
Assessment of 10 Years EU Retail Forum for Sustainability

Project

Duration

Jan - Sep 2019

Retailers play an essential role in shaping product decisions via their own business choices—choices regarding which suppliers to work with, what items to stock, how to manage supply-chain operations, what information to provide to consumers, as well as how their own brand identity and market positioning will relate to sustainability. Retailers thus occupy a unique position in the product value chain, being intermediaries between producers and consumers, with considerable influence on which goods we enjoy as consumers, the means by which they come to us and the long chain of impacts related to our purchasing decisions.

Sustainable consumption and production have been on the EU's agenda for over a decade now, with European retailers being in a unique position to promote both. The European Commission established the EU Retail Forum for Sustainability in 2009 to facilitate knowledge exchange among its members. This project will analyse to what extent the EU Retail Forum for Sustainability has achieved its objectives. Ecologic Institute leads the project, with denkstatt as a project partner. More specifically, the project team will:

- Assess changes in Forum members' environmental performance
- Assess Forum members' uptake and contributions in relation to EU developments and initiatives
- Assess Forum's added value in terms of membership and commitments
- Assess the response of the Forum to EU policy developments since 2009

The project team will collect qualitative and quantitative data on Forum members and a pre-defined selection of non-members through desk research, which will be fed into an information management system developed within the project. Data sources include the REAP database and monitoring reports, Issue Papers, Sectoral Reference Documents and the GRI database. With the data tool, the project team will further analyse the collected data stored in the data bank. A number of structured interviews with Forum members and non-members will complement the desk research, as to close data gaps and to allow for comparative analysis to establish the Forum's impact. The results will be an important contribution to the European Commission's information base as it decides on the future of the Forum.

More about the EU Retail Forum for Sustainability

In March 2009, EU policymakers and retail-sector representatives jointly established the EU Retail Forum for Sustainability. This includes the Retailers' Environmental Action Programme (REAP) — a programme for sustainability commitments across retailers's three main areas of influence —

products sold, impacts of business operations and influence on consumer choice. The initial time frame was 2009-2011, which was renewed for the years 2012-2014 and 2016-2018. As a multi-stakeholder platform, the Forum allows retailers to exchange best practices for sustainability and to identify enabling factors and barriers for achieving sustainable consumption and production.

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European Commission, [Directorate-General Environment](#) (DG Environment), International

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