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GLOBAL RECYCLING DAY 2019

globalrecyclingday.com

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1. About Global Recycling Day

The Bureau of International Recycling (BIR) established Global Recycling Day in 2018 to help achieve its goal of greater international recognition of the benefits of recycling. Setting a day each year to recognise the vital role recycling plays in preserving the wellbeing of our planet, is an effective way of focusing worldwide attention on the crucial steps urgently needed to safeguard the future of planet Earth.

Global Recycling Day is the vision of Ranjit Baxi, the President of the Bureau of International Recycling (BIR), who first announced his desire to launch such a day at his inauguration at BIR's convention in Dubai in 2015.

The inaugural Global Recycling Day took place on 18 March 2018, on the same day BIR celebrated its 70th anniversary. The Day was an unprecedented success, with more than 13 million people across the globe actively participating in the day. The results can be seen in the [Global Recycling Day campaign video](#).

In October 2018, BIR announced the formation of the Global Recycling Foundation (see below) which will oversee the continued growth of Global Recycling Day as well as other initiatives.

The theme for Global Recycling Day 2019 will be '**Recycling into the Future**' and will concentrate on youth and innovation, two crucial drivers for change. By focusing 2019 on youth and innovation, the Global Recycling Day will encourage the world to look towards the impact that today's young people and future technologies can have on recycling.

Global Recycling Day 2019 will work to get more young people engaged with the power of recycling and the Seventh Resource (see more on the Seventh Resource below) and will also work with businesses and entrepreneurs globally to share their innovation, concepts and ideas for better recycling practices in the future.



The Foundation will shortly be announcing a number of initiatives including events and competitions to mark Global Recycling Day 2019, which will include the announcement of global partnerships and calls for action.

Parallel to this, Global Recycling Day will continue to engage with world leaders and key UN agencies (including UNIDO – which has already pledged support – and UNEP) to see it recognised in the UN calendar and to ensure recycling and the circular economy continues to be prioritised. To this end, Global Recycling Day will actively support UNIDO’s theme of Sustainable Inclusivity and support the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Foundation will work with BIR and the BIR’s network of national recycling associations and member organisations to help spread this call for action across the globe.

2. Global Recycling Foundation

The creation of the Global Recycling Foundation is a crucial step in ensuring the longevity of Global Recycling Day and other initiatives aiming at the promotion of a global and united approach to recycling. The Foundation will support the promotion of recycling across the world in order to showcase its vital role in preserving the future of the planet.

It will fund educational and awareness programmes as well as initiatives that focus on the sustainable and inclusive development of recycling activities.

The Foundation has nine key goals:

1. Continue to support and celebrate Global Recycling Day on 18 March each year.
2. Promote the prioritisation of the Seventh Resource.
3. Foster the promotion of recycling across the world, and support and share best practices and innovation.
4. Protect biodiversity.
5. Commit to, and promote, eco-responsibility and the circular economy.
6. Encourage responsible, sustainable and inclusive environmental actions to the benefit of ecological developments.
7. Support statistical, economic and social studies in the field of recycling.
8. Support research and innovation in the field of recycling.
9. Support educational programmes, university and scientific research in the field of recycling.

You can find a beta version of the Global Recycling Foundation site at www.globalrecyclingfoundation.org or on the following social channels:

- Twitter - [@GlbRecyclingFdn](https://twitter.com/GlbRecyclingFdn)
- Facebook - [Global Recycling Foundation](https://www.facebook.com/GlobalRecyclingFoundation/)
- LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/global-recycling-foundation/>

3. Where can people learn more about Global Recycling Day 2019



You can find out more about Global Recycling Day on the website www.globalrecyclingday.com and on Twitter ([@Glbreyclingday](https://twitter.com/Glbreyclingday)) Facebook ([Global Recycling Day](https://www.facebook.com/GlobalRecyclingDay)) and Instagram ([@globalrecyclingday](https://www.instagram.com/globalrecyclingday)). You can also follow the hashtags #globalrecyclingday #GRDfuture and #GRDinnovation.

4. The Seventh Resource

One of the overriding missions of Global Recycling Day is to shift the focus from 'waste' to resource. BIR wants people to recognise the value in the materials all around us, and to recognise the recycling industry's role, as well as our own, in using and reusing them wherever possible.

In line with this mission, Global Recycling Day introduced the world to the Seventh Resource.

There are six major natural resources: water, air, coal, oil, natural gas and minerals. Recyclables should be recognised as the seventh most important resource.

