



argusmedia.com

# Argus Recycled Polymers

Market news, analysis and weekly prices

Issue 26-6 | Friday 6 February 2026

**EDITORIAL: Markets will continue to display seasonal ups and downs, but these are expected to be more muted this year in many cases**

## Argus launches Recycled Polymers Outlook

Seasonality, legislation and competition from virgin polymer prices are expected to drive changes in the recycled polymers market in the coming year, according to the first issue of *Argus Consulting's* Recycled Polymers Outlook, published last week

### PET

Prices in the European rPET market are expected to increase in the coming months, after existing bale stocks built up over the Christmas period – when collection is typically plentiful and recycler operating rates fall – have been processed, and preparations are under way for the peak summer season for on-the-go beverage consumption. But the seasonal increase may be less pronounced than in previous years, with initiatives such as Poland's new deposit return scheme, implemented in October, expected to push up collection rates and bale quality. The virgin PET market may be more volatile in 2026, with buyers reportedly sourcing more of their requirements through spot purchases rather than contracts. This could, at times, cause recyclers' margins to strengthen and maintain spreads to virgin material.

Outside Europe, sharp seasonal price rises seen in the US bale market last year – owing to rising demand from US and Mexican recyclers in the low season – are likely to be more muted this year after three US PET recyclers closed in 2025. Bale prices are still expected to pick up from March-June – recyclers did not fully pass through year into their sale prices the decline in bale prices they experienced in the second half of last, so flake prices are expected to rise less than bale in the first half of this year.

### Polyolefins

A common theme of *Argus Consulting's* European recycled polyolefin forecast is pressure from virgin polymer prices, which fell during 2025 and are projected to recover only gradually during the forecast period, dampening the typical seasonal increases in prices throughout the recycling value chain. This is particularly true of the rPP market, in which substantial seasonal rises seen in the first half of 2024 and 2025 are forecast to be flatter in 2026. Virgin PP homopolymer spot prices – which were still assessed below €900/t (\$1,000/t) on 30 January – make it more difficult for recyclers to pass on higher prices to their customers. A significant portion of the seasonal demand increase for rPP comes from the plant pot and horticulture market, which is traditionally seen as one where buyers mainly use recycled material to save money.

The forecast for flexible PE grades in Europe and Asia-Pacific is affected by upcoming restrictions on EU PE film waste exports under the Waste Shipment Regulation, particularly to non-OECD countries. The restrictions are expected to raise feedstock availability in the EU and cut significantly into the availability waste PE to southeast Asian recyclers.

*The Argus Recycled Polymers Outlook is produced by Argus Consulting and contains more detail on these trends, including price forecast data for bale and resin and a round-up of legislation changes in Europe, the US and Asia-Pacific. It is available as an add-on to the Argus Recycled Polymers subscription.*

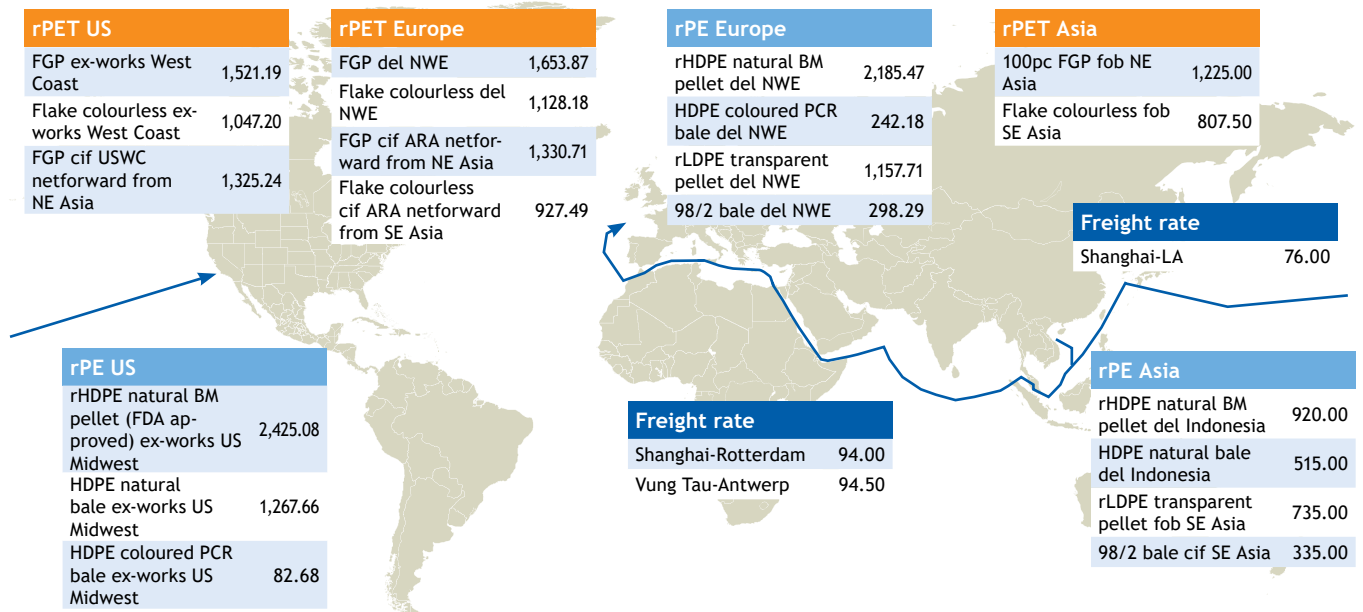
## CONTENTS

Argus Recycled Polymers Outlook	1
Regional market commentaries	2-10
rHDPE BM pressure in Europe	11
EU votes on mass balance	12
News	14-17
Mechanical recycling	14
Chemical recycling	14
Legislation/associations	16
News in brief	18



GLOBAL PRICES

\$/t



COMMENTARY HEADLINES

- rPET Europe: Prices hold mostly steady
- rPET US: Prices steady
- rPET Asia: China domestic market quickens
- rPE/rPP Europe: rHDPE white, natural prices slide
- rPE/rPP US: HDPE, PP bale prices hold steady
- rPE Asia: Prices stable amid subdued demand
- EU members vote on mass balance
- rPVC Europe: Prices unmoved in quiet market
- Petrochemical markets

NEWS HEADLINES

- 3 Austrian PET recycler reaches record volumes 14
- 4 WM recycling margins rise despite lower prices 14
- 4 China's BoReTech opens recycling subsidiary in India 14
- 6 Cirttec's Netherlands tyre pyrolysis plant starts up 14
- 7 Pyrolysis feedstock project receives Dutch subsidy 15
- 8 German waste-sorting plant offline after fire 15
- 8 Aduro selects Geleen for 10kt chemical recycling site 15
- 9 Eastman raises rPET output 15
- 9 Japan's Sumitomo starts PMMA recycling licensing 16
- California to tighten plastics packaging law 16
- US PP cups gain recyclable status 16
- California settles on plastic bag claims 17

MARKETS UPDATE – rPET – EUROPE

Europe rPET prices hold mostly steady

Most European rPET prices were stable in the first week of February and market activity remained steady, with more inquiries but limited trading volumes in the low season. Buyers are waiting for more clarity on the overall demand outlook for the peak packaging season and are still assessing market prices and business requirements.

Bale prices across the European region were largely stable this week. Offers below €300/t delivered have started to recede, and most material is trading around €330/t. Some higher offers for DRS material are up to the early €400s.

Italian bale auction prices for February ranged between €495-550/t for clear material, €275-280/t for light blue, and €190-220/t for mixed colour. The range for clear material is not representative of the market, market participants said. Some Italian recyclers are focusing on processing light-blue and mixed-colour material because prices for clear material are too high considering current flake pricing, they said.

The UK bale price range widened this week. Deals were completed up to £250/t delivered as market participants reported more interest in material for export to Turkey.

Flake and food-grade prices are mostly steady. The high end of the flake ranges fell slightly because of lower offers in the market. Prices for flake have now bottomed out, most recyclers said, but Spanish recyclers may lower prices to take advantage of low to negative bale prices in the first quarter. Some sellers are offering food-grade pellets as low as €1,300/t delivered to incentivise purchases and move volumes quickly.

Demand remains steady but in a seasonal lull currently. Recyclers are hopeful that demand will be stimulated as the peak packaging consumption season approaches, because inventories have been drawn down over recent weeks. The delta between flake and virgin PET (vPET) remains below €100/t, and sellers hope this will also help demand pick up. Current European vPET resin spot prices are between €860-940/t delivered.

