

Success Factors of Reuse Systems

CAP SEA Regional Pilot Project Exchange

Clara Löw & Siddarth Prakash | Kuala Lumpur, 14.11.2022



Our Profile

Oeko-Institut is a leading European research and consultancy institute working for a sustainable future.

- A non-profit association founded in 1977
- Offices in Freiburg, Darmstadt and Berlin, Germany
- Clients: European Union, national and state-level ministries, companies, foundations and non-governmental organisations.
- More than 190 staff
- 17,5 Mio. Euro turnover in 2021

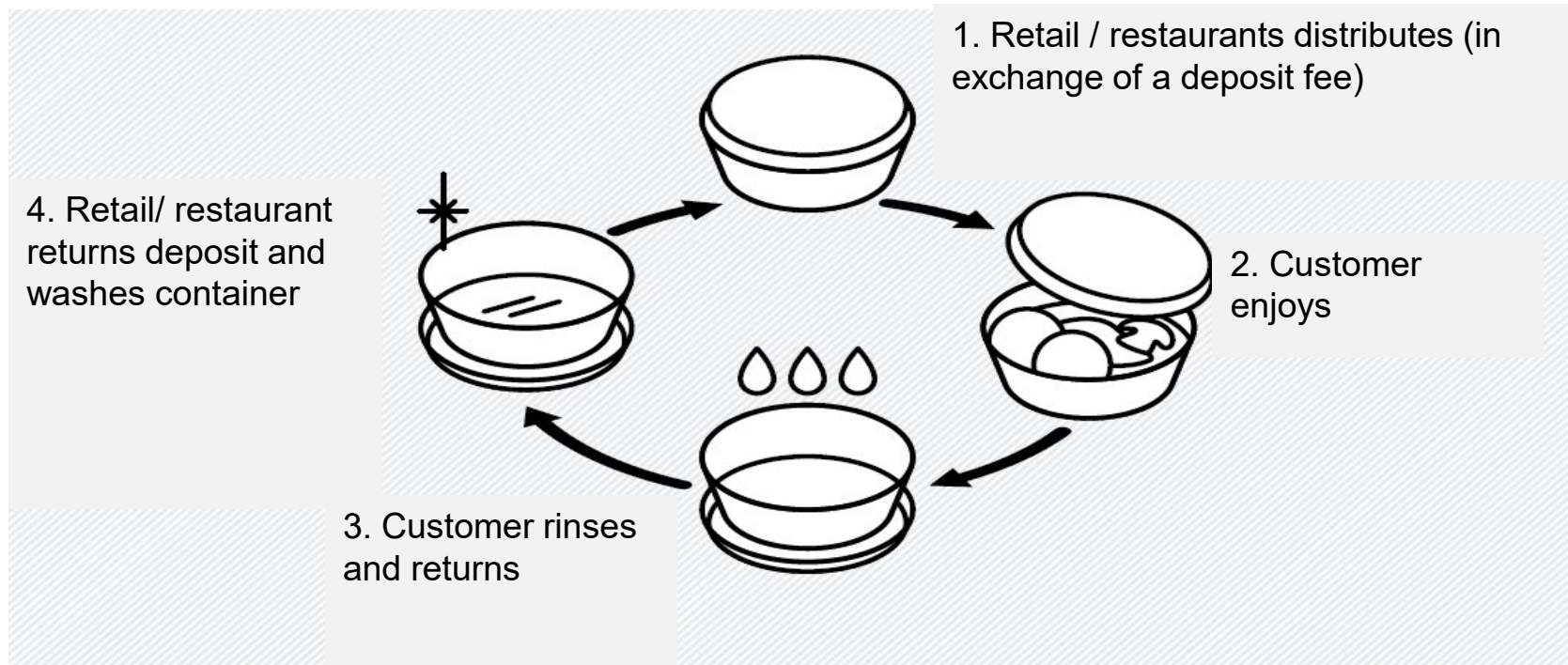
On the basis of interdisciplinary research, the institute

