



Q&A: November 2017



INTRODUCING GLOBAL RECYCLING DAY 2018

An initiative of the Bureau of International Recycling

globalrecyclingday.com

When is Global Recycling Day?

The first ever Global Recycling Day will be held on 18 March 2018. Thereafter it will be 18 March every year.

What is Global Recycling Day?

Global Recycling Day is an initiative of the Bureau of International Recycling (BIR). It was first conceived by Ranjit Baxi at his inauguration as BIR President at the BIR World Recycling Convention in Dubai in 2015. The aim is to show the importance of recycling and unite the world's approach to recycling.

Why has BIR introduced Global Recycling Day?

BIR is the global federation of recycling, representing the interests of the global recycling industries.

One of BIR's key objectives is to promote recycling globally – showcasing its benefits to industry, policy makers and the wider community.

2018 marks the 70th anniversary of BIR (indeed, BIR was founded on 18th March 1948), an ideal landmark year to create a day which recognised the vital role recycling and the industry plays in protecting the planet.

What is the mission of Global Recycling Day?

The mission of Global Recycling Day is twofold:

- To unite the world's approach to recycling, from world leaders to businesses, communities to individuals
- To encourage the world to think resource not waste, and to celebrate the planet's Seventh Resource

What is the Seventh Resource?

There are six primary natural resources: water, air, coal, oil, natural gas, minerals. The Seventh Resource is recyclables



Every year, the Earth yields trillions of tons of natural resources to transform into consumables. At some point, some of them will run out. That is why we must think about what we throw away – seeing not waste, but opportunity.

Why is it important?

Every year the earth yields several trillion tons of her six natural resources for us to transform into consumables. At some point, some of those resources will run out. We have to make full use of the Seventh Resource otherwise we will exhaust our planet.

Continually stripping the earth of her virgin resources is not an option - we have to recycle more.

The recycling industry is at the epicentre of action on resource preservation. Without it, all our used and discarded fridges, plastic bottles, packing boxes, cars, cell phones, clothes and paper cups will contribute to the growing waste mountains, be incinerated or go to landfill – never to be used again.

The future of the planet's environmental wellbeing is too important not to be a global concern. The power of the Seventh Resource must be recognised at a global level.

Is the recycling industry really that important to the planet?

The power of the recycling industry not just in preserving our resources, but in protecting the environment cannot be denied. It also helps fill several Millennium Development Goals.

- Recycling combats climate change head on:
 - The recycling industry reduces CO2 emissions by 700 million tons per year
 - This is the equivalent of offsetting the total production of the aviation industry each year
 - By collecting just 1kg of used clothing, we can reduce 3.6kg of CO2 emissions; 6000l of water consumption; 0.3k of the use of fertilizers and 0.2kg of the use of pesticides
- Recycling boosts local employment:
 - 1.6 million people worldwide are active in the recycling industry
 - Each year \$20 million is invested by the industry into job creation
 - The recycling industry has an annual turnover of \$200 billion; 10% of this figure is reinvested in new technologies, R&D and in creating new skilled jobs to improve the efficiencies and environmental impact of recycling
- Recycling conserves primary resources:
 - Recycling materials provide at least 40% of the global raw material needs
 - Over 63% of aluminum cans are recycled worldwide
 - A typical electrical appliance is usually made of 75% recycled steel
 - Steel cans consist of at least 25% recycled steel
 - An average stainless steel object is composed of about 60% of recycled materials

What will happen on 18 March 2018?

Global Recycling Day will be a day of action, aimed at building a global approach towards recycling, calling on world leaders, international businesses, communities and individuals to make seven clear commitments in their approach to recycling. Consumers are also being invited to ask themselves some key questions about recycling, to think of it in a new way.



The day itself – across the world – will focus on LEARN, SIGN and DO.

- **LEARN** about the recycling industry at our website globalrecyclingday.com and about the power of the Seventh Resource
- **SIGN** the change.org petition on the globalrecycling.day.com website to join in the host of voices asking for world leaders to take a united approach towards recycling
- **DO** something good for the planet by joining in local activities on 18 March 2018, sharing recycling best practice on your social media channels

What issues is Global Recycling Day bringing to light?

Climate change is the major overarching issue of our time and the single greatest challenge facing environmental regulators. It is a growing crisis, with economic, health and safety, food production, security and other dimensions. Therefore, it is imperative to promote a sustainable solution, which will turn this challenge into an opportunity.

Recycling (whether industrial or at home) saves more CO2 emissions each year than the aviation industry generates. It employs 3m people, contributes over 200 billion US Dollars to the world economy, and by 2025 is projected to add 400 billion dollars to global GDP.

The cost of failure to raise awareness around recycling would be high for our planet with detrimental effects not only to the environment but also to our health and the global economy. Some regions, particularly Europe, are taking the lead by setting ambitious recycling targets and putting the right framework in place to make recycling an indispensable part of their societies and economies. However, in other parts of the world, namely Africa and Asia, recycling is less entrenched in everyday life, and much work remains to be done, particularly in terms of education and efficient infrastructure. Otherwise, the very real danger is that CO2 emissions will increase together with the population of these areas. This time bomb is bigger than one or two continents can defuse alone: a global approach is required.

Recycling saves energy, reduces air and water pollution, and conserves natural resources.

Equally, those serious about tackling climate change must simply start recognising the huge untapped potential of the recycling industry as a green partner. The reduction of carbon emissions is of paramount importance in the fight against climate change.

What seven commitments are we asking from our world leaders?

1. Focus on international legislation and agreements.
2. Boost free sustainable trade of recycling materials across the globe.
3. Educate, from grass roots up, the public on the critical necessity of recycling.
4. Agree to a common language of recycling (same definitions, same messages).
5. To make recycling a community issue, supporting schemes and initiatives which help households and businesses provide Seventh Resource materials for repurposing.
6. Work with the industry to encourage “design for recycling” in the repurposing of materials – reducing waste, integrating end-of-life at design stage
7. Support innovation, research and initiatives that foster better recycling practices



What seven questions are we asking individuals and communities to ask themselves?

1. Do I dispose of everything I have used (from plastic bottles to refrigerators to cars) properly, so it can be recycled?
2. Do I know my municipality's policies on recycling and do I follow them?
3. Do I know what happens to my recyclables once they are taken away by my local municipality?
4. Do I, and my friends, mend, repair and reuse in order to sustain the usefulness of the items around us for as long as possible?
5. Am I committed to producing as little waste as I can?
6. Do I know how, and do the brands that I buy make it easy for me, to make the right 'recycling friendly' purchasing decisions?
7. Am I sufficiently aware of my government's recycling legislation, or should I be demanding more?

How can I find out more about Global Recycling Day 2018?

Log on to our website, continually updated, at www.globalrecyclingday.com.

Join in the conversation on Twitter @glbrecyclignday

Find us and share on Facebook by searching for Global Recycling Day

Share your images with us on Instagram @globalrecyclingday

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