Tray pricing

Prices for rPET tray bales and flakes dipped in January, with pressure from bottle rPET and virgin PET pushing prices lower. Sheet producers are likely to buy bottle bales or flake for recycled uses, prioritising the most economically efficient and more consistent quality material. Clear tray flake prices dipped by €50/t to a range of €800-900/t, with some market participants losing offtake from brand owners who preferred cheaper virgin PET material while others saw interest cool from customers. The higher end of gate fees

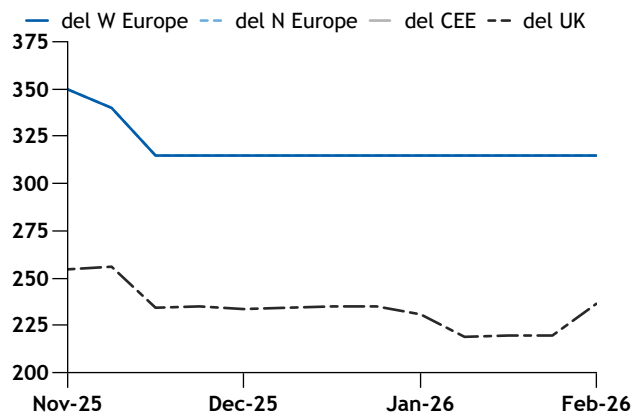
Recycled PET Europe bottle market prices						€/t
	Timing	Low	High	Midpoint	Δ	
<b>Bale prices</b>						
PET bottle colourless, del W Europe	6-Feb	280.00	350.00	315.00	nc	
PET bottle colourless, del N Europe	6-Feb	280.00	350.00	315.00	nc	
PET bottle colourless, del UK £/t	6-Feb	160.00	250.00	205.00	+15.00	
PET bottle colourless, del central Europe	6-Feb	300.00	350.00	325.00	nc	
PET bottle colourless, del eastern Europe	6-Feb	280.00	350.00	315.00	nc	
PET bottle colourless, yellow container, del Spain	1Q26	-250.00	83.00	-83.50	nc	
<b>Flake prices</b>						
Bottle flake colourless, del NWE	6-Feb	920.00	990.00	955.00	-5.00	
Bottle flake colourless, del S Europe	6-Feb	900.00	990.00	945.00	nc	
Bottle flake colourless, del CEE	6-Feb	920.00	990.00	955.00	-5.00	
Bottle flake colourless, del UK £/t	6-Feb	800.00	850.00	825.00	nc	
<b>Food grade pellet</b>						
del NWE	6-Feb	1,350.00	1,450.00	1,400.00	nc	
del S Europe	6-Feb	1,340.00	1,450.00	1,395.00	nc	
del CEE	6-Feb	1,330.00	1,450.00	1,390.00	nc	

Recycled PET Europe tray market prices						€/t
	Timing	Low	High	Midpoint	Δ	
<b>Bale prices</b>						
Monolayer colourless, del W Europe	30-Jan	-30.00	30.00	0.00	-10.00	
Multilayer colourless, del W Europe	30-Jan	-250.00	-150.00	-200.00	-10.00	
<b>Flake price</b>						
Colourless, del W Europe	30-Jan	800.00	900.00	850.00	-50.00	

for both monolayer and multilayer clear bales fell by €20/t. A recycler in northern Europe was reportedly sending a few multilayer bales to customers as test loads.

PET bottle bale prices Europe

€/t



## MARKETS UPDATE – rPET – AMERICAS

### US rPET prices steady

West coast A-grade and B-grade bale prices held steady at 12.50¢/lb and 3¢/lb, respectively, this week, reflecting stable demand. Mexican buyers are less active in the market so far this year, than at the same time in 2025 when strong demand from Mexico drove sharp increases in PET bale prices.

East coast PET bale prices remain unchanged at 7¢/lb in early February, with no meaningful change in the supply/demand balance.

February flake and pellet prices for rPET on the West Coast remain steady. Domestic recycling capacity has reduced on the year, owing to plant closures. But demand is expected to remain weak throughout the month, consistent with the seasonal norm before on-the-go beverage consumption picks up in the spring. Conversion capacity has tightened slightly as certain wash-plant operations move toward rationalization.

Many buyers remain cautious, monitoring price levels but limiting purchases given recent volatility and the steep declines seen through Q4. The market expects some upward movement later in the year, but demand is still too weak to support meaningful near-term increases with virgin prices steady and no clear compliance pathway yet driving mandatory PCR procurement.

Additional rPET capacity overseas particularly in India and southeast Asia is creating pressure for exporters to

Recycled PET US weekly market prices						ex-works
	Timing	Currency	Low	High	Midpoint	Δ
<b>Weekly</b>						
PET bottle bale						
A grade US west coast	6-Feb	¢/lb	11.00	14.00	12.50	nc
		\$/t	242.51	308.65	275.58	nc
PET bottle bale						
B grade US west coast	6-Feb	¢/lb	2.50	3.50	3.00	nc
		\$/t	55.12	77.16	66.14	nc
PET bottle bale						
US east coast	6-Feb	¢/lb	5.00	9.00	7.00	nc
		\$/t	110.23	198.42	154.33	nc

Recycled PET US monthly market prices						ex-works
	Timing	Currency	Low	High	Midpoint	Δ
<b>Monthly</b>						
rPET flake colourless US west coast	Feb 2026	¢/lb	45.00	50.00	47.50	nc
		\$/t	992.08	1,102.31	1,047.20	nc
rPET pellet US west coast	Feb 2026	¢/lb	66.00	72.00	69.00	nc
		\$/t	1,455.05	1,587.33	1,521.19	nc

place higher volumes into the US, which could weigh on prices. But logistics will be impacted in the near term by the lunar new year holiday which begins in China and Taiwan on 16 February.

## MARKETS UPDATE – rPET – ASIA-PACIFIC

### China domestic market quickens

Rising virgin PET prices and limited feedstock supply supported higher prices in the Chinese domestic rPET market this week, but export demand throughout the Asia-Pacific region remained slow.

In northeast Asia, the Chinese domestic rPET flake market picked up, supported by higher virgin PET resin prices. In addition to rising demand, some recyclers expect prices to rise further in late February and March, leading them to hold onto stock until after the lunar new year holiday which will take from on 16-20 February. A limited supply of PET bales and low inventories of bales and flakes also supported prices.

Selling indications for premium-grade rPET flakes for fiber application rose to 5,500-5,600 yuan/t, and deals concluded at 5,350-5,500 yuan/t. Offers for rPET flakes for beverage-packaging application rose to 5,900-6,000yuan/t, and deals concluded at 5,700-5,900 yuan/t.

Bale prices also rose recently, with deals in east and south China increasing to 4,100-4,200 yuan/t, around 100 yuan/t higher than in January, Chinese recyclers said.

The business environment for exports from northeast Asia was more challenging. Chinese mainland producers maintained offers for 100pc rPET pellet at \$1,220-1,250/t fob China, but failed to conclude deals with major beverage companies because of weak demand. A handful of small deals concluded at \$1,180-1,200/t fob.

Demand for exports from Taiwan was also weak. Some US consumers enquired about March shipments, recyclers said, but negotiations were not firm as it remains unclear when the reduced 15pc tariff rate that the US announced on imports from Taiwan in January may take effect.

Notional selling indications for 100pc rPET pellet held steady at \$1,220-1,280/t fob and discussion levels were \$1,200-1,270/t fob. Only a handful of small deals were concluded during the week, a rPET producer said.

**MARKETS UPDATE – rPET – ASIA-PACIFIC**

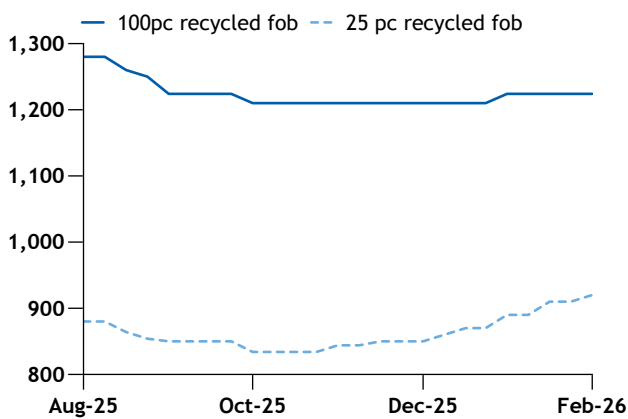
The assessment for 25pc rPET pellet rose to \$900-940/t fob China, tracking firmer virgin PET resin prices.

In southeast Asia, demand for flake and pellet exports was weak, particularly from Europe.

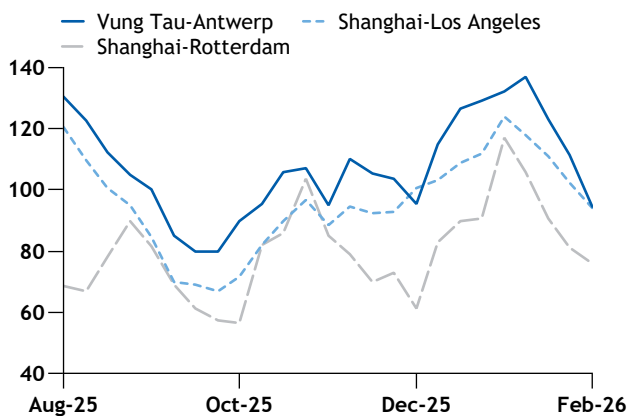
Prices for bales and mixed-colour flakes were stable, although the upper end of the price range for colourless flake rose by \$40/t to \$835/t fob southeast Asia, in line with a deal done to a UK buyer this week. The low end of the price range was stable at \$780/t in line with offers from Indonesia.

