

## Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF)

### EXAMPLE

The Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) has produced a study outlining its viewpoint on the use of chemical recycling technology. The non-governmental organization advised that such approaches be used in accordance with circular economy principles, stressing that they are surrounded by "serious issues."

Chemical recycling, also known as advanced or molecular recycling, refers to chemical, thermochemical, and combustion techniques that convert a part of processed plastic waste into chemical building blocks. This substance may then be recycled into various polymers, including plastic for food-grade purposes.

According to the position paper, which was produced as part of the NGO's 'No Plastic in Nature' project, chemical recycling technologies should be used in accordance with circular economy principles, with 'reduction and reuse' prioritised as 'our top tactics.' Recycling methods will 'be crucial in keeping materials and value moving in the system' and remove plastic from landfill, incineration, or littering if materials lack a viable reuse solution.

Proponents of chemical recycling technologies emphasize their capacity to 'fill the gap' in present recycling by giving an alternate waste management option for goods that are not currently recycled, and recycle material back to virgin-like condition.

PlasticsEurope, a trade organisation, is among those lobbying for the introduction of chemical recycling technology. The group stated in a statement last year that scaling up such technology was 'important' in attaining EU standards on recycled content for plastics packaging, reiterating that members were 'already working towards' the target by investing in 'new technology solutions.'

According to the position paper, if these concerns are not addressed, the use of such procedures may 'raise carbon emissions' and fail to 'fundamentally enhance present recycling rates,' thus weakening current recycling infrastructure and circular economy growth.

According to the WWF research, if used, chemical recycling methods should be 'complementary' to current waste management systems rather than competing for

feedstocks with mechanical recycling. Plastic waste streams should also be linked to the "most ecologically effective technology available," according to the NGO, to "ensure the entire system runs with the smallest environmental imprint feasible."

The study further states that only 'material-to-material' applications should be deemed recycling, with 'plastic-to-fuel' operations falling outside of circular thinking since they 'do not offset virgin plastic entering the system.' According to WWF, chemical recycling methods should not be utilized to convert recyclable material into non-recyclable material.

In response to the position paper, Alix Grabowski, Director of Plastic and Material Science at WWF, emphasized the importance of 'carefully' considering the design and implementation of chemical recycling technologies: *"Even as technologies advance, we can't recycle our way out of the growing plastic waste crisis."* Instead of focusing just on recycling, we should emphasize tactics such as lowering our overall single-use plastic use and increasing reuse, which give the best chance of achieving the large-scale change we require.

*"In order for a technology like chemical recycling to be part of a sustainable material management system, we must carefully examine how it is designed and implemented, as well as whether it offers environmental benefits over the status quo, adheres to strong social safeguards, and truly contributes to advancing our circular economy. These guidelines are intended to do precisely that."*

## MORE INFORMATION

- Website:

<https://resource.co/article/chemical-recycling-application-should-be-carefully-considered-says-wwf>

- Social Media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/worldwildlifefund>

Twitter: [https://twitter.com/world\\_wildlife](https://twitter.com/world_wildlife)

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/World\\_Wildlife/](https://www.instagram.com/World_Wildlife/)

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/wwfus>

Pictures:

