



## PRESS RELEASE

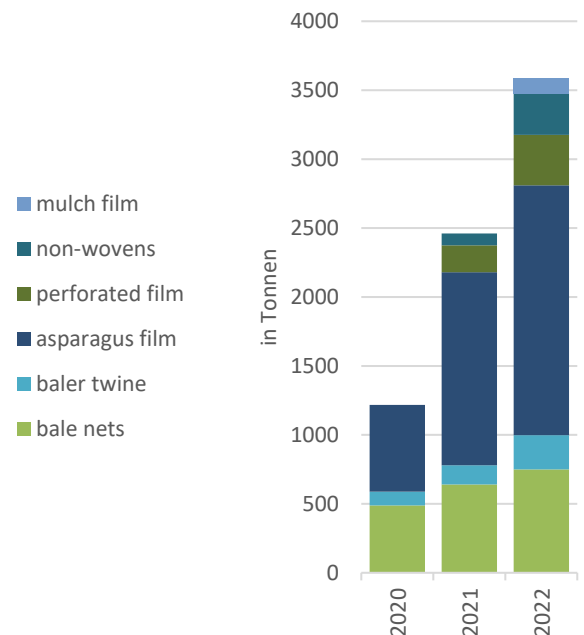
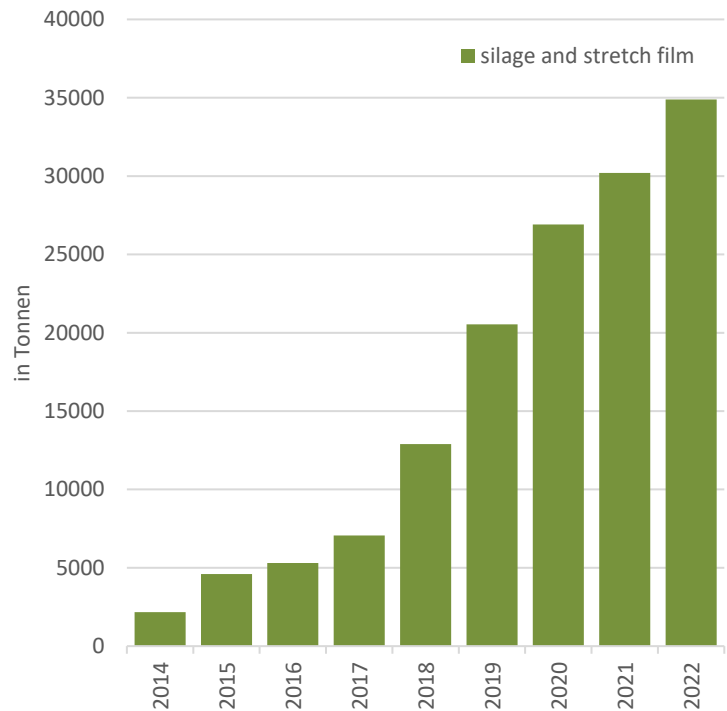
### IK-Initiative ERDE fulfils voluntary commitment and collects over 68% of silage and stretch films in Germany

*ERDE was also able to increase its collection volumes considerably last year - with 34 889 tonnes of silage and stretch film, this is 15.5 percent higher than in the previous year. © ERDE*

*Bad Homburg, 16 May 2023*

The ERDE (Erntekunststoffe Recycling Deutschland - Crop Plastics Recycling Germany) initiative was again able to significantly increase its collection volumes in 2022. At 645 bring centres and with 3147 on-farm collections, a total of 34 889 tonnes of silage and stretch films were collected and recycled. This corresponds - after deduction of contamination - to 68.7 percent of the silage and stretch films put on the German market. This is confirmed in this year's annual report to the German *Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV)* based on calculations by GVM Gesellschaft für Verpackungsmarktforschung (2023). With this recycling quota, ERDE fulfils all points of the "Voluntary commitment to recover and recycle used agricultural film" submitted to the BMUV in 2019. In this commitment, the ERDE initiative undertook to recycle at least 65 percent of the silage and stretch film put on the market in Germany in 2022.

In addition, more than 3586 tonnes of other agricultural plastics - from yarns to nets, non-wovens and films from the horticultural sector - were collected and 95 percent of that recycled. Since 2019, the collection system has been successively expanded to include the product groups bale nets, baler twine, asparagus film, perforated film, PP non-wovens and mulch film.