Prices for rPET pellets fob Southeast Asia were unchanged at \$1,100-1,200/t this week. A deal were heard this week at \$1,150/t fob Vietnam.

**rPET food grade pellet prices NE Asia**



**Container freight rates**



**Recycled PET Asia-Pacific market prices**

	Timing	Currency	Low	High	Midpoint	Δ
<b>North East Asia rPET</b>						
rPET food grade pellets 25pc fob NE Asia	6-Feb	\$/t	900.00	940.00	920.00	+10.00
rPET food grade pellets 100pc fob NE Asia	6-Feb	\$/t	1,180.00	1,270.00	1,225.00	nc
rPET flakes domestic China	6-Feb	Yuan/t	5,350.00	5,900.00	5,625.00	+75.00
<b>South East Asia rPET</b>						
PET bottle bale colourless domestic Indonesia	6-Feb	IDR/kg	7,300.00	8,200.00	7,750.00	nc
		\$/t	430.00	490.00	460.00	nc
PET bottle bale mixed colour domestic Indonesia	6-Feb	IDR/kg	7,100.00	7,100.00	7,100.00	nc
		\$/t	420.00	420.00	420.00	nc
rPET food grade flakes colourless fob southeast Asia	6-Feb	\$/t	780.00	835.00	807.50	+20.00
rPET food grade flakes mixed colour fob southeast Asia	6-Feb	\$/t	765.00	790.00	777.50	nc
rPET pellets fob southeast Asia	6-Feb	\$/t	1,100.00	1,200.00	1,150.00	nc

**Calculated rPET netforwards**

	Timing	Low	High	Midpoint	Δ
rPET food grade pellet cif USWC - netforward from NE Asia \$/t (20t/FEU)	6-Feb	1,266.63	1,383.85	1,325.24	nc
rPET food grade pellet cif ARA - netforward from NE Asia \$/t (24t/FEU)	6-Feb	1,279.00	1,382.41	1,330.71	nc
€/t	6-Feb	1,084.72	1,172.42	1,128.57	+13.31
rPET flake cif ARA - netforward from SE Asia \$/t (23t/FEU)	6-Feb	892.99	961.98	927.49	+20.00
€/t	6-Feb	757.34	815.86	786.60	+26.04

Container freight rates					\$/t
Route	Low	High	Midpoint	Source	
Shanghai-Los Angeles	71.00	81.00	76.00	Freightos	
Shanghai-Rotterdam	87.00	101.00	94.00	Freightos	
Vung Tau-Antwerp	89.00	100.00	94.50	Freightos	

\*Freight rates used in net forward calculations are adjusted for the specified shipment size per FEU



Argus freight rates are as of the day of publication. Rates derived from Freightos data are of the previous day. Selected polymer spot freight rates are calculated by Argus methodology, based on underlying data from the online freight marketplace, Freightos. Visit [www.freightos.com](http://www.freightos.com) for complete lists of \$/FEU rates in the wider spot container market.

## MARKETS UPDATE – RPE/RPP – EUROPE

### rHDPE white, natural prices slide

Prices for rHDPE BM packaging-grade pellets came under further pressure in late January, and export demand increased for northwest European 98/2 flexible PE and UK HDPE natural bales.

Prices for rHDPE BM white and natural grades fell again in January on average, having already dropped in the fourth quarter of 2025. The high-low ranges for both products also widened. Prices for established business have steadier than for new business, with recyclers finding that they had to offer lower prices in some cases to secure additional volumes amid greater supply competition.

In addition to new capacity ramping up or soon to start, many recyclers have looked to produce more white and natural grades at existing plants because of persistently weak demand for darker-coloured regranulates from the packaging and construction markets. Meanwhile, demand is expected to be flat in 2026, compared with 2025. Packaging manufacturers appear to have little urgency to increase recycled content so far before the 2030 PPWR deadline. Premiums for rHDPE BM grades over virgin HDPE also rose last year as virgin prices fell, climbing to well over €1,000/t for rHDPE BM natural by late summer-early autumn, which buyers looked to challenge in new agreements with more supply options available.

Other prices in the rHDPE and rPP supply chains were stable in the past two weeks. Particularly cold weather in northwest Europe in January further limited the already-slow pipe market. Plant pot producers are beginning to prepare stocks for the peak season, but the impact on rPP pellet sales has been fairly muted so far. Workable offers for PP bale from the UK have reappeared in Belgium and the Netherlands – which have very cheap freight costs from Britain – in the past two weeks. UK PP bales have been too expensive for mainland European recyclers to consider in recent months, even given the higher yield compared with local material. But a rise in PERN prices this week – in pre-sale agreements as the new system for logging and generating PRN/PERNs is not yet running – has helped to reopen the arbitrage.

Higher PRN/PERN values had little no impact on delivered UK HDPE mixed-colour and 98/2 PE film bales this week. Prices for HDPE natural bales rose to £700-770/t del UK, from £660-750/t, because of the rise in PRN prices and an increase in buying interest for UK bales from the US market.

In the flexible PE market, exports have resumed to Turkey, where many buyers have now received 2026 import

Europe recycled polyolefins					
	Timing	Low	High	Midpoint	Δ
<b>Bales del NWE (€/t)</b>					
HDPE rigid bale (D329 or equivalent)	6-Feb	180.00	230.00	205.00	nc
PP rigid bale PCR (D324 or equivalent)	6-Feb	70.00	140.00	105.00	nc
Shrink hood flexible PE bale	6-Feb	700.00	730.00	715.00	nc
98/2 flexible PE bale post-commercial	6-Feb	225.00	280.00	252.50	+2.50
80/20 flexible PE bale post-commercial	6-Feb	75.00	115.00	95.00	+5.00
Mixed colour flexible PE bale post-commercial	6-Feb	45.00	60.00	52.50	+15.00
Kerbside flexible bale (D310)	2-Jan	-200.00	-170.00	-185.00	-30.00
Mixed plastic waste (D350 fraction) del German incinerator*	6-Feb	-185.00	-150.00	-167.50	nc
<b>Bales del UK (£/t)</b>					
HDPE natural PCR bale	6-Feb	700.00	770.00	735.00	+30.00
HDPE coloured PCR bale	6-Feb	370.00	410.00	390.00	nc
PP PCR bale	6-Feb	400.00	450.00	425.00	nc
98/2 flexible PE bale post-commercial	6-Feb	390.00	420.00	405.00	nc
<b>Regrind del NWE (€/t)</b>					
HDPE regrind mixed colour household packaging	6-Feb	520.00	550.00	535.00	nc
PP regrind mixed colour household packaging	6-Feb	510.00	570.00	540.00	+5.00
<b>Regranulate prices del NWE (€/t)</b>					
rHDPE BM white, from PCR, deodorised	6-Feb	1,450.00	1,750.00	1,600.00	nc
rHDPE BM natural from PCR deodorised del NWE	6-Feb	1,650.00	2,050.00	1,850.00	nc
rHDPE pipe dark/black	6-Feb	640.00	780.00	710.00	nc
rPP light, packaging, deodorised	6-Feb	1,550.00	1,800.00	1,675.00	nc
rPP grey, high MFI, plant pot and bucket	6-Feb	740.00	855.00	797.50	nc
rPP IM dark/black	6-Feb	710.00	840.00	775.00	nc
rLDPE/LLDPE shrink film transparent	6-Feb	1,250.00	1,320.00	1,285.00	nc
rLDPE/LLDPE stretch film transparent	6-Feb	1,060.00	1,160.00	1,110.00	nc
rLDPE/LLDPE standard film transparent	6-Feb	930.00	1,030.00	980.00	nc
rLDPE/LLDPE standard film dark/black	6-Feb	650.00	730.00	690.00	nc

\*Prices are negative when payment is made to the recipient to take the material

licences. Prices for mixed colour and 80/20 bales rose to €45-60/t and €75-115/t del NWE, respectively, as a result. Turkish recyclers typically focus on less-transparent bale grades, but some have also shown interest in buying 98/2 bales from Europe at the current price level. This may be a factor in price increases at the low end of the market this week, together with some exporters raising their buying prices in anticipation that the market will climb as and when exports to Indonesia can restart. Indonesian buyers could be granted new licences in the next two weeks, several

**MARKETS UPDATE – RPE/RPP – EUROPE**

participants said, although after multiple delays this remains uncertain.

Several exporters raised their purchase prices for 98/2 by €10-15/t to €230-240/t del NWE to secure more material, although others were more cautious and lower prices were

also reported. European recyclers’ purchase prices were stable in a range of €240-280/t delivered for standard 98/2 bales, with some higher prices reported for bales with specific composition. We raised our assessment range for 98/2 bale to €225-280/t, up by €5/t at the lower end.

