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Biorepack: the Italian EPR system for organic recycling of compostable packaging

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Summary

- About Biorepack
- Biodegradable and compostable plastic packaging
- The organic recycling process
- Communication activities
- Next steps

About Biorepack

A private, non-profit national Consortium for the organic recycling of biodegradable and compostable plastic packaging (according to EN 13432), under the CONAI umbrella.

Biorepack enables packaging producers and users to achieve recycling and recovery targets for biodegradable and compostable plastic packaging waste (currently the same as for traditional plastic).

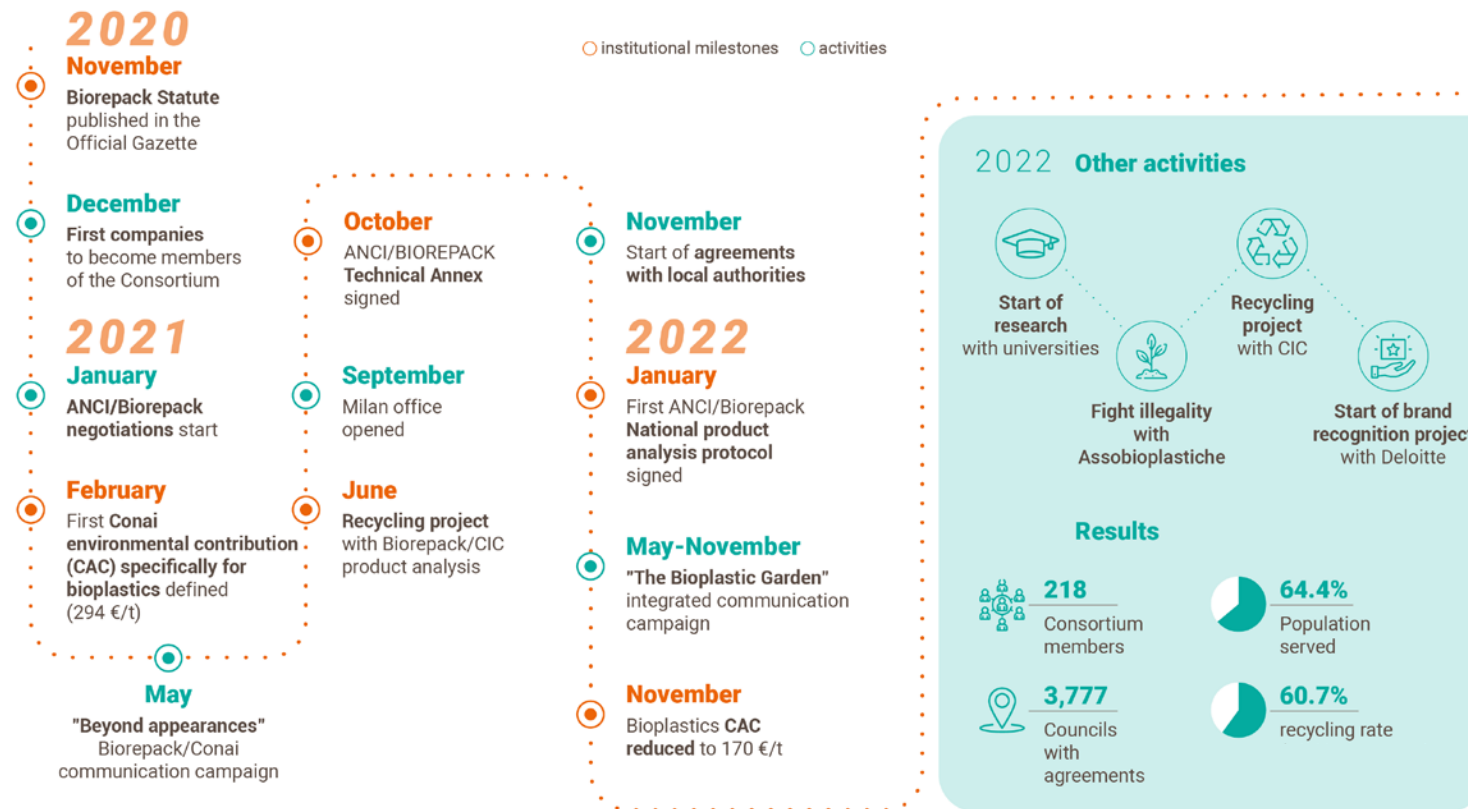
The financial resources are generated by the EPR fee paid by the producers to comply with their EPR obligations (€130/t in 2024).