- Conducts research-based projects and studies,
 - Develops key methodologies,
 - Advises decision-makers in politics, industry and civil society,
 - Completes some 380 national and international projects each year.
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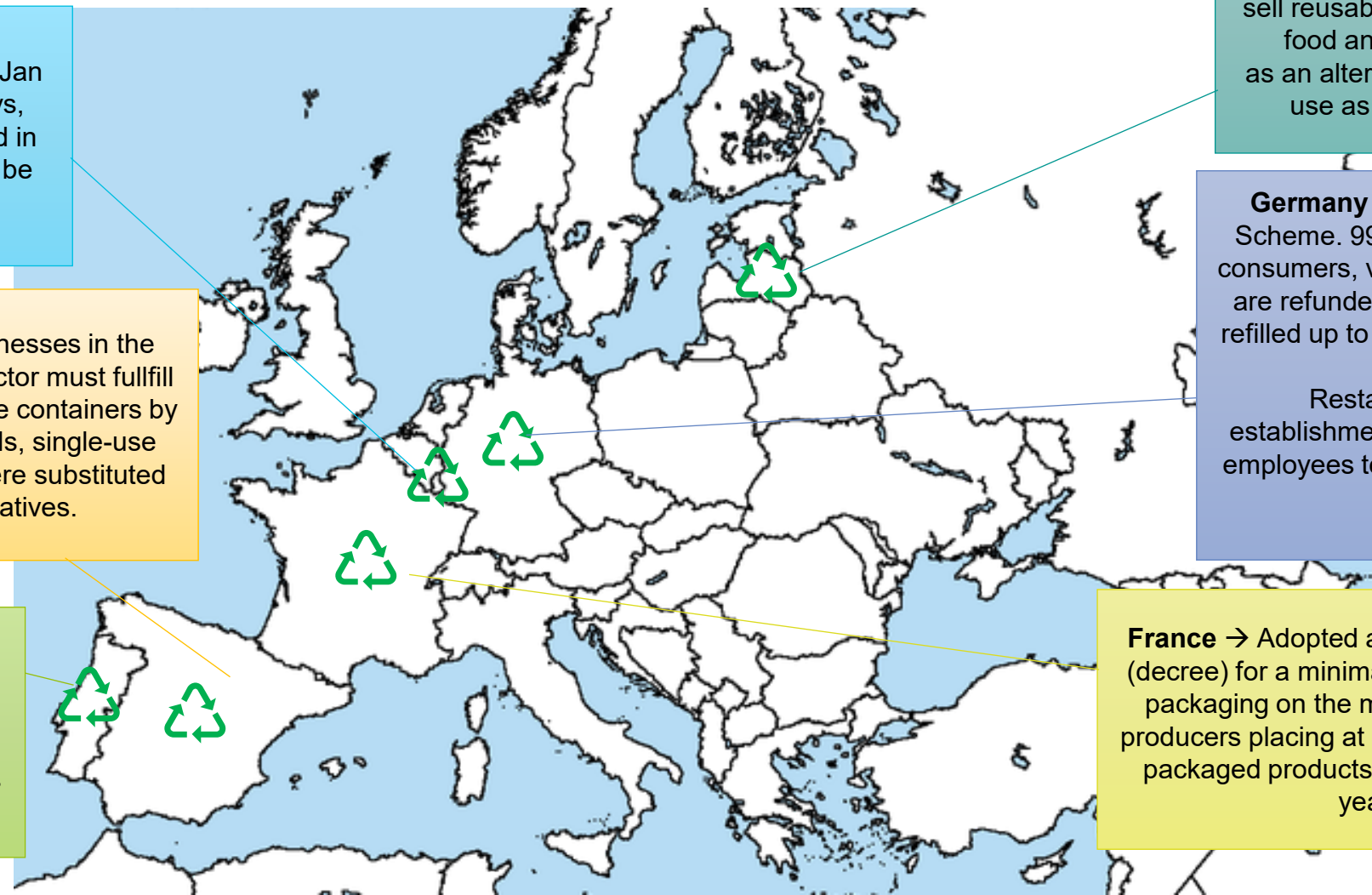
What is are reuse systems?

Synonyms:

Managed pool systems | container refund scheme | deposit- and app-based pool systems



Examples from European countries



Luxembourg → As of Jan 2025, containers, trays, plates and cutlery used in takeaway meals must be reusable.

Spain → In Navarra, businesses in the hotel, retail and catering sector must fulfill targets of reusable beverage containers by 2028. In the Canary Islands, single-use plastics in public events were substituted with reusable alternatives.

Portugal → By Jan 2024, restaurants are required to provide reusable packaging for takeaway/delivery, at same/lower price than single-use packaging.

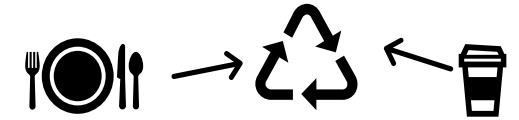
Latvia → Mandated establishments to offer or sell reusable packaging for food and beverages as an alternative to single-use as of Jul 2021.

Germany → National Deposit Return Scheme. 99% of bottles are returned by consumers, via machines or in stores, who are refunded their deposit. Glass bottles refilled up to 50 times; PET bottles around 20 times.
Restaurants and take-away establishments over 81 sq. meters and 6 employees to use reusable cups and food containers by Jan 2023.