**MARKETS UPDATE – RPE/RPP – AMERICAS**

**HDPE, PP bale prices hold steady**

Natural HDPE bale prices remained steady at 57.50¢/lb in early February, reflecting weak downstream demand and limited shifts in material flow.

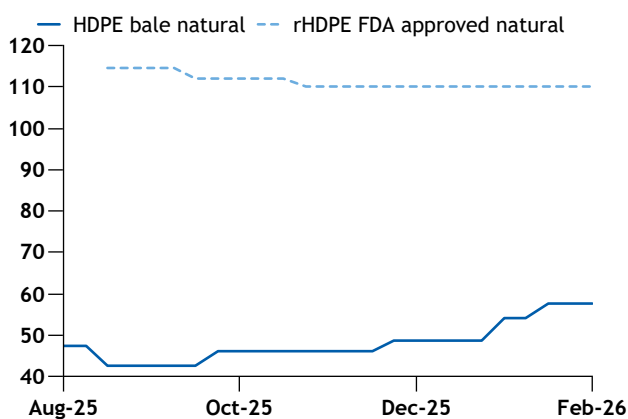
Natural HDPE bale prices are viewed as being at an appropriate premium given the material’s quality, and market participants see little justification for any further rise while downstream demand remains soft.

Mixed-color bale prices were steady at around 3.75¢/lb, with expectations for prices to move higher by the end of February.

Pellet prices for rHDPE natural FDA remained unchanged at 110¢/lb in negotiations for February supply. While bale prices had risen earlier in the year, those increases have not yet been passed through to the pellet prices, with sources suggested there is typically a 60-day lag. Prices for rHDPE color non-FDA and rHDPE black held steady at 47.50¢/lb and 35.5¢/lb, respectively, in line with stable feedstock prices during January.

PP bale prices held steady at 6.50¢/lb, and rPP pellet prices were also stable heading into February. Demand remains weak following months of persistent oversupply, although there may be some seasonal increases in the near term, including from higher paint can production as manufacturers prepare for more demand from the home improvement market in the spring.

**HDPE bale, rHDPE regragate US Midwest ¢/lb**



Recycled polyolefins US Midwest weekly market prices						
	Timing	Currency	Low	High	Midpoint	Δ
<b>Weekly</b>						
HDPE natural PCR bottle bale	6 -Feb	¢/lb	55.00	60.00	57.50	nc
		\$/t	1,212.54	1,322.77	1,267.66	nc
HDPE coloured PCR bottle bale	6 -Feb	¢/lb	2.50	5.00	3.75	nc
		\$/t	55.12	110.23	82.68	nc
PP PCR bale	6 -Feb	¢/lb	5.00	8.00	6.50	nc
		\$/t	110.23	176.37	143.30	nc

Recycled polyolefins US Midwest monthly market prices						
	Timing	Currency	Low	High	Midpoint	Δ
<b>Monthly</b>						
rHDPE BM natural, FDA approved	Feb 2026	¢/lb	105.00	115.00	110.00	nc
		\$/t	2,314.85	2,535.31	2,425.08	nc
rHDPE BM light grey, non-FDA approved	Feb 2026	¢/lb	45.00	50.00	47.50	nc
		\$/t	992.08	1,102.31	1,047.20	nc
rHDPE dark/black general purpose	Feb 2026	¢/lb	33.00	38.00	35.50	nc
		\$/t	727.52	837.76	782.64	nc
rPP light grey, FDA approved	Feb 2026	¢/lb	75.00	80.00	77.50	nc
		\$/t	1,653.47	1,763.70	1,708.59	nc
rPP light grey, non-FDA approved	Feb 2026	¢/lb	55.00	60.00	57.50	nc
		\$/t	1,212.54	1,322.77	1,267.66	nc
rPP dark/black, general purpose IM	Feb 2026	¢/lb	38.00	43.00	40.50	nc
		\$/t	837.76	947.99	892.88	nc

## MARKETS UPDATE – RPE/RPP – ASIA-PACIFIC

### Prices stable amid subdued demand

Southeast Asian rPE prices remained stable because low virgin PE prices continued to weigh on demand for recyclates.

Indonesian prices for HDPE rigid bales and natural-color rHDPE pellets were stable this week at 8,000-9,500 rupiah/kg and 14,500-18,500 rupiah/kg, respectively.

The 98/2 PE bale cif southeast Asia price was unchanged at \$310-360/t this week. The rLDPE/LLDPE transparent pellet fob southeast Asia was unchanged at \$670-800/t this week.

Trading activity for rHDPE was limited in the Chinese domestic market because of weak downstream demand. Some consumers left the market and cargo deliveries slowed ahead of the lunar new year holiday, recyclers said.

Offers for natural-color rHDPE BM held steady at 10,000-10,500 yuan/t in the Chinese domestic market, and a handful of deals concluded at 9,700-10,200 yuan/t. Selling indications fob China held steady at \$1,250-1,300/t. Deals for small volumes concluded at \$1,170-1,250/t fob.

Recycled polyolefins Asia Pacific market prices						
	Timing	Currency	Low	High	Midpoint	Δ
South East Asia rPE						
HDPE rigid bale PCR domestic Indonesia	6-Feb	IDR/kg	8,000.00	9,500.00	8,750.00	nc
		\$/t	470.00	560.00	515.00	-10.00
98/2 flexible PE bale, post commercial cif SE Asia	6-Feb	\$/t	310.00	360.00	335.00	nc
rHDPE natural, from PCR, domestic Indonesia	6-Feb	IDR/kg	14,500.00	16,500.00	15,500.00	nc
		\$/t	860.00	980.00	920.00	nc
rLDPE/LLDPE standard film, transparent. fob southeast Asia	6-Feb	\$/t	670.00	800.00	735.00	nc
North East Asia rPE						
rHDPE BM natural colour from PCR, food contact, fob China	6-Feb	\$/t	1,170.00	1,250.00	1,210.00	nc

## SUSTAINABLE FEEDSTOCKS

### EU members vote on mass balance

The spot market for plastic-derived pyrolysis oil (PPO) and circular naphtha remained inactive in the past two weeks.

Plentiful stocks of recycled credits and a lack of incremental demand for circular polymers continued to discourage European polymer producers from making firm bids to secure new circular feedstocks. We notionally lowered our assessed range for light fraction PPO to €1,280-1,450/t, from €1,310-1,490/t, on 30 January. This followed indications from market participants about achievable levels. Premiums for mass balanced circular naphtha – a one-to-one drop-in feedstock with more value than un-upgraded PPO – were indicated in a range around \$1,300/t over fossil naphtha, equating to an outright price of around €1,550/t on a cif northwest Europe basis.

EU member states [voted on 6 February](#) in favour of an update to the implementing decision under the Single Use Plastics Directive (SUPD), including rules for attributing chemically recycled content. The final text has not yet been published, but there are no reports yet of significant changes to the mass balance rules in the draft [leaked in early January](#). Many industry participants expect the rules agreed for the SUPD to set a precedent for establishing mass balance attribution rules for the more wide-ranging recycled

Advanced Recycling/Bio-feedstocks						
	Timing	Currency	Low	High	Midpoint	Δ
Europe						
Pyrolysis oil plastic-derived refinery grade fca Europe	6-Feb	€/t	1,140.00	1,310.00	1,225.00	nc
Pyrolysis oil plastic-derived light fraction fca Europe	6-Feb	€/t	1,280.00	1,450.00	1,365.00	nc
Circular naphtha premium	6-Feb	\$/t	1,275.00	1,325.00	1,300.00	nc
Bionaphtha chemical feedstock UCO-based fob ARA Asia-Pacific	6-Feb	\$/t	1,755.00	1,765.00	1,760.00	+10.00
Bionaphtha cfr Northeast Asia	Feb 2026	\$/t	1,925.00	1,945.00	1,935.00	+100.00

content requirements that are set to apply in the EU from 2030 under the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR). Market participants hope that acceptance of mass balance under the SUPD improves confidence in the market and can stimulate downstream demand as well as upstream investment in the near term.

Following consultation, Argus has updated its bionaphtha fob ARA range methodology to better capture the grow-

## SUSTAINABLE FEEDSTOCKS

ing price difference between bionaphtha used in voluntary applications – such as chemical market feedstock – and bionaphtha supplied into mandated markets. By Friday, the premium for UCO based bionaphtha fob ARA over fossil naphtha had eased to around \$1,600/t, while the newly launched bionaphtha fob ARA (chemicals feedstock) premium was assessed at roughly \$1,200/t. Both premiums weakened recently because of softer demand in the ARA region, which reflects typical winter reductions in gasoline consumption and the start of a new compliance year, when obligated parties are generally under less pressure to secure compliance volumes early.

