresses the potential role of mainstreaming compostable packaging as a replacement for some key hard-to-recycle plastics while ensuring these can be effectively treated and organically recycled post consumption.

Key application segments where little to no recycling is feasible such as tea bags, coffee pods, fresh produce packaging and foodservice packaging will be evaluated and assessed within the project, in alignment with WRAP and The Plastics Pact vision of the most suitable applications for compostable packaging.

Advisory Board members, who are also members of the UK's Plastics Pact, will ensure the research project is objective, empirically robust and supports the priorities and interests of key stakeholders – not least in supporting the attainment of the UK's Plastics Pact goals for compostability and circularity.

The Advisory Board members, including pact members, have been confirmed as follows:

- James Bull, Head of Packaging and Food Waste Strategies, Tesco
- Margaret Bates, Executive Director, OPRL
- Paula Chin, Senior Policy Advisor (Consumption), WWF
- Sam Clough, Senior Packaging Technologist, Marks & Spencer
- Laura Fernandez, Senior Packaging and Sustainability Manager, Ocado Retail

**Tomos Davies from Compostable Coalition said:**

*We are delighted to have assembled such a formidable group of packaging and wider industry experts to join our research project. Their insights and expertise will prove invaluable in finessing the research project as well as ensuring the objectivity and robustness of our research trials. With the Advisory Board's expert input, we are confident the project's findings can successfully signpost industry and Governments towards the necessary policy and behavioural interventions.*

**Laura Fernandez from Ocado Retail said:**

*At Ocado Retail, we're committed to continue innovating to ensure our packaging is the best it can be for the planet. I'm delighted to join this project with industry colleagues to help determine the possible benefits of compostable packaging and the role it can play in the circular economy when used appropriately and when it is supported by an effective collection, sorting and recycling infrastructure.*

**Sam Clough from Marks & Spencer said:**

*At M&S, we know that meeting our commitments to customers on plastic will require us to explore all options. Plastic waste is a difficult problem to solve and compostables could be part of the solution. But their lifecycle is complex, and the benefits are hard to validate. I look forward to supporting this important initiative and being able to critique the findings and help shape the future of compostables on behalf of our customers.*

**Paula Chin from WWF said:**

*Finding solutions to tackle the plastic pollution crisis remains a pressing issue and considering what role compostable packaging can play is critical. Exploring the potential of its contribution to a circular economy is an opportunity which WWF is supportive of, and I look forward to reviewing the emerging findings regarding the environmental benefits and the potential wider positive impacts on soil health.*

**Margaret Bates from OPRL said:**

*In the absence of a dedicated forum to further examine, challenge and critically reflect on the potential of this industry to support the attainment of Plastics Pact targets, Compostable Coalition UK's research project offers an opportunity to plug some of the missing evidence gaps and to signpost further areas in need of research or examination, including on-pack labelling and consumer behaviour.*