



spiritsEUROPE welcomes institutional alignment on Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) including mandatory re-use exemption for spirits and better protection of packaging designs protected by IP rights

Brussels, 19 December 2023 – The institutional alignment reached by EU Environment Ministers on PPWR duly recognizes sector-specific realities by exempting spirits from mandatory re-use targets. At the same time, the agreement includes improved provisions to safeguard packaging diversity, distinctive designs and Intellectual Property (IP) Rights.

“We welcome the decision of EU Environment Ministers to exempt spirits from mandatory re-use targets and to align their approach on this point to the one taken by the European Commission and the European Parliament. This is the most sensible and sustainable approach forward – and will help preserve bottle diversity in the future while delivering real sustainability benefits on the ground”, commented Sarah Melina Siebel, Director Internal Market and Sustainability at spiritsEUROPE.

While minimisation requirements will further improve the carbon footprint of packaging, such provisions should not come to the detriment of creative, innovative and distinctive packaging designs protected by Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) under EU and international legislation. spiritsEUROPE and its members welcome the improved provisions on packaging minimisation as adopted by EU Environment Ministers.

“We welcome the fact that Ministers agreed improved provisions for the protection of IP Rights to safeguard packaging diversity also in the future. Against this background it is unclear to us, why the Council distinguishes between trademarks on the market and future ones – which will not get the same level of IPR protection. This may hinder innovation and artificially distinguishes products in an unhelpful way,” said Ulrich Adam, Director General of spiritsEUROPE. *“Packaging is, and will always remain, a central pillar of spirits brands. It plays a key role in consumers’ unique experiences and competitive dynamics in the sector. We can and should not compromise on quality, functionality, brand equity and consumer preferences.”*

“We now count on the co-legislators to agree a reasonable and workable compromise which safeguards the existing IP Rights for iconic spirit drinks – and their bottles – and excludes them from mandatory minimization criteria whenever they could jeopardize existing IP Rights on packaging”, Adam added.

ENDS



Note to editors

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- spiritsEUROPE is the representative body for the spirits industry at European level comprising 31 associations and 11 international companies: www.spirits.eu.
- The Brussels Times - [Re-use or recycle? Understanding nuance in the glass bottle debate](#)
- The Brussels Times - [United in diversity or monotony by standardization? New EU packaging rules for spirits bottles need to reflect & protect product-specific needs](#)
- [Sustainable from #Farm2Glass](#) – The spirit sector at the heart of a sustainable food system
- Spirits closing the loop: <https://youtu.be/lubuk6ZPeAs?si=w5sfzCY1ArF7cvA3>