### RPVC EUROPE

#### Prices unmoved in quiet market

Little has changed in the European recycled PVC (rPVC) landscape in the last month, and prices were unchanged in the UK and northwest Europe between January and February.

With ample rPVC available in the market, prices tracking largely alongside costs, and underlying demand at a low ebb, there is little expectation of big price changes in the recycling market in the near term.

Cold and wet weather in Europe during January limited construction activity, dampening rPVC demand. This is on top of long-term weakness in the construction sector, with the eurozone construction PMI falling to 45.3 in January, down from 47.7. The index has been in contraction territory below 50 now for nearly four years. Germany fell back heavily to 44.7, having briefly risen above 50 in December, while UK construction output recovered from a five-and-a-half year low of 40.1 in December, but remained in recession at 46.4.

The virgin PVC market is also showing only limited price changes, meaning no significant improvement in the cost comparison between recycled and virgin material. Virgin PVC contract prices fell by €10-15/t in January, although a €15/t increase in the February ethylene monthly contract price (MCP). Virgin PVC spot prices have ticked up slightly in recent weeks, mainly attributed to China's upcoming removal of 13pc VAT rebates on PVC exports.

Argus' assessment of the spot import price for sPVC was €710-740/t on a cif basis on 30 January, equivalent to a delivered price of high €700's or low €800's depending upon duties and transport costs. This means that rPVC micronised powder still offers a cost advantage at €600-700/t ex-works – particularly once the need for additives to the virgin PVC is taken into account – but white rPVC pellets at €1,030-1,180/t ex-works remain at a premium.

In northeast Asia, the premium for UCO-based biopropane over conventional propane was steady at around \$850/t by the beginning of February, with some premiums in the Scandinavian market reported at higher levels.

Bionaphtha delivered to northeast Asia declined by \$30/t from a fortnight ago to \$1,875/t cfr, as participants reported lower indicative premiums over Japanese fossil naphtha in the chemicals sector.

Hong Kong-based biofuels producer EcoCeres said it has exported the first bionaphtha produced at its 420,000 t/yr biofuels facility in Johor, Malaysia, to South Korean chemical company LG Chem.

Recycled PVC Europe market prices					
	Timing	Low	High	Midpoint	Δ
<b>ex-works NWE (€/t)</b>					
rPVC regrind white ex-works NWE	6-Feb	580.00	680.00	630.00	nc
rPVC regrind mixed colour ex-works NWE	6-Feb	405.00	500.00	452.50	nc
rPVC pellet white ex-works NWE	6-Feb	1,030.00	1,180.00	1,105.00	nc
rPVC micronised powder mixed colour ex-works NWE	6-Feb	600.00	700.00	650.00	nc
<b>ex-works UK (£/t)</b>					
rPVC regrind white ex-works UK	6-Feb	500.00	550.00	525.00	nc
rPVC regrind mixed colour ex-works UK	6-Feb	350.00	400.00	375.00	nc
rPVC pellet white ex-works UK	6-Feb	850.00	950.00	900.00	nc
rPVC micronised powder mixed colour ex-works UK	6-Feb	600.00	650.00	625.00	nc
<b>Virgin PVC (€/t)</b>					
S-PVC pipe del NWE final month 1	Jan 2026	-	-	977.50	-12.50

#### Argus Chemicals coverage

Please see Argus' global olefins, polymers and aromatics reports for more prices, commentary, news and analysis from the petrochemicals markets. Visit [www.argusmedia.com/chemicals](http://www.argusmedia.com/chemicals) to find out more

**PETROCHEMICAL MARKETS**

**Europe**

February’s European ethylene and propylene monthly contract prices were settled with €15/t increases from January.

Based on early indications, PE producers will individually aim to increase PE contract prices by similar or larger amounts in freely-negotiated deals this month. No clear picture of demand has emerged for the month, but sellers are likely to be in a stronger position in the LDPE market, which is the most tightly supplied and least exposed to imports.

Sellers’ February contract price targets may be slightly more modest in the PP market, although early indications are that they will aim to move at least in line with the propylene increase to defend margins.

PE spot prices were assessed stable this week in north-west Europe, while PP homopolymer spot prices rose by €25/t, on the back of a rise in Middle East export prices.

European PET resin spot prices widened to €860- 940/t, with some lower offers heard last week. Demand for PET resin remains seasonally steady but low, and inventories across the value chain are well stocked.

**Americas**

Extra downtime caused by recent winter storms, as well as some supply tightness for certain grades resulted in some increases in US/Canada PE and PP. Despite the outages, spot availability was still ample enough to meet most customers’ needs for now. Supplies of HDPE high molecular weight film and LDPE grades were tight.

After January contracts in the US PP market settled up tracking the increase in January polymer grade propylene (PGP) contracts, market participants are eyeing another possible increase for February, with PGP spot prices continuing to inch higher. Spot PP supply, while not tight, is tighter than at the beginning of the year, as some plants were slow to restart following earlier production issues.

US PET resin contract prices remained steady for January. The US and Canada PET Pre-sales for February strengthened after a delayed start in demand for PET resin in January according to a source.

**Asia Pacific**

Chinese LLDPE prices in the Dalian Commodity Exchange fell by 3 percentage points on 6 February, compared to the closing price on 30 January. Physical PE prices diverged this week.

HDPE film prices continued to increase on shorter overseas supplies, while LLDPE and LDPE prices softened. PE buying interest remained flat this week, with converters closing operations ahead of the Lunar New Year holidays.

Olefin monthly contracts & Polymer spot			
	Timing	Midpoint	Δ
<b>Ethylene contract</b>			
del NWE €/t	Feb 26	1,095.00	+15.00
cfr Taiwan \$/t	Dec 25	777.00	-17.00
Pipeline USGC ¢/lb	Jan 26	30.25	-0.75
<b>Polymer grade propylene (PGP) contract</b>			
del Europe €/t	Feb 26	965.00	+15.00
del Taiwan \$/t	Dec 25	752.00	-10.00
fob US ¢/lb	Jan 26	32.50	nc
<b>HDPE IM spot</b>			
del NWE \$/t	6 -Feb	1,092.50	-6.50
cfr China \$/t*	6 -Feb	780.00	nc
fas Houston bagged \$/t	6 -Feb	860.00	+55.00
<b>Polypropylene spot</b>			
homopolymer del NWE \$/t	6 -Feb	1,033.50	+23.50
raffia cfr China \$/t	6 -Feb	775.00	-5.00
<b>LLDPE butene-1 spot</b>			
del NWE \$/t	6 -Feb	1,092.50	-6.50
fas Houston \$/t	6 -Feb	882.00	+55.00
cfr China \$/t	6 -Feb	785.00	-5.00

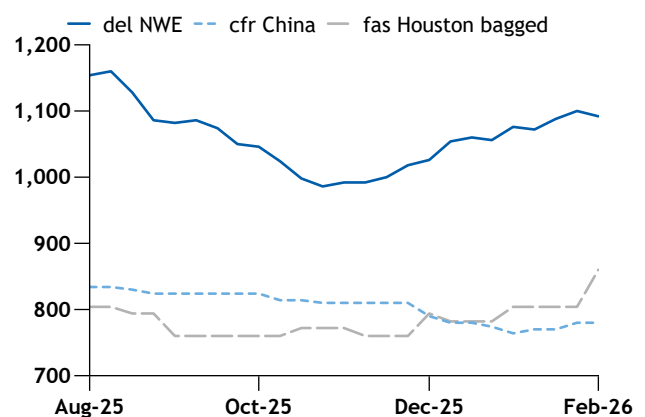
\*Main origin

Chinese PP prices in the Dalian Commodity Exchange fell by 2 percentage points on 6 February, compared to the closing price on 30 January. Physical PP prices diverged this week. PP buying interest remained flat this week, with converters closing operations ahead of the Lunar New Year holidays.

Asia PET resin market edged down amid increased raw material cost. Prices across the polyester industry chain have fluctuated sharply, prompting buyers to adopt a more cautious approach to purchasing. Domestic PET resin trading was limited this week. A series of maintenance plans tightened market availability, which helped limit further price drop.

**HDPE spot**

\$/t



## NEWS AND ANALYSIS

**Lower-cost virgin HDPE will put pressure on recycling margins and lead to a slow uptick in prices, writes Will Collins**

## rHDPE BM under pressure in Europe

Prices for packaging-quality blow moulding-grade rHDPE have fluctuated in the past 3-4 months in Europe, which participants attribute to a lack of urgency from packaging firms to develop new recycled products.

Argus' assessment for rHDPE BM natural-grade material has declined by €150/t, or 7.5pc, since the start of October, based on the midpoint of the range. The price of rHDPE BM white has fallen by €200/t, or 11.1pc, in the same period. In both cases, the range has also widened.

The expanding range reflects the relationship-driven market structure, with customers looking to include material in large volumes in consumer-facing applications favouring trusted suppliers, the quality and consistency of whose material they have taken time to qualify. Recyclers have found it easier to maintain prices for established, regular business, but have found winning new business to be an increasingly price-sensitive exercise.

