

PLASTIC PROMISES

Measuring Corporate Ambition and Action on Plastic Packaging

2021 Edition - Summary

SUMMARY

Plastic pollution has become one of the world's most pressing environmental problems. The production of single-use plastic products currently exceeds the world's capacity to collect, sort, and recycle this waste stream. Alarming amounts of packaging are being sent to landfill or worse, ending up in our oceans.

Not only does plastic have a huge waste issue, but it is also closely linked to carbon footprints and greenhouse gas emissions as it is primarily made from fossil fuels. Some see the circular economy as the answer to a sea of mismanaged plastic waste and carbon-intensive packaging. **Environmentalists recommend a hierarchical approach – Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle single use plastics, in that order of priority.**

Corporations are acknowledging their role in the plastic crisis resulting in many Fortune 500 and global companies making commitments to reduce the environmental impact of their packaging. One major driver of corporate accountability is the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment from the Ellen MacArthur Foundation. More than 500 businesses, governments and other organizations have united around a common vision of a circular economy for plastics in which it never becomes waste. Signatories of the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment (NPEGC) have set ambitious goals for 2025 to help realize this vision.

Many reports about plastic have been published that call out the largest polluters or show the extent of the plastic pollution crisis, but these reports do not compare end-user corporations in a quantifiable way. The aim of this report is to create a benchmarking system by which companies can analyze their performance using a measurable, actionable score. With this in mind, Ubuntu partnered with Brandscapes Worldwide, a global insights and data analytics company, to compare the stated plastic packaging goals of companies against their actual progress toward these goals. This report looks at how 176 global companies with annual revenues above 1 billion USD are faring against their targets.

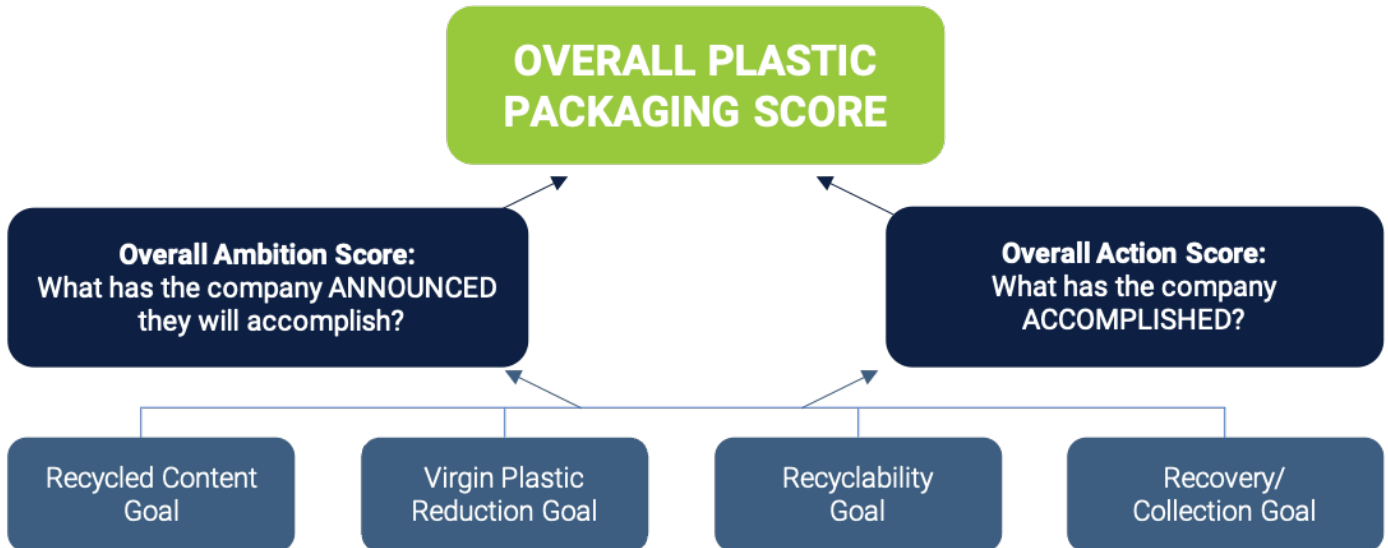


Eco-friendly cleaning tablets by minq

Photo Credit: minq

Companies were scored against **four goal categories**: commitment to virgin plastic reduction, use of recycled content, packaging recyclability, and recovery/collection goals. Each goal was scored based on the extent of the company's ambition and the action they have taken toward their goal.