France → Adopted an implementing act (decree) for a minimal share of reusable packaging on the market imposed on producers placing at least 10 000 units of packaged products on the market per year.

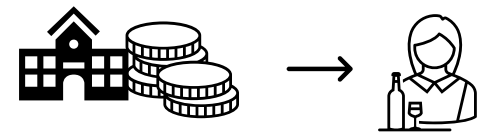
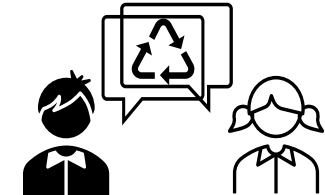
Success factors: A reuse system functions when...

Broad scope of packaging for drinks and food and reusable lids are also part of the deposit system.



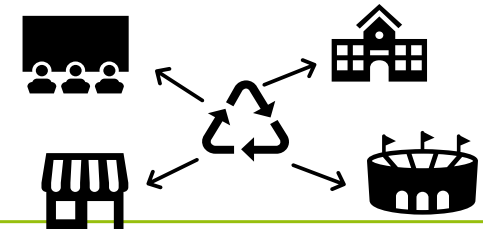
Hygiene authorities support the reuse system and pass on their knowledge to the implementers.

Citizens are convinced and involved, e.g., in advertising for reuse in their favorite retail stores and restaurants.



The municipality finances trays, trowels and jugs and distributes them to the businesses in order to reduce additional acquisition costs for the hygienic filling of reusable containers.

Actors in "closed systems", i.e., in canteens, in the sports stadium, at fresh markets, etc. are quickly convinced and a reuse system is simply implemented.



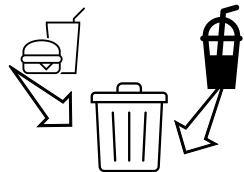
Failure factors: It does not help when...

The containers are not returned.



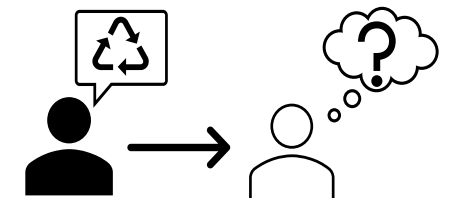
Deposit accounting leads to difficulties in the companies.

Education on the hygienic handling of reusable containers cannot eliminate hygiene concerns.



Education on the advantages of reusable packaging / disadvantages of single-use bio-plastics is not having any effect on the public.

The experience with reusable containers and addressing customers is lost through frequent personnel changes.






Take-Home Messages

- The more parties are engaged and the higher the political support, the better the success of reuse systems
- Some conditions for effective reuse systems are:
 - System infrastructure and employee training
 - Reusable container design
 - Systems at scale to avoid burden shifting
 - Hygiene requirements
 - Minimum viable population density (of users and vendors)
 - Public engagement/participation
- Municipalities and the retail/gastronomy sectors play an important role in enabling such conditions.

Recommended activities for system implementers, restaurants etc.

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- Take measures to support the establishment a centralized collection & off-site dishwashing service
 - Set up a working group that includes temples, sport stadiums, universities, restaurants, businesses and others interested and active in promoting reuse.
 - Design an information and awareness campaign
 - Get engaged with consumers on the objections and willingness for reusable tableware.

Recommended activities for municipal administration

01

Assign the task to take leadership in the transition to reusables to an existing governmental body.

02

Bans on Single-use packaging to support the implementation of reusable packaging

03

Set up and promote an investment and financial support program in the infrastructure or in businesses active on reuse, e.g., public procurement.

04

Take measures to support the establishment a centralized collection and off-site dishwashing service

05

Set out targets (%) for reusable containers in the different use scenarios, e.g., open markets

Support from national level

For the transition to reusable packaging, municipalities and system providers need support from the national level, such as,

- As long as single-use and reusable packaging are offered in parallel, it's more convenient to use single-use packaging → create regional/national market disadvantages for SUP
- Develop a set of guidelines and standards for both products (reusable containers and cups) as well as processes (collection, transportation, washing,...).
- Set out national targets (%) for reusable containers in the different use scenarios, e.g., open markets, food delivery systems
- Economic and fiscal incentives, e.g., taxes and levies for SUP

→ Engage in multi-municipalities-networks & join forces



Each blue dot represents an idea how to reduce SUP



Freiburg reusable coffee cups

<https://map.seas-at-risk.org/>

MAP SEAS AT RISK: A COASTAL RISK ASSESSMENT FOR EUROPE 2011-2012

Do you have any questions?