Brands have not outwardly dropped their commitment to sustainability. But 2026 may be something of a transition year in Europe, between the targets that many laid down for 2025 through the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and the legislative requirements to include more recycled content in the EU that will kick in at the end of the decade under the EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation.

The feeling from the recycling and packaging industries is that volumes are unlikely to change significantly compared with last year, based on annual offtake negotiations in late 2025. And supply competition has increased because existing recyclers are targeting the high-value packaging market, as well as new plants starting up or due to come on line.

New recycling sites aiming to serve the rHDPE packaging market include Jayplas' 20,000 t/yr rigid polyolefin recycling plant in the UK, which has been ramping up since the second half of 2024, and Morssinkhof's 40,000 t/yr rigid polyolefin plant in Lommel, Belgium, which is due to come on line later this year.

The cost comparison with virgin HDPE is likely to be a factor in pushing recycle prices lower. The average premium of rHDPE BM natural to virgin HDPE BM spot prices in Europe was just over €1,000/t in 2025, up from just over €800/t in 2024, owing to decreases in the virgin market during the year. Even after a €75/t recovery in virgin HDPE spot prices over the past 2-3 months, and the decline in rHDPE BM prices, the gap remained at €950/t on 30 January. Europe is a net importer of virgin HDPE, with low-cost production in the US and Middle East typically setting the low end of prices. And with worldwide virgin HDPE capacity still growing, Argus does not expect a significant uptick in global prices over the course of our two-year forecast period.

### Small margins

The reduction in prices will put pressure on recycling margins. Most recyclers that make white/natural rHDPE pellets in Europe also produce darker-coloured grades, because the usual process involves carrying out colour sorting on mixed-colour packaging waste bales. Sales of these darker grades – both into packaging and more traditional cost-saving markets such as construction – have been consistently challenging in recent years, meaning sales of white and natural pellets have supported margins.

Following the price drops, modelled margins for complex recycling processes, which take into account sales of coloured and white/natural pellets, are at their lowest level since the sharp drop in electricity prices in the second half of 2022.

## NEWS AND ANALYSIS

---

*By Chloe Kinner, Will Collins and Dafydd ab Iago*

### EU passes SUPD implementation update

EU member states voted on 6 February in favour of an update to the implementing decision under the Single Use Plastics Directive, including rules for attributing chemically recycled content, Louhane Jacob, a project manager at the French economy and finance ministry, said at the Petcore Europe conference.

Member states voted by majority in favour of the rules. The draft decision clarifies mass balance rules and the inclusion of chemical recycling, and establishes rules for fuel-exempt mass balance, with no reports yet of significant changes compared with the leaked draft that circulated in early January.

The final text has not yet been published. Minor changes are expected to affect how imported recyclates can count towards recycled content targets. The rules in the leaked draft stated that recycled PET (rPET) produced outside the EU market cannot count towards the 25pc recycled content for PET beverage bottles until after 21 November 2027, when imports from OECD countries will be allowed. Sources indicate that the text voted on today clarifies that all steps of the recycling chain are to take place within the EU until this date.

The European Commission will adopt implementing measures without significant delay, and the implementing act will enter into force 20 days after its publication in the EU's Official Journal.

The response from market participants was mixed. Some support the exclusion of imports from counting towards recycled content targets, hoping this will stabilise and secure the European PET recycling market over the next couple of years, protecting the market from cheaper import volumes from countries with lower collection and fixed costs. Others want a level playing field for EU and non-EU recyclers, with fair competition and access to affordable, high-quality and compliant recycled materials to achieve sustainability targets. The decision's impact may be limited because reporting requirements are on EU member states and not companies, some participants said.

"We are happy, because it is a step needed to maintain circularity in Europe. If this was not approved there would be nothing supporting Europe. Some members and brand owners are not happy but Europe needs a reality check with what is competitiveness. The cost of collection in Europe is so high. There are some countries (outside the EU) that are collecting waste at the cost 10 times lower than the EU. We need to give some time, not forever, for the industry to get balanced," Petcore Europe president Antonello Ciotti said.

The rules will help secure the chemical recycling market in Europe and may stimulate further investment and progress on projects because they are a move towards chemically recycled material counting towards recycled content targets, some market participants said.

"Today is a major step forward for circular plastics because it puts in a clear harmonised mass balance approach for recycled content... this clarity in rules will support investments and further capacity in Europe", Chemical Recycling Europe chairman Valentijn De Neve said.

"The European preference also shows a strong signal that there is support to make this a European competitive market and we look forward to the next steps to use this framework also for the Packaging and Packaging Waste regulation (PPWR)", he said.

Rules for allocating chemically-recycled content by mass balance for the more wide-ranging recycled content requirements in PPWR – due to come into force in

## NEWS AND ANALYSIS

---

2030 – will need to be confirmed independently. But many in the industry expect those agreed under the SUPD to act as a precedent in the decision process.

But non-governmental organisation Zero Waste Europe (ZWE) was much less supportive. “If the main points remain the same, including the same allocation rules with a fuel-use exemption model, we would not be able to support the text,” said Lauriane Veillard, ZWE policy expert on chemicals recycling and plastic-to-fuels.

### Argus Global Polyethylene and Polypropylene

*Argus Global Polyethylene and Polypropylene is a weekly pricing service with global resin prices and detailed commentary on key polymer grades*

#### Key features

- Detailed feedstock information on crude, naphtha, propane, ethane, ethylene and propylene
- Cracker and propane margins analysis
- Global pricing and fundamental information by country and region
- Coverage of Dalian futures market
- Production and outage news
- New plant data
- Buy-side information, including FMCG and packaging news
- Polymer freight assessments

*For more information, visit our webpage:*

[www.argusmedia.com/argus-global-polyethylene](http://www.argusmedia.com/argus-global-polyethylene)

[www.argusmedia.com/argus-global-polypropylene](http://www.argusmedia.com/argus-global-polypropylene)

## NEWS AND ANALYSIS

## Mechanical recycling

### Austrian PET recycler reaches record volumes

PET to PET Recycling Austria recycled a record 34,000t in 2025, a 7pc increase from just over 31,000t in 2024.

Single-use deposit return systems in Hungary, Slovakia and Austria contributed to an initial sharp increase in processing in the first half of 2025, but challenging market conditions and consumer reluctance weighed on the market in the second half of the year.

Despite the positive results in 2025, the PET recycling industry is facing increasingly difficult conditions because of the price difference with virgin PET and cheap imports, the company said.

"An additional problem area is the increasing number of cheap imports of secondary raw materials from non-EU countries," said PET to PET managing director Thomas Billes. "Even though we managed to increase our processing volume in the past financial year, the sales market did not develop to the same extent. Here, we were 3pc behind the 2024 result. This circumstance led to a short-term build-up of inventory."

PET to PET is making further investments in its plant to increase automation and efficiency and expects demand for PET recyclates to rise again in 2026.

By *Chloe Kinner*

### WM recycling margins rise despite lower prices

US-based WM, previously known as Waste Management, strengthened its recycling profitability as automation upgrades at its material recovery facilities (MRFs) offset lower commodity prices.

The company completed automation upgrades at five recycling facilities and added facilities in four new markets in 2025. WM expects to complete four additional recycling projects in 2026. The upgrades are designed to produce higher quality commodities that can sell at a higher price point.

WM's recycling business delivered 22pc higher earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (Ebitda) growth in the fourth quarter, despite a 18pc decrease in prices for recycled material in 2025. The decline in commodity prices over the year had only a minimal effect on margins.

"We're very pleased with the investments we've made," said senior vice president Tara Hemmer, citing higher throughput at the facilities, and a more than 30pc improvement in labor costs.

Prices for recycled commodities declined during the year, falling from \$125/t to about \$70/t by the fourth quarter, and WM expects pricing to hold in the \$60-65/t range

in the near term, the company said. The company expects continued benefits from its technology investments, which have improved visibility into operations and reduced operating costs.

WM does not expect any near-term improvement in plastic pricing. Its automation program has supported high margin performance despite market headwinds.

By *Dona Davis*

### China's BoReTech opens recycling subsidiary in India

Chinese r-PET machinery producer BoReTech Group has opened its Indian subsidiary, BoReTech India, in Pune, Maharashtra, strengthening its commitment to India's fast-growing plastics and recycled polymers sectors.

The new unit expands BoReTech's global footprint and is intended to support rising domestic demand from India for polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottle washing lines, fibre production systems and turnkey engineering services, according to an official statement released on 2 February.

BoReTech first entered the Indian market in 2007 with the installation of its initial PET bottle-washing line. By end-2025, the company had delivered 76 washing lines and 14 fibre production lines, all of which remain in stable operation.

The Pune subsidiary will focus on local manufacturing and delivery, engineering, procurement and construction (EPC), and engineering capabilities, and a reliable spare-parts and after-sales service network, with the aim of reducing delivery times and improving service responsiveness for Indian recyclers.