Figure 1. Components of the Plastic Packaging Score



Companies were classified by industry and each industry was categorized as a **high**, **medium**, or **low** plastic packaging user. The **top 10 scoring companies** in the **high usage category** are listed below.

Figure 2. Top 10 Companies Amongst High Plastic Users

COMPANY NAME	PLASTIC PACKAGING SCORE	INDUSTRY
Kesko Corporation	3.9	Retail
L'Oréal	3.1	Cosmetics
Unilever	2.9	Household Products
Natura Cosmetics	2.8	Cosmetics
Mars, Incorporated	2.6	Food
PepsiCo	2.6	Food
SC Johnson	2.5	Household Products
Pick n Pay	2.5	Retail
Sonae	2.4	Retail
Carrefour	2.4	Retail

A more stringent standard was used to identify Sustainability Leaders, defined as companies with Overall Ambition Scores equal to or greater than 3.0 (out of a possible 5.0) and Overall Action Scores equal to or greater than 2.0.

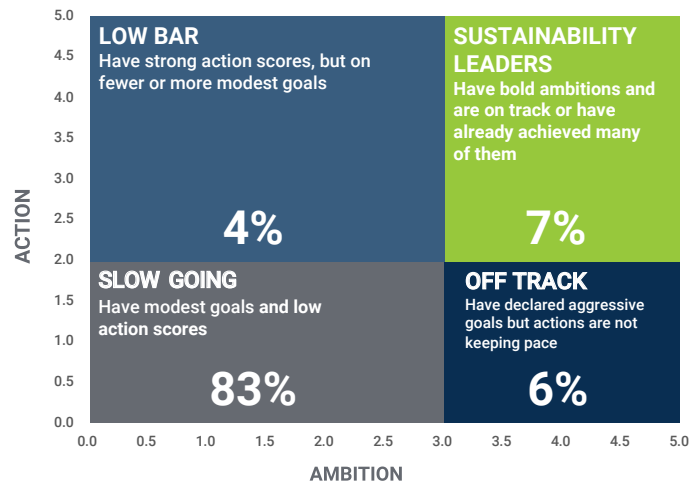
Despite these conservative limits, only 7% of the 176 companies surveyed made the cut. While their efforts should be applauded, even our Sustainability Leaders have more opportunities for improving their scores and reducing the environmental impact of their packaging.

Generally, industries classified as high single-use plastic users are among those with the highest average score. These companies are also among the most visible in the plastic pollution issue as they use a large amount of plastic packaging. They have been the first and most ambitious goal setters.

Figure 3.

Plastic Sustainability Action vs Ambition Grid

% companies in each quadrant



Since many companies have set their goals relatively recently, more ambition has been reported while fewer companies have reported progress toward their goals. As we get closer to the target year and companies report more achievements, we hope to see more differentiation between Sustainability Leaders that are reaching and exceeding their goals from those merely making empty promises. As the report, and these plastic packaging goals, evolves, the criteria for being a Sustainability Leader will become more stringent to show those truly taking strides to improve their environmental performance.



Edible and biodegradable packaging from seaweed by Notpla

Photo Credit: Notpla

Note on Methodology

This report focuses on business-to-consumer (B2C) companies with revenues over 1 billion USD. All information in this report reflects data reported up to December 31, 2020. Companies were grouped by industry and volume of single-use plastic usage. Since most companies did not report actual annual plastic usage, the classification of high, medium, and low plastic use is based on knowledge of the industries.

The **Plastic Packaging Score** for companies was calculated using four metrics:

1. **Recyclability Goals:** What percentage of their materials will be recyclable?
2. **Reduction Goals:** By what percentage has the company committed to reduce their use of virgin plastic?
3. **Recycled Content Goals:** What percentage of the company's plastics will be derived from recycled materials?
4. **Recovery Goals:** Has the company committed to making a portion of their plastics returnable? Do they have a goal to recover or collect a certain amount of plastic?

Each of these four metrics was scored according to both the company's stated ambition and their actual reported action against this ambition.

Ambition

The ambition score is comprised of the size of the company's target, the scope of their target, and their timeline. Size, scope, and timeline scores are averaged to achieve the overall ambition score.

The size of the target score is based on the company's stated target. The scope of target refers to the extent the company's goal affects their whole portfolio of plastic. The timeline score is calculated to award companies who are committed to implementing their goals earlier.

