

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 November 2020 12:42
To: wastecomments
Subject: Deposit Return Scheme

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I agree that a centralised model probably makes more sense. The decentralised approach reads as potentially resulting in somewhere like a large supermarket having to have multiple return machines to handle per-producer waste, instead of having a few machines to deal with each type of waste.

There is still a sorting requirement, but it can be in a more centralised sorting building (perhaps regional ones) and take advantage of economies of scale.

As for waste collectors (assuming this is Panda etc), I would presume that in a centralised model they could be contracted by the scheme operators to provide the transport from the RVMs (or manual collection bins at smaller retailers) to the sorting facility. I would be concerned about the existing compacting trucks being used, as that would contaminate the collected material.

Twenty euro cents seems reasonable, but I have a good income - for those with lower income, the overall hit on their wallet could be disproportionate at time of purchase, even if they know they will get the money back. Consider a bottle of water from a major retailer that costs €1.00 - the proposed charge increases that cost by 20%, a significant increase.

Given the general concern about obesity and health in the country, it is possible that a varying deposit based on the contents could be a way to nudge the population; reduce the charge on nominally healthier options like water, increase it on soft drinks. It will all balance in the end, because of how the scheme works, but the day to day "oh, this is now more expensive, let me get that other thing" nudge may be valuable.

To announce the DRS? A combined media story, making it very clear that the overall consumer cost is zero. It is also possible that producers will increase the cost of goods to cover their scheme membership, which would mean the scheme is actually not a zero cost to the consumer. However, given the state of our planet, a product cost increase may well be one of the few things that reduces consumption of plastic long-term. Once the scheme is in place, it may make sense that every bottle or can that is eligible for the scheme should have a marker on it that makes it very clear that the item can be returned at a retailer. This of course has an impact on global supply chains, as the label printing for a bottle may be done in a central location for multiple markets, and so another cost burden is imposed on the producers, which may trickle to the consumer.

Barring product labeling, the RVMs will need very clear signage about what is valid for return, as will retailers that cannot support a RVM on their premises.

With regards cross-border issues - perhaps importers should also be scheme members, working in the same fashion. I presume Germany has solved this problem for bottles and cans imported from outside of German borders (I am presuming there's no EU-wide DRS agreement that they could use), and thus should have good input on the problems they have faced in this area, and how they have solved them.

I asked a friend in Germany about their current system, and they remarked:

There's a few developments that probably hadn't been foreseen, e. g. people break into basements and garages to steal empty bottles, and homeless people/low-income pensioners rummage bins for empty bottles (which can get them into trouble because - at least in the cities - bins in a defined area "belong" to someone who will be very unhappy if random people "steal" from them).

I would also note that I am disappointed that glass bottles are not included in the proposal. I am hopeful that should such a scheme come into existence and be proven viable, the scheme would be expanded to glass bottles such as wine etc - my nearest glass collection point is at least twice the distance of the nearest supermarket; if the supermarket had a RVM for glass, it would be easier to return the glass bottles on my next shopping trip (as is possible in Germany).

Regards

[Redacted signature]