Biorepack signs agreements with collection and treatment operators (town councils, and public and private companies contracted by town councils) and pays them for collecting, transporting and treating compostable packaging.

Members: 220 companies to date.

Milestones

Fundamental milestones in the Consortium's development



It took around two years to set up a new supply chain, which is unprecedented in the EU

(other supply chains have been active for about 25 years).

The procedure must be completed within the next three years, starting by increasing agreements with local authorities.

Biorepack is based on three pillars

THE ITALIAN PACKAGING WASTE SYSTEM

Established in 1997, the CONAI system, of which Biorepack is a part, guarantees compliance with the EPR principle. CONAI has achieved excellent recycling levels at European level

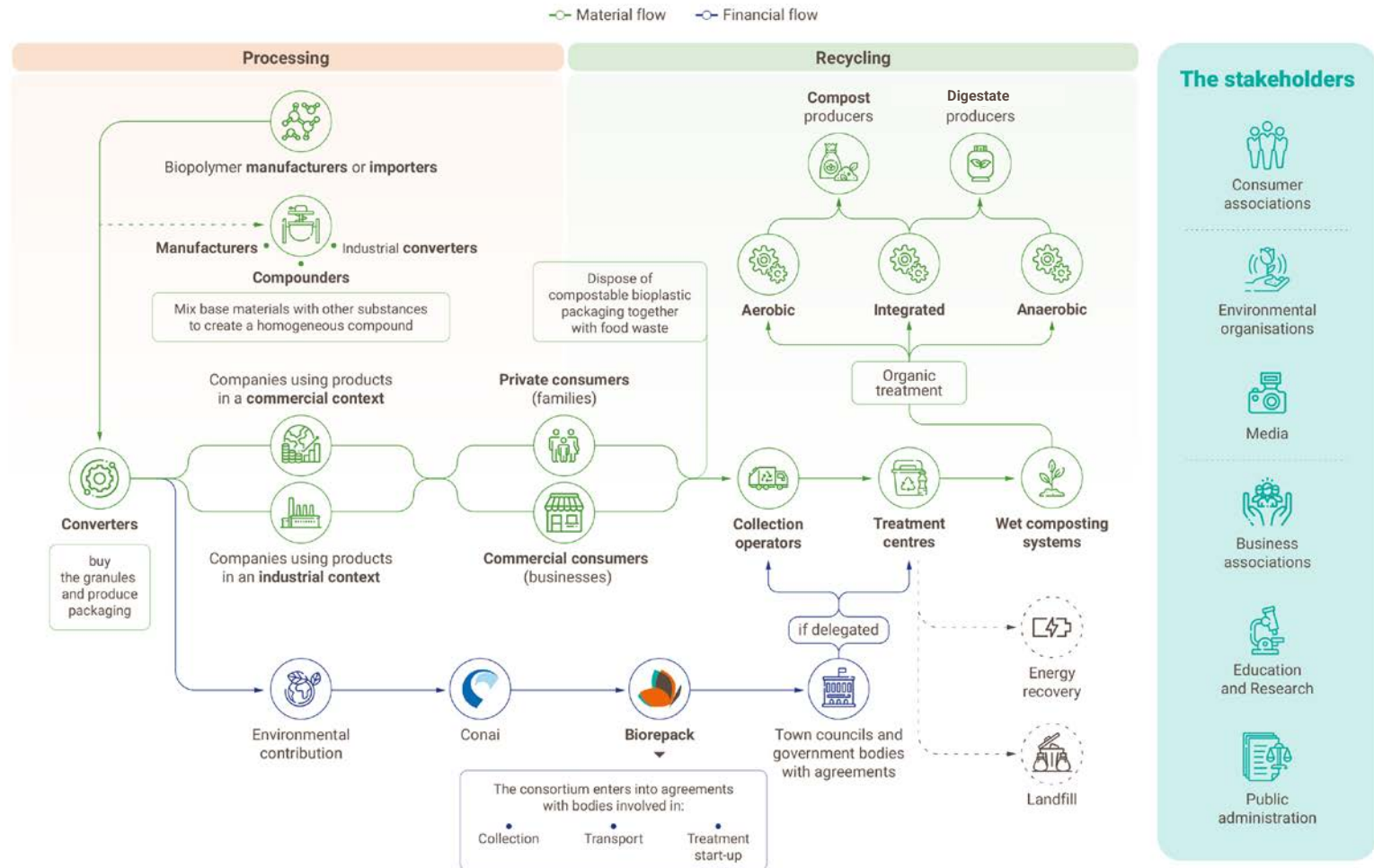
THE ITALIAN ORGANIC KITCHEN WASTE COLLECTION AND RECYCLING SYSTEM

In 2022 more than 5 million tonnes of bio-waste collected and more than 250 organic recycling plants in operation. The separate collection of bio-waste has existed since the 1990s and has been mandatory since 2022