BoReTech said the establishment of the subsidiary reflects its strategy to deepen its local presence, strengthen supply-chain capabilities and support customers amid global market shifts.

By *Sihan Long*

## Chemical recycling

### Circtec's Netherlands tyre pyrolysis plant starts up

Tyre pyrolysis developer Circtec has completed construction and commissioning of the first phase of its end-of-life tyre recycling plant in Delfzijl, the Netherlands.

The announcement comes after investment in the project was [raised in May 2024](#).

The plant's first phase has a capacity of 50,000 t/yr of end-of-life tyres. Circtec plans to start the second phase later in 2026, lifting total capacity to 200,000 t/yr. Once fully operational, the facility will process about 6pc of European waste tyres each year, the company said.

Circtec will use the site to produce its HUPA-branded renewable marine fuel and circular naphtha for petrochemi-

## NEWS AND ANALYSIS

cal feedstock. Tyre pyrolysis oil from the plant will also be used to make recovered carbon black for tyre and rubber production, and can be supplied as feedstock to petrochemical plants and refineries, the company said.

Circtec has offtake agreements with Birla Carbon for recovered carbon black and with BP for HUPA, circular naphtha and tyre pyrolysis oil.

“By partnering with Circtec, BP can help scale advanced circular feedstocks and biofuels, creating real impact for industry and transport in the Netherlands and beyond,” said head of BP Netherlands Corne Boot.

*By Sebastian du Plessis*

### Pyrolysis feedstock project receives Dutch subsidy

A consortium planning to develop chemical recycling solutions for plastic waste has received a €1.5mn (\$1.77mn) subsidy from the Dutch government for its Project Clean initiative, which aims to improve the management of unwanted plastics in pyrolysis feedstock.

Project Clean – a four-year research programme – aims to design and develop low-temperature absorbents and catalysts to dewater and decontaminate plastic waste, with a particular focus on polyolefin films for recycling by pyrolysis, partner BlueAlp said. Other partners in the venture comprise waste firm Renewi, Utrecht University and Shell, which operates a pyrolysis oil hydrotreater in Rotterdam.

Unwanted components in plastic waste that cannot be processed by pyrolysis are a “key bottleneck” in the supply chain, BlueAlp said. The challenge is to combine new technologies and identify the most effective points in the value chain to remove these materials, the firm said.

Feedstock supply systems for pyrolysis have expanded across Europe in recent years. Pyrolysis plants typically require very high concentrations of polyolefins and only low single-digit percentages of PET and PVC in their infeed material. Projects aimed at supplying feedstock include new sorting centres such as the OMV/Interzero joint venture in Wallduern, Germany, and Source One – a joint venture between LyondellBasell and 23 Oaks Investments.

*By Will Collins*

### German waste-sorting plant offline after fire, restart unclear

Operations at the Source One Plastics waste-sorting plant in Eicklingen, northern Germany, remain suspended after a fire on 27 January. The timeline for a restart is unclear as investigations and impact assessments continue.

“An investigation will be conducted to determine what happened and why, with the aim of preventing a similar situation in the future,” joint-venture partner LyondellBasell said. “We are in close contact with Source One Plastics and are supporting them. In addition, an assessment of the

impact of the fire is currently underway”.

The fire broke out at the 70,000 t/yr sorting centre on the morning of 27 January. The plant, a joint venture between LyondellBasell and 23 Oaks Investments, supplies feedstock for chemical recycling plants, including LyondellBasell’s MoReTech pyrolysis unit. MoReTech is under construction in Wesseling, western Germany, and will rely on material from sorting plants once operational.

The fire was contained and extinguished with assistance from the local fire department, LyondellBasell said. All personnel are safe and accounted for.

*By Will Collins*

### Aduro selects Geleen for 10kt chemical recycling site

Canadian chemical recycler Aduro has selected a site in Geleen, the Netherlands, to build its first industrial chemical recycling plant.

The facility will have an initial processing capacity of roughly 10,000 t/yr, and Aduro expects to begin operations by early 2027.

The site will be the first of its kind, Aduro said, because it will use what it is calling “hydrochemolytic technology”, as opposed to more conventional pyrolysis technology for chemical recycling. Aduro’s technology can use polyethylene, polystyrene and polypropylene waste as an input to produce circular naphtha-cracker feedstock. The water-based technology is able to use plastic waste that has higher contamination than other processes and can take place at lower temperatures, the firm said.

Oil produced in trial runs at a pilot site in Ontario, Canada, was “processed in a pilot-scale steam-cracking furnace as-produced, without dilution or further pre-treatment, under various operating conditions compared to other circular feedstocks that can be fed into steam crackers”, it said, representing an “important third-party validation milestone”.

The Chemelot site in Geleen had been selected because it is already an “established site for steam cracking and downstream polymer production,” and northwest Europe was selected regionally due to its “established waste management infrastructure, concentration of downstream industrial partners and end markets, and evolving regulation supporting circular materials.”

In November 2022, Aduro received funding from Shell as part of its start-up accelerator programme. As of December 2025, Aduro had graduated from the programme, stating formal engagement had concluded at that stage.

*By George Barsted*

### Eastman raises rPET output

US recycling company Eastman’s Kingsport, Tennessee, molecular recycling facility had its strongest year for chemical recycling in 2025, producing more than 2.5 times the amount

## NEWS AND ANALYSIS

of recycled content that it produced in 2024.

The Kingsport facility generated approximately \$60mn in incremental earnings in 2025 compared with 2024, as chemically recycled materials saw increased use from major brands including Pepsi.

Eastman expects that momentum to continue into 2026 and projects about \$39mn in additional circular economy earnings as rPET contract volumes increase and demand for chemically recycled content strengthens.

“We are really the long-term solution to chemical recycling,” said Mark Costa, board chair and chief executive officer. He added that mechanical recycling yields remain low because the process only cleans 25-35pc of clear bottles.

Mechanical rPET degrades faster than expected, causing yellowing, graying, and even structural issues such as bottle collapse during case stacking, the company said.

Eastman plans to expand the Kingsport facility’s production capacity by 130pc to increase supply growth while development of a second chemical plant remains paused.

The second facility is on hold following the loss of a US Department of Energy grant in June 2025. However, the Kingsport expansion and improved efficiency will allow Eastman to continue scaling chemical recycling production while maintaining strong cash flow. The company generated nearly \$1bn in operation cash flow in 2025, reinforcing its ability to continue investing in circular technology despite market uncertainty.

By *Dona Davis*

### Japan’s Sumitomo starts PMMA recycling licensing

Japanese chemical company Sumitomo Chemical and US based Lummus Technology announced today that they have begun commercial licensing of Sumitomo’s polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA) recycling technology.

The two firms have signed a [partnership](#) in May 2024 to jointly commercialise and provide the PMMA recycling technology. They have since worked on scaling up and evaluating the process through demonstrations at a [pilot facility](#) located at Sumitomo’s Ehime plant in western Japan.

Sumitomo’s PMMA recycling technology breaks down waste acrylic resin via pyrolysis into feedstock methyl methacrylate (MMA) monomers with high yield and purity. The recycled monomers have quality equivalent to fossil-derived MMA, the company said.

Using monomers produced through this recycling process can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by around 50pc over the material’s life cycle compared with conventional fossil-based products.

Sumitomo expects Lummus to leverage its global network and marketing expertise to license the technology worldwide.

Sumitomo Chemical has domestic MMA monomer capacity of 90,000 t/yr at the Ehime plant, 53,000 t/yr at its

subsidiary Sumitomo Chemical Asia in Singapore and 90,000 t/yr at its joint venture PetroRabigh in Saudi Arabia.

The company does not produce PMMA in Japan, but its Singapore subsidiary has a production capacity of 50,000 t/yr, and PetroRabigh has an additional 50,000 t/yr in Saudi Arabia.

By *Kohei Yamamoto*

## Legislation/associations

### California to tighten plastics packaging law

California regulators are proposing to tighten the scope of packaging covered under the state’s extended producer responsibility (EPR) law, SB 54.

California’s Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) released updated draft regulations on 29 January to limit the types of packaging eligible for exemptions under federal food safety rules. The change aims to ensure fewer products fall outside the program, which requires producers to pay into a statewide system that funds recycling and waste reduction infrastructure.

The law requires companies using covered packaging to pay fees to support recycling infrastructure. CalRecycle is currently writing detailed rules to implement SB-54.

The latest proposal limits exemptions from the state’s EPR program that are based on the US Food and Drug Administration and US Department of Agriculture regulations.

The updated proposal addresses concerns that earlier draft rules were overly broad and could have exempted as much as 70pc of packaging found in grocery stores. While some market participants believe the latest revisions represent progress, questions remain about enforcement and oversight.

The updated draft does not modify provisions for chemical recycling, which has been closely watched by industry groups and environmental organizations.

CalRecycle has given the public until 13 February to submit comments.