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Sources

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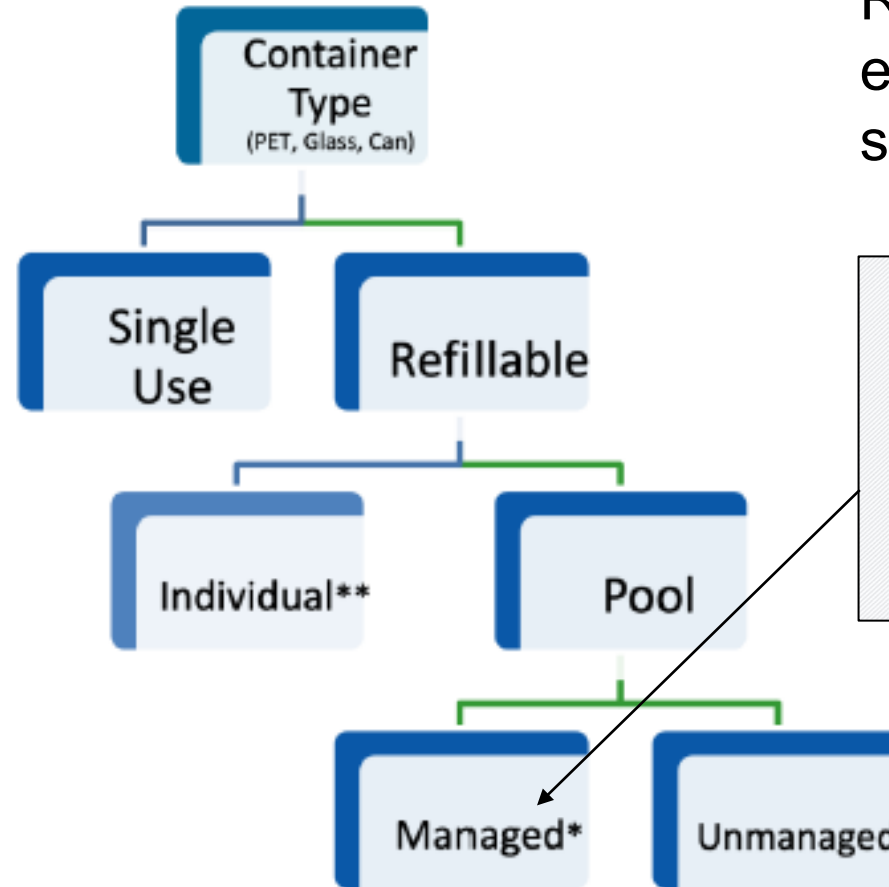
“Taxonomy” of deposit return systems

- Type of beverage?
- Are there branding considerations?

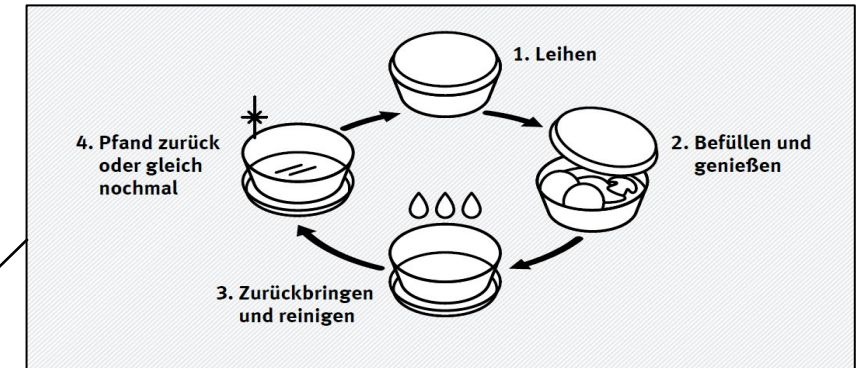
- What are customers and consumer preferences
- Strategy (Corporate, Brand, Sustainability)

- Economic and environmental efficiency
 - Costs
 - Independence

- Quality
- Fair Share of burdens



Reuse systems are one possible example for a deposit return systems.



Recommendation for adoption & enabling condition(s)

PERFORMANCE



1. Broad scope of beverages and containers
2. Minimum deposit value
3. Return-rate target

CONVENIENCE



4. Convenient redemption system for consumers
5. Separately charged and fully refundable deposits
6. Container deposit markings for consumers and manual returns, barcodes for accurate accounting

PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY



7. Extended producer responsibility financing
8. Reinvestment of unredeemed deposits and material revenue within the system
9. Recycled content requirements

SYSTEM INTEGRITY



10. Centralized, non-profit administration and operations
11. Government reporting and consumer communication
12. Government enforcement