THE COMPOSTABLE POLYMERS INDUSTRY

In 2023, 270 companies active, with more than 3,000 workers. Turnover of 1.66 billion euros. 78,400 tons of compostable bioplastic marketed

The compostable bioplastic value chain: an integrated economic system



Mission

- to **promote** the separate collection of compostable bioplastic packaging waste with bio-waste (Art. 22, Directive 2008/98)
- to **manage** compostable bioplastic packaging waste recycling in composting/anaerobic digestion plants
- to **monitor production** and consumption of compostable bioplastic packaging
- to **analyse** the composition of bio-waste and compostable packaging
- to **educate, inform and engage** both citizens and stakeholders through communication campaigns (national and local).

Types of compostable bioplastic packaging

Mandatory feature to join Biorepack: certification of compostability in compliance with EN 13432.

Additional feature: by Italian law, very lightweight bags for fruit and vegetables must contain at least 60% of renewable raw material.

Food contact/food scrapes are the main applications of most of compostable bioplastic packaging.



How compostable plastic packaging is recycled

- By law, compostable bioplastic packaging must be recycled together with the foodwaste
- Kitchen waste is the largest municipal waste fraction collected (more than 5 million tonnes/year)
- Recycling takes place in **organic treatment plants** (aerobic treatment plants or anaerobic treatment plants with subsequent composting phase)
- Compostable plastic waste is processed together with bio-waste **to produce compost**, or digestate, provided it can be used on land (Reg. 2019/1009) and this use results in benefits for agriculture or ecological improvement (Art. 6a of Directive 94/62)
- **Organic recycling is the specific type of recycling for bio-waste and biodegradable materials, mentioned in Art. 3(17) of Directive 2008/98**
- Organic recycling results in the production of a **natural fertilizer** that can be used as a soil improver **in place of chemical fertilizer**

Results

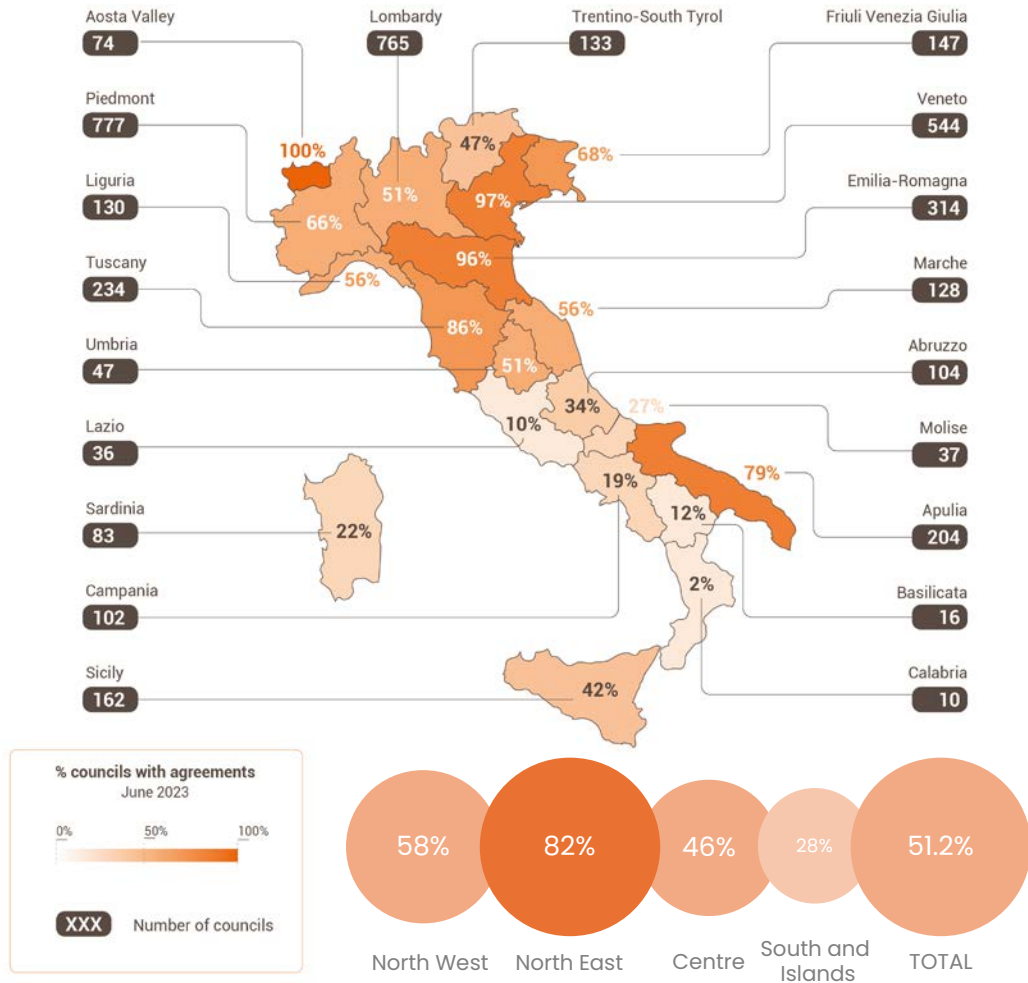
The statutory target of 50% by 2025 and 55% by 2030 was already exceeded in 2022.