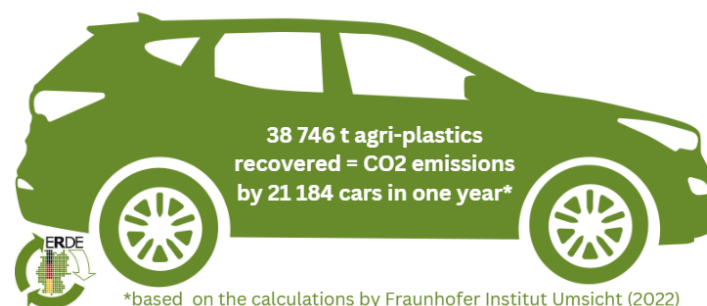




Christian Schröder, Key Account Manager Industrial & Agricultural Films of the ERDE founding member Polifilm Extrusion GmbH, sees the exceeding of the 65 percent mark as a result of the good cooperation in agriculture: *"We are delighted that we were able to significantly exceed the 65% collection and recycling rate for silage and stretch films in 2022 - as we promised in our voluntary commitment. This success is only possible through close cooperation across all stages of the value chain - the support of the agricultural trade, the machinery rings and the agricultural contractors and, of course, the commitment of the farmers. Silage and stretch films are important products for ensuring a sustainable and high-quality feed supply for livestock. Together we show that modern agriculture and the use of agri-plastics can be combined with environmental protection."*

The voluntary industry initiative is supported in its project by the associations IK Industrievereinigung Kunststoffverpackungen e.V., Deutscher Raiffeisenverband e.V., BVA Bundesverband Agrarhandel e.V., and BLU Bundesverband Lohnunternehmen e.V.. Dr. Hartmut Matthes, Managing Director of BLU Bundesverband Lohnunternehmen e.V., comments: *"The report to the BMUV describes the success story of ERDE and shows that initiatives established by the industry can make a significant contribution to environmental protection and CO<sub>2</sub> minimisation. Our contracting companies assume their share of responsibility in the value chain, among other things by providing and organising collections for used plastics in agriculture. And I am convinced that we will achieve a lot together in the coming years."*

The IK-initiative ERDE Recycling is a solution for the collection and recycling of used agricultural plastics financed by environmentally conscious manufacturers of agricultural plastics and supported jointly with RIGK GmbH. All collected films are sent for mechanical recycling within the EU. The share of the quantity processed in Germany was 66% last year. Calculating the CO<sub>2</sub> savings achieved from the 38 476 tonnes of agricultural plastics collected and recycled, this results in a CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent of 42 748 tonnes - a saving that around 3 million trees would bind annually.



In addition to the specific recycling quotas for silage and stretch films, the ERDE initiative has committed to successively including other agricultural plastics in the collections. These include bale nets, asparagus films, mulch films, baler twine and perforated films. For the year 2022, the report to the BMUV shows collection quantities of 749 tonnes of bale nets, 248 tonnes of baler twine, 366 tonnes of perforated film, 109 tonnes of mulch film, 301 tonnes of nonwovens and 1812 tonnes of asparagus film - the latter corresponding to a recycling rate of 41.5 percent. Used asparagus films, which are usually recycled after eight to nine years of use, pose major challenges to recycling systems due to the high sand content. ERDE was therefore involved in the past in the *SpaFo* research project of the *Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Engineering and Bioeconomy*, which aims to mechanically clean asparagus films while they are still in the field. The technology developed from this is expected to be in use in Germany from 2023.



The ERDE initiative is also active beyond the German border: In 2021, the "ERDE Switzerland" initiative was founded. The independent collection system in Switzerland was already able to collect and recycle 1880 tonnes of used crop plastics last year – also in cooperation with RIGK GmbH.

In 2023, ERDE will continue to offer farmers and contractors a cost-effective, nationwide return option for their used agricultural plastics. A location search available on the ERDE website (<http://www.erde-recycling.de>) provides quick and easy information on current collection dates and locations. The continuing success of the unique collection concept for crop plastics is due to the steadily increasing willingness of farmers to deliver their used films to the collection points pre-cleaned and separated according to product groups, thus benefiting from the ecological and financial advantages of the system (e.g. compared to incineration).

#### **About ERDE**

Under the umbrella of the IK Industrievereinigung Kunststoffverpackungen e.V. and in cooperation with RIGK as system operator, ERDE organises the separate return and recycling of used crop plastics such as silage film, stretch film, asparagus film, perforated film, mulch film, non-wovens, bale nets and baler twine via collection partners throughout Germany. Contractors and farmers collect the crop plastics and hand them in bundled - broom-clean and freed of coarse dirt - at a collection point (<https://www.erde-recycling.de/erntekunststoffe-abgeben/sammelstelle-finden/>). The return fee is set directly by the collection point. Recycling companies then process the collected material into new plastic raw materials.

Any manufacturer or primary distributor of crop plastics who supplies the German market can become a member of ERDE. The following 27 companies assume responsibility for their products and the environment as ERDE members: ape Europe, ASPLA S.A., Groupe Barbier, Berry bpi, Berry Fiberweb France, CLAAS Vertriebsgesellschaft mbH, Cordex - Companhia Industrial Textil S.A., Coveris Flexibles Austria GmbH, Daios Plastics S.A., DUOPLAST AG, KARATZIS S.A., Manupackaging Deutschland GmbH, NOVATEX, PIlppo OYJ, Plastika Kritis S.A., POLIFILM Extrusion GmbH, Ab Rani Plast Oy, Reyenvas S.A., RKW Agri GmbH & Co. KG, Sicor - Sociedade Industrial de Cordoaria S.A., Solplast S.A., Sotrafa S.A., Tama Group, Tecfil S.A., Tencate Geosynthetics, TRIOWORLD GmbH and WKI Tegafol Sp. z o.o.-

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