By *Dona Davis*

### US PP cups gain recyclable status

US standardized labeling system How2Recycle upgraded polypropylene (PP) cold drink cups to “widely recyclable” status in the US after determining that more than 60pc of households now have curbside or drop-off access for the material.

The new status follows a 10pc growth in household recycling access in recent years, according to the group, including the addition of 2mn households in the last four months.

The status change reflects increased investment in PP cups sorting and end-market development, including upgrades at materials recovery facilities and clearer

## NEWS AND ANALYSIS

consumer-facing labeling to support correct recycling, said environmental nonprofit GreenBlue, which manages the How2Recycle program.

The upgrade builds on progress made in 2022, when How2Recycle found that national access to PP recycling reached 65pc, allowing rigid PP packaging such as tubs and containers to regain the "widely recyclable" label after previously losing it.

*By Dona Davis*

### California settles on plastic bag claims

California has reached a \$3.35mn settlement with three major plastic bag producers over allegations the companies falsely marketed their bags as recyclable.

The action comes as California phases in new regulations on single-use plastics for recycled content across the state's packaging sector.

The settlement resolves allegations that Novolex Holdings, Intoplast Group, and Mettler Packaging sold bags labeled as recyclable in violation of state law. The agreement follows earlier settlements with four additional producers announced in October 2025. The total penalties and legal fees across the seven companies now amount to more than \$5.1mn.

The settlements stem from a 2022 investigation by California attorney general Rob Bonta into whether or not recyclability claims by plastics bags producers were misleading. The companies could not provide documentation to Bonta's office that their bags were recycled at scale, the state said.

Data from a statewide survey of 69 recycling facilities show only two facilities claimed to accept plastic bags, but neither could confirm the materials were recycled.

The settlement coincides with the implementation of SB 1053. The law bans single-use plastic bags at checkouts beginning this year and eliminates a material stream already widely excluded from recycling operations. It also strengthens the existing SB 270, which bans all single-use plastic shopping bags.

California is pursuing a few parallel policies to increase recycled content in plastic packaging and raise overall recycling rates. These policies include the state's extended producer responsibility program under SB 54.

The attorney general's office said it will monitor compliance with SB 1053 as the law rolls out to prevent inaccurate environmental claims and reduce contamination across the plastic stream.

*By Dona Davis*

### New Jersey limits plastic utensils

A New Jersey law establishing new limits on single-use plastic utensils at food service establishments will take effect on 1 August, after it was signed last week by governor Phil

Murphy (D) on his final day in office.

Bill S-3195, known as the "Skip the Stuff" bill, requires casual food service businesses to provide single-use utensils and condiments only upon customer request. Full-service restaurants with at least 10 seats are prohibited from automatically providing single-use items to dine-in customers and must instead offer reusable, washable utensils.

The rules apply to restaurants, takeout, delivery and drive-thru operations, but do not apply to schools, health-care facilities or correctional institutions.

The bill does not ban fast food restaurants, convenience stores, gas stations or food trucks from stocking single-use utensils. These businesses may continue offering them as long as they are provided only upon request.

Violators receive a warning for the first offense, a \$100 penalty for a second, and a \$250 penalty for subsequent violations. Each day a violation continues counts as a separate offense.

Penalty revenue will go to the Clean Communities Program, which funds state and local litter removal, education and enforcement initiatives. Municipalities or certified enforcement entities may retain 30pc of the penalties they collect.

The law also directs the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to launch a 180-day education campaign to inform residents of the financial and environmental benefits of reducing use of single-use plastic utensils and condiments.

The bill was sponsored by state senators Bob Smith (D) and Raj Mukherji (D).

*By Dona Davis*

### Chemical recycling project tracker

Keep a track of the global chemical recycling project pipeline, including a view on capacities and pyrolysis oil offtake agreements, with our chemical recycling project tracker, available on Argus Direct at <https://direct.argusmedia.com/dataanddownloads>.

Search Data and Downloads from your dashboard to find out more.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

The US generated about 5.3mn t of flexible films that can be recycled with existing technologies last year, whereas it recovered 500,000t, according to industry body the Flexible Film Recycling Alliance's 2025 impact report. Most recovered film came from retail take-back programmes, which collect about 114,000 t/yr, or 11 times more than curbside systems. The alliance reported rapid adoption of its Plastic Film Recycling Directory, which lists more than 20,000 drop-off locations nationwide. It will launch a third-party verification programme in the second quarter, aiming to improve data credibility across the film-recycling value chain.

German packaging recycling was stable in 2024 compared with a year earlier, according to environmental agency UBA and packaging register ZSVR. Around 5.5.mn t of packaging was recovered through dual systems and five of eight statutory recycling targets were achieved, UBA and ZSVR say. Mechanical recycling of plastic packaging reached 70pc, an increase of nearly 30pc from 2018. More than half of material collected through Germany's yellow bin system went to recycling last year, supported by modern sorting facilities. All non-recyclable items collected in yellow bins went to energy recovery. Recycling of beverage cartons, glass and composite packaging is still proving challenging, as recyclability requirements have tightened under EU rules, USB and ZSVR say.

Japanese pharmaceuticals firm Otsuka began a nationwide rollout of PET bottles made from 100pc recycled PET resin

in late January. The company expects to shift more than 90pc of its beverage rPET bottles to 100pc rPET in 2026. The move is projected to lower the company's greenhouse gas emissions as well as reduce its plastics use. Otsuka has signed resource-circulation agreements with 30 local governments in Japan to support bottle-to-bottle recycling and collection efforts at major events.

UK-based Ineos Olefins and Polymers Europe has introduced a new Recycl-IN hybrid polypropylene grade containing 70pc recycled material for use in contact-sensitive cosmetics packaging. The material delivers mechanical strength, processing ease and optical properties comparable to virgin polymer, while offering a 30pc lower carbon footprint. The new grade, rPP1025C, is a natural polypropylene homopolymer designed for thin-walled injection moulding such as caps, jars, mascara reservoirs. The recycled feedstock has been backed by a no objections letter from the US' Food and Drug Administration, confirming the recycled material is suitable for use in regulated applications.

Technology provider Lummus Technology and Japan's Sumitomo Chemical have announced the commercial release of a new depolymerisation technology for polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA) waste, following "successful validation" at a Sumitomo Chemical pilot plant in Japan. The process converts PMMA waste back into methyl methacrylate monomer, which "matches the quality of fossil-derived material" and can then be repolymerised.



Argus Recycled Polymers is published by Argus Media group

**Registered office**

Lacon House, 84 Theobald's Road, London, WC1X 8NL  
Tel: +44 20 7780 4200

**ISSN: 2753-6629****Copyright notice**

Copyright © 2026 Argus Media group  
All rights reserved  
All intellectual property rights in this publication and the information published herein are the exclusive property of Argus and/or its licensors (including exchanges) and may only be used under licence from Argus. Without limiting the foregoing, by accessing this publication you agree that you will not copy or reproduce or use any part of its contents (including, but not limited to, single prices or any other individual items of data) in any form or for any purpose whatsoever except under valid licence from Argus. Further, your access to and use of data from exchanges may be subject to additional fees and/or execution of a separate agreement, whether directly with the exchanges or through Argus.

**Trademark notice**

ARGUS, the ARGUS logo, ARGUS MEDIA, INTEGER, Argus Recycled Polymers, other ARGUS publication titles and ARGUS index names are trademarks of Argus Media Limited. Visit [www.argusmedia.com/Ft/trademarks](http://www.argusmedia.com/Ft/trademarks) for more information.

**Disclaimer**

The data and other information published herein (the "Data") are provided on an "as is" basis. Argus and its licensors (including exchanges) make no warranties, express or implied, as to the accuracy, adequacy, timeliness, or completeness of the Data or fitness for any particular purpose. Argus and its licensors (including exchanges) shall not be liable for any loss, claims or damage arising from any party's reliance on the Data and disclaim any and all liability related to or arising out of use of the Data to the full extent permissible by law.

All personal contact information is held and used in accordance with Argus Media's Privacy Policy <https://www.argusmedia.com/en/privacy-policy>

**Publisher**

Adrian Binks

**Global compliance officer**

Vladas Stankevicius

**Chief commercial officer**

Martin Gijssel

**President, Expansion Sectors**

Christopher Flook

**Global head of editorial**

Neil Fleming

**Editor in chief**

Jim Washer

**Managing editor**

Jim Kennett

**Editor**

Will Collins

Tel: +44 20 7780 4226

[polymers@argusmedia.com](mailto:polymers@argusmedia.com)

**Customer support and sales:**

[support@argusmedia.com](mailto:support@argusmedia.com)

[sales@argusmedia.com](mailto:sales@argusmedia.com)

London, Tel: +44 20 7780 4200

Houston, Tel: +1 713 968 0000

Singapore, Tel: +65 6496 9966



INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE

Chemicals

illuminating the markets®

Licensed to: Lucie Zhai, Argus Media Limited (London)