Global Recycling Day wants to continue raising awareness amongst the public regarding the Seventh Resource and enhance the perception that recycling is about creating a clean and sustainable environment for us today and for future generations. We must also acknowledge that without the huge skills and expertise of the recycling industry, much of this Seventh Resource would not be so widely accessible today.

5. The problem we are trying to solve

Climate change is one of the major issues of our time and the single greatest challenge facing environmental regulators. It is a growing crisis in terms of the economy, health and safety, food production, security and other dimensions. Therefore, it is imperative to promote a sustainable solution that will turn this challenge into an opportunity.

Failure to raise awareness and educate our global population on the benefits of recycling would come at too high a cost 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 integral part of their societies and economies.

However, in other parts of the world such as Africa and Asia, recycling is less entrenched in everyday life. Much work remains to be done, particularly in terms of education, developing recycling infrastructure and putting legislation in place. Otherwise, the very real danger is that CO₂ emissions will increase exponentially together with the increasing population in these areas. This time bomb is bigger than one or two continents can defuse alone: a global approach is required.



Everybody involved in the climate change discussion must acknowledge and recognise the huge untapped potential of recycling as a green partner. The reduction of CO2 emissions is of paramount importance in the fight against climate change.

6. Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals

The **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)** are the world's time-bound and quantified targets for addressing extreme poverty in its many dimensions – income poverty, hunger, disease, lack of adequate shelter and exclusion – whilst also promoting gender equality, education, and environmental sustainability. They are succeeded by the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, which represent a new set of 17 measurable goals, ranging from ending world poverty to achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls by 2030.

Global Recycling Day will highlight a number of these goals and demonstrate that the industry is working to address a number of these urgent issues. International recycling combats climate change head-on, helps boost local employment and conserves primary resources.

To this end, in the EU alone recycling has generated 300,000 local jobs. Across the globe 1.6 million people are active in the industry.

A key BIR objective is to promote recycling globally, showcasing its benefits to industry, policy makers and the wider community. It is calling on supranational organisations such as the UN to include Global Recycling Day in the official calendar of internationally celebrated days.

7. 18th March: A day of action around the world

Global Recycling Day is all about action. It is about getting people across the globe to focus on a better future for the planet and take better stewardship of the goods and materials we create, use and dispose of every day.

In 2018, nine world cities hosted official events (London, Paris, Brussels, Washington DC, Sydney, Delhi, Dubai, Johannesburg and Sao Paolo) with at least 23 unofficial events also taking place. Around 10.5 million people also joined in on social media – including some of the biggest brands on the planet, and media coverage appeared across the world.

2019, with its focus on youth and innovation, promises to be even bigger, and once again official events will take place in at least 10 cities across the world.

8. Global Recycling Day Sponsors and Partners

Following on from sponsorship work with [Fjällräven](#), [Sims Metal Management](#) and the [Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries](#) last year, Global Recycling Day 2019 will continue to seek sponsorship for this year's activities and programmes.

This work will now be undertaken through the Global Recycling Foundation which is seeking partners to help spread its message across the world, and is inviting businesses to become 'Friends of the



Foundation' as well as offering a number of key sponsorship opportunities. Donations may be eligible for tax benefits and donors will be able to build their involvement into their Corporate and Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes.

9. Words of support for Global Recycling Day

"Everyone has a responsibility to think about the waste they produce and to recycle as much as they can. In the United Kingdom we have made great progress in increasing our recycling rate, which now stands at over 44%. Global Recycling Day is a reminder to us all of the difference we can make to protect our environment by disposing of our rubbish responsibly and is an opportunity to make sure that we are recycling all that we can. If in doubt you can check what you can recycle legally on recyclenow.com." **Dr. Thérèse Coffey MP**

"I am pleased to celebrate and share in recognizing the importance of the world's first Global Recycling Day, acknowledging recycling as crucial to realizing the sustainable development agenda. At the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), we recognize that changing attitudes and mindsets is crucial to achieving the Future We Want by 2030. Sustainable development and the targets included in the 2030 Agenda will only be achieved if we as individuals, communities and societies change our everyday habits, actions and consumption and production patterns.

"I strongly believe that Global Recycling Day will be instrumental in raising the awareness needed to amplify our recycling practices. Changing our mindsets so as to see recyclables and waste as valuable resources, will allow us to mend, repair and reuse materials that we otherwise would dispose of. By reconsidering what we throw away, we put the planet first and put the lives of people and future generations at the top of our priorities. Efficient recycling processes and practices can support the mitigation of dangerous climate change, generate jobs and local employment, help create sustainable cities and communities and can preserve our natural resources supporting our efforts towards more peaceful, just and sustainable societies.