Action

The action score is based on the company's achievement momentum factor and a transparency factor. The achievement momentum factor comprises 70% of the overall action score while the transparency factor score represents 30% of the score

Overall Score

The total **Plastic Packaging Score** was a weighted score of 40% for the reduction goal and 20% each for recyclability, recycled content, and recovery goal.

RANKING BY COMPANY

Ranking for High Plastic Packaging Users

Rank	Company Name	Country	Industry
1	Kesko Corporation	Finland	Retail
2	L'Oréal	France	Cosmetic
3	Unilever	UK	Household Products
4	Natura Cosmetics	Brazil	Cosmetic
5	Mars, Incorporated	USA	Food
6	PepsiCo	USA	Food
7	SC Johnson	USA	Household Products
8	Pick n Pay	South Africa	Retail
9	Sonae	Portugal	Retail
10	Carrefour	France	Retail
11	L'OCCITANE en Provence	Switzerland	Cosmetic
12	S Group	Finland	Retail
13	Ferrero	Italy	Food
14	Walmart	USA	Retail
15	Tupperware	USA	Household Products
16	Colgate-Palmolive Company	USA	Household Products
17	Barilla G. & R. Fratelli SpA	Italy	Food
18	Mondelez International	USA	Food
19	Ahold Delhaize	Netherlands	Food & Drug Stores
20	METRO AG	Germany	Retail
21	Stanley Black & Decker	USA	Household Products
22	Selfridges	UK	Retail
23	Henkel AG & Co KGaA	Germany	Household Products
24	Nestlé	Switzerland	Food
25	Keurig Dr Pepper	USA	Beverages
26	Schwarz Group (Lidl & Kaufland)	Germany	Food & Drug Stores
27	Danone S.A.	France	Food
28	Johnson & Johnson	USA	Household Products
29	McCormick & Company	USA	Food
30	Reckitt	UK	Household Products
31	The Coca-Cola Company	USA	Beverages
32	Kimberly-Clark	USA	Household Products
33	Target Corporation	USA	Retail
34	Hershey	USA	Food
35	Woolworths Holdings Limited	South Africa	Retail
36	Procter & Gamble	USA	Household Products
37	FrieslandCampina Nederland B.V.	Netherlands	Food
38	Ikea	Netherlands	Retail
39	Jeronimo Martins	Portugal	Retail
40	The Clorox Company	USA	Household Products
41	The Kroger Company	USA	Food & Drug Stores

Ranking for High Plastic Packaging Users (cont.)

Rank	Company Name	Country	Industry
42	Kmart Australia Limited	Australia	Retail
43	Albertsons	USA	Food & Drug Stores
44	Zespri Group Limited	New Zealand	Food
45	Kellogg Company	USA	Food
46	Tesco Plc	UK	Food & Drug Stores
47	Marks and Spencer plc	UK	Retail
48	Conagra Brands	USA	Food
49	Estée Lauder	USA	Cosmetic
50	Kraft Heinz	USA	Food
51	Hormel Foods	USA	Food
52	Seven & I Holdings	Japan	Retail
53	Post Holdings	USA	Food
54	J.M. Smucker	USA	Food
55	Aeon	Japan	Retail
56	Home Depot	USA	Retail
57	Newell Brands	USA	Household Products
58	Campbell Soup	USA	Food
59	Nordstrom	USA	Retail
60	TJX	USA	Retail
61	Walgreens Boots Alliance	USA	Food & Drug Stores
62	General Mills	USA	Food
63	Coty	USA	Cosmetic
64	JBS	Brazil	Food
65	CVS Health	USA	Food & Drug Stores

High Plastic Packaging Users with Zero Scores

Company Name	Country	Industry
Advance Auto Parts	USA	Retail
Amazon	USA	Retail
Andersons	USA	Food
Archer Daniels Midland	USA	Food
AutoZone	USA	Retail
Bed Bath & Beyond	USA	Retail
Best Buy	USA	Retail
BJ's Wholesale Club	USA	Retail
Burlington Stores	USA	Retail
CHS	USA	Food
Costco	USA	Retail
Dean Foods	USA	Food
Dick's Sporting Goods	USA	Retail
Dillard's	USA	Retail
Dollar General	USA	Retail
Dollar Tree	USA	Retail
Foot Locker	USA	Retail
J.C. Penney	USA	Retail
Kohl's	USA	Retail
L Brands	USA	Retail
Land O' Lakes	USA	Food
Lowe's	USA	Retail
Macy's	USA	Retail
O'Reilly Automotive	USA	Retail
Publix Super Markets	USA	Food & Drug Stores
Rite Aid	USA	Food & Drug Stores
Ross Stores	USA	Retail
Seaboard	USA	Food
Tyson Foods	USA	Food
WH Group	Hong Kong	Food