60.7%

(Amount of compostable bioplastic packaging waste entering organic recycling plants, net of bioplastic removed before, during or after the recycling operation, see following slides)

Councils with Biorepack agreement



Results



Compostable plastic packaging in Italy and what is the expected trend in the coming years

	2023 (pre final balance)	2024	2025	2026	2027
Compostable bioplastic	78,400	80,600	82,700	85,000	87,400
Plastic	2,189,000	2,204,000	2,205,000	2,215,000	2,200,000
%	3.6%	3.7%	3.8%	3.8%	4.0%

Source: forecast of packaging released for consumption in Italy - Prometeia for CONAI - July 2023
Plastic: Total volumes CoRePla - other consortia

Communication

- TV Commercial
- Digital communication
- Local communities projects
- Events
- Media Relations
- Measurement



Communication

TV Commercial

CHALLENGE: Educate about the proper way to collect household wet waste, where only food scraps and compostable bioplastics should be put in.

IDEA: What can get people to think about what to put in the wet waste bin? scrupulous "input sorting."

GOALS: increase awareness about proper collection of wet waste, awareness of the Consortium, and the recycling rate of compostable bioplastic packaging.

MESSAGES: increase citizens' awareness of compostable bioplastic, which is often associated with plastic due to similarity in name; explain to citizens that compostable bioplastic should be placed in the wet waste bin as it is able, when combined with food scraps, to improve the quality of wet waste in the process of being turned into compost.

EXECUTION: A campaign built around two characters symbolizing the importance of "sorting at the entrance" of the wet waste bin: the "Buttadentro".

PERIOD: May-December 2023

MEDIA AND TARGET AUDIENCE: Italian citizens very broadly, and consequently we activated a comprehensive media mix that included TV, radio, print, digital, and social.