"Whilst we often think of recycling as a local issue, Global Recycling Day helps us to elevate this important challenge to the global level, encouraging us to strengthen our commitments and develop new, dynamic and energetic partnerships across communities and cultures, and between governments and industries.

"Ultimately, our consumption and production patterns are in our hands, and our habits can impact and inspire our daily lives, and those of our children, families, friends and colleagues. In the spirit of the 2030 Agenda, I strongly encourage our partnership in stepping up our efforts to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle; together we can make a difference and help realize our vision for a more sustainable future." **United Nations Assistant Secretary General Nikhil Seth**



“We must reduce consumption levels and design goods using less and more readily recyclable materials. But, realistically, the flow of waste will continue to be large, and the huge volume of products already in circulation will reach the end of its useful life. Global Recycling Day emphasizes the urgency of increasing the scale, quality and legitimacy of recycling: a critical environmental service to capture and process this material in a way that is equitable, efficient, and safe.” **Dr Yaakov Garb**

“Recycling waste is the first step in closing resource loop. Currently what is seen as ‘waste’ can be reformed into a resource for green manufacturing, therefore creating environmental, social and economic value. This event is fantastic in raising awareness about what is the right thing to do in the face of the mounting waste challenge.” **Scientia Professor Veena Sahajwalla FTSE FIEAust CPEng**

“We fully support global recycling day. As environmental consultants, we see at first hand, the effects of plastics in our oceans and water systems and this is a major concern. When we analyse the diversity and abundance of macro-invertebrate animals in sediment samples, we are often asked to record the presence and nature of plastic fragments as well. Usually we encounter two types – small fragments of items such as fishing nets or waste, and microbeads that are also found in toothpaste and cosmetic scrubs. Once microplastics enter the environment, they are present for many tens of years, so preventing the release of plastics into our waterways and oceans remains a priority.

“The UK has reacted to this environmental risk by imposing a ban on microbeads in certain products. However, this is only the tip of the iceberg and far more needs to be done as a priority such as a recyclable bottle deposit scheme. If we continue polluting our oceans with plastic at this rate, by 2050 the oceans will contain more plastic – by weight – than fish.” **Dr Phil Aldous, BSc(Hons) LLM DMS**

“We need to see waste for what it really is – a wasted resource. There is no place on our planet anymore for products that are used only briefly and thrown away. We need to ensure planned obsolescence is a thing of the past. It’s time for countries in the world to dramatically step-up recycling rates if we are to save this planet.” **Erik Solheim, Head of UN Environment**

“The management of hazardous wastes has been on the international environmental agenda for many years now. Today waste is belatedly recognised not just as a problem but also as an opportunity. The waste management hierarchy (prevention, minimization, reuse, recycling, other recovery including energy recovery, and final disposal) and the recognition of waste as a resource underpin implementation of the Basel Convention across the world.



"At the last UN Environment Assembly, the nations of the world unanimously agreed to encourage sustainable lifestyles and to move forward to ensure more sustainable consumption and production patterns, by providing reliable sustainability information to consumers, increasing education and awareness raising, and making it easier to rethink, reuse, recycle, recover and remake any products, materials and/or services and prevent and reduce waste generation.

"Clearly, the environmentally sound management of hazardous and other waste is a complex issue which requires concerted actions by states, the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders. Every individual, every family, every household can and must participate in this quest. I believe that the launch of the Global Recycling Day is an important step in this direction – prompting people across the world to work together - on waste - towards a more sustainable future for all." **Rolph Payet - Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions.**

10. About BIR and the Global Recycling Foundation

BIR is the global federation of the recycling industry, representing the interests of global private and public recycling industry. Founded in 1948, it was the first federation to promote recycling worldwide. It has around 750 member companies from the private sector and 34 national recycling associations in 70 countries, making it the largest international recycling federation. One of the BIR's key objectives is to promote active recycling across the globe amongst all industrial sectors, policy-makers and the wider community. Ranjit Baxi is the current President of BIR and its Director General is Arnaud Brunet.

The Global Recycling Foundation, formed by BIR in October 2018, supports the promotion of recycling, and the recycling industry, across the world in order to showcase its vital role in preserving the future of the planet. It will fund educational and awareness programmes and innovation initiatives which focus on the sustainable and inclusive development of recycling. Current BIR President Ranjit Baxi is the Foundation's Founding President.

11. All Press Releases can be found on the Global Recycling Day website.

www.globalrecyclingday.com/media/

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