Ranking for Medium / Low Plastic Packaging Users			
Rank	Company Name	Country	Industry
1	H&M Group*	Sweden	Apparel
2	Inditex*	Spain	Apparel
3	Conde Nast	USA	Media
4	Diageo	UK	Alcohol
5	Pernod Ricard	France	Alcohol
6	ASOS*	UK	Apparel
7	Apple	USA	Technology
8	Burberry Group*	UK	Apparel
9	AB Inbev	Belgium	Alcohol
10	British American Tobacco PLC	UK	Tobacco
11	Molson Coors Beverage Company	USA	Alcohol
12	HP Inc.	USA	Technology
13	Starbucks Coffee Company	USA	Restaurants
14	LPP*	Poland	Apparel
15	McDonald's	USA	Restaurants
16	Chipotle	USA	Restaurants
17	Sealed Air Corporation	USA	Materials
18	Melco Resorts & Entertainment	Hong Kong	Hospitality
19	HanesBrands*	USA	Apparel
20	Yum! Brands	USA	Restaurants
21	Microsoft	USA	Technology
22	Dell	USA	Technology
23	Ford Motor	USA	Motor Vehicles & Parts
24	3M	USA	Industrials
25	Philip Morris International	USA	Tobacco
26	Gap*	USA	Apparel
27	Dow	USA	Chemicals
28	Schneider Electric	France	Technology
29	Aramark	USA	Business Services
30	PVH*	USA	Apparel
31	Alphabet	USA	Technology
32	Ralph Lauren*	USA	Apparel
33	Corteva	USA	Chemicals
34	Toyota Motor	Japan	Motor Vehicles & Parts

*Plastic goals and achievements of the Apparel industry in this report do not include the plastics used in their textiles

Medium / Low Plastic Packaging Users with Zero Scores		
Company Name	Country	Industry
Altria Group	USA	Tobacco
American Airlines Group	USA	Transportation
Ascena Retail Group	USA	Apparel
Bloomin' Brands	USA	Restaurants
Caterpillar	USA	Industrials
Constellation Brands	USA	Alcohol
Corning	USA	Materials
Darden Restaurants	USA	Restaurants
Delta Air Lines	USA	Transportation
DuPont	USA	Chemicals
FedEx	USA	Transportation
General Electric	USA	Industrials
General Motors	USA	Motor Vehicles & Parts
Goodyear Tire & Rubber	USA	Motor Vehicles & Parts
Hewlett Packard Enterprise	USA	Technology
Hilton Worldwide Holdings	USA	Hospitality
Honda Motor	Japan	Motor Vehicles & Parts
Honeywell	USA	Industrials
Hyatt Hotels	USA	Hospitality
Hyundai	South Korea	Motor Vehicles & Parts
IBM	USA	Technology
IWC Schaffhausen	Switzerland	Apparel
JetBlue Airways	USA	Transportation
Las Vegas Sands	USA	Hospitality
Lear	USA	Motor Vehicles & Parts
Levi Strauss	USA	Apparel
Marriott International	USA	Hospitality
MGM Resorts International	USA	Hospitality
Mitsubishi	Japan	Motor Vehicles & Parts
Nike	USA	Apparel
Nissan	Japan	Motor Vehicles & Parts
Penn National Gaming	USA	Hospitality
Philips	Netherlands	Technology
PPG Industries	USA	Chemicals
SAIC Motor	China	Motor Vehicles & Parts
Samsung Electronics	South Korea	Technology
Sherwin-Williams	USA	Chemicals
Southwest Airlines	USA	Transportation
Tapestry	USA	Apparel
Tenneco	USA	Motor Vehicles & Parts
Tesla	USA	Motor Vehicles & Parts
United Airlines Holdings	USA	Transportation
United Parcel Service	USA	Transportation
VF	USA	Apparel
Volkswagen AG	Germany	Motor Vehicles & Parts
Weyerhaeuser	USA	Materials
Whirlpool	USA	Industrials

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BUY NOW



Are you a company on this list or would you like to be added to the list? Want a roadmap to show you how to improve your score? To find out how to update your score, get more information about this report, or receive quarterly updates, please contact plasticpromises@ubuntu.com.

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