Number of TV commercials: 5,592

% prime time of TV commercials: 36%

% reach on total population: 59%

Frequency (how often each individual saw the commercial): 8

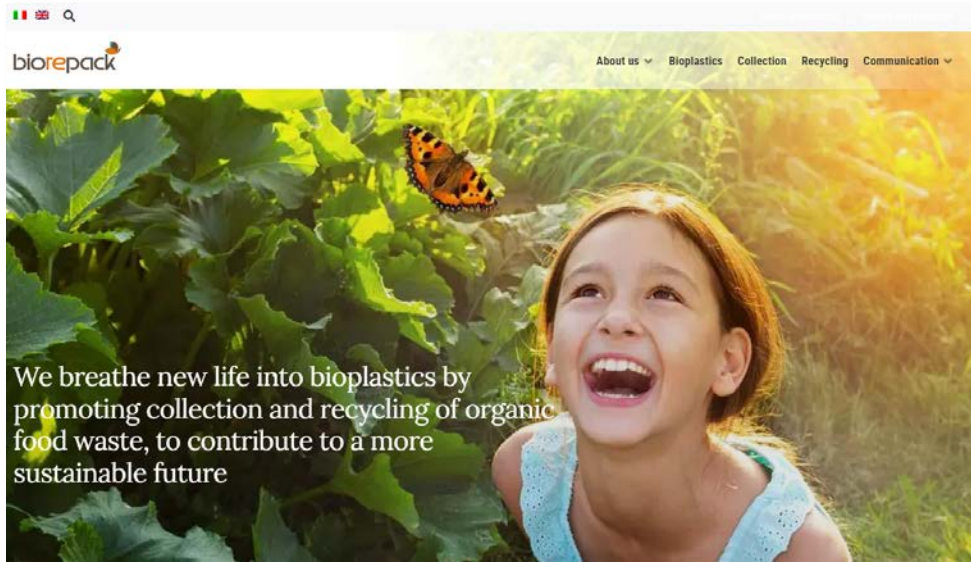


. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PzvlSOkmRM>

Communication

Digital communication

WEBSITE: eng.biorepack.org



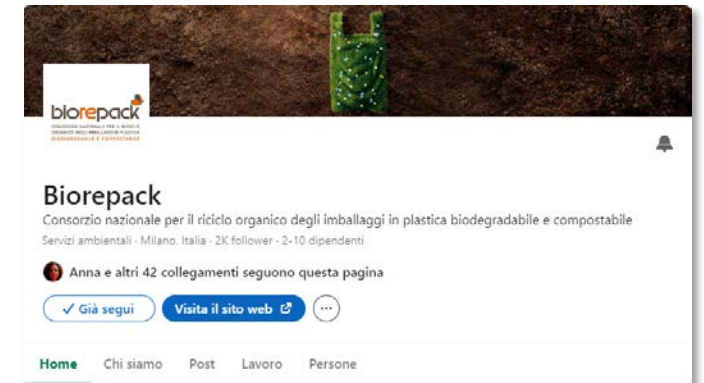
Unique users: 21.6k (2023)

META: Facebook & Instagram



Reach: 74.9k (2023)

LINKEDIN



Impressions: 20k (2023)

Communication

Local communication projects

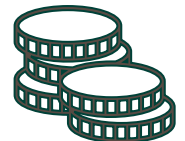
In 2023, for the first time, Biorepack promoted a **call for proposals** to fund **local communication projects** to promote the **recognition** and **recycling** of compostable bioplastic packaging. 39 municipalities and waste collection management companies participated, and **15 projects were funded** throughout Italy, for a total amount of **200,000 euros** allocated.



**39 PROJECTS
SUBMITTED**



**15 PROJECTS
FUNDED**



**200,000 €
ALLOCATED**

Communication Events

In June 2023, Biorepack organized an **institutional event** to give voice to the Italian compostable bioplastics supply chain and to present the Consortium's main achievements to the public.

Biorepack also participates in major environmental and sustainability trade fairs, such as **Ecomondo** in Rimini, one of the main events in the sector



Communication

Media Relations

The bioplastics industry in Italy is still a novelty and **many newspapers are still unfamiliar** with it.

For this reason, Biorepack has organized a **free training course for journalists**. It also constantly dialogues with all Italian newspapers to **spread knowledge** and **prevent the spread of misinformation and fake news** about compostable bioplastics.

17 press releases distributed to Italian and international media outlets.

33 interviews

1 media event

387 press clippings

19 tv news releases



New York comincia dal Queens la sperimentazione della raccolta porta a porta seguendo l'esempio dell'Italia. Marco Versari, presidente Consorzio Biorepack: «Siamo i primi al mondo»

BIOPLASTICA COMPOSTABILE UN MODELLO PER GLI USA



Communication

Measurement

A **quantitative analysis** was activated to monitor the impact of the TV campaign and the communication activities implemented by Biorepack.

These are the main evidences:

- **+19%** increase in the number of people correctly assessing where to dispose of bioplastics (in food waste) compared to the end of 2022
- **77%** of respondents correctly assessed which bag to use for food waste collection.
- **+23%** increase in awareness of the Consortium.

In particular, this is an important result because the more people know about Biorepack, the more awareness there is about what it is and how to correctly recycle bioplastics.

Final remarks

Goals for the next three years

- Increase the territorial coverage and the number of member companies
- Adopt the recognisable mark (already finalized) to help citizens in the correct recycle of compostable bioplastic packaging in order to strengthen the level of awareness of the population
- Support a more efficient separate collection of bio-waste throughout the country
- Support the technological improvement of treatment plants (composting and A.D.)
- Intensify the fight against illegal practices

Thank you!

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