

# Press release

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## “resources SAVED by recycling” – results for 2020 published

### New study: recycling secures raw materials for a climate-neutral Europe

- +++ Resources balance of the ALBA Group: 3.5 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions and 28.8 million tonnes of primary resources saved – in 2020 alone
- +++ Recycling as a key factor for achieving the EU climate goals
- +++ Minimum quotas for the use of recycled raw materials urgently required

Berlin. “Fit for 55” thanks to the circular economy: the recycling of raw materials leads to a systematic reduction in the greenhouse gas emissions of our civilisation – and can therefore make a key contribution to achieving the EU climate goals. This is the outcome of the “resources SAVED by recycling” study presented today, which the Fraunhofer Institute for Environmental, Safety and Energy Technology UMSICHT prepared on behalf of the ALBA Group. Thanks to the closed-loop circulation of 4.8 million tonnes of recyclable materials, the ALBA Group succeeded in preventing some 3.5 million tonnes of climate-damaging greenhouse gas emissions in the year 2020 alone. This amount is equivalent to the emissions from some five million return flights between Frankfurt am Main and Mallorca. At the same time, recycling also secures valuable raw materials for the industry: in 2020, in comparison with primary production, recycling saved 28.8 million tonnes of resources, such as crude oil and iron ore.

“The circular economy is one of the strongest pace-setters on the journey to achieving climate neutrality,” highlights **Dr Axel Schweitzer, CEO of the ALBA Group**. “We will only achieve the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55 per cent throughout Europe by 2030 if we make consistent use of recycled raw materials.” This includes the area of plastics, for example: compared with primary plastics made from crude oil, the use of high-quality recycled plastics achieves a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions of more than 50 per cent. “It is now necessary to lever this potential,” explains Schweitzer. “We are expecting the new Federal Government in Germany to act decisively and push ahead directly with the transition to a circular economy. The environmental benefits of recycling due to its clearly superior CO<sub>2</sub> balance should also find reflection in prices. As immediate climate protection measures, clear industry standards for recyclates combined with minimum quotas on the use of recycled raw materials in products and packaging are also urgently necessary. Last but not least, the state sector is also called upon to prioritise resource protection in the area of procurement. Sustainable procurement can ultimately provide a significant boost to the circular economy”.

Plastics, metals, waste electrical (and electronic) equipment, wood, paper, cardboard, cartons or glass: the Fraunhofer Institute for Environmental, Safety and Energy Technology UMSICHT has now been researching the specific benefits of recycling for 14 years. Detailed comparisons have also been made of the primary processes and recycling processes for the various material flows. “This means we can precisely

quantify the extent to which the recycling activities of the ALBA Group can contribute to reducing the burden on the environment,” explains **Dr Ing. Markus Hiebel, Director of the Department for Sustainability and Participation at Fraunhofer UMSICHT.**

Hiebel believes that the greatest savings can be achieved if the entire value chain is aligned consistently with the circular principle: “The transformation towards a genuine circular economy requires completely new thinking. Products should be designed and managed to ensure that they contain recycled raw materials right from the start – which enables them to be recycled appropriately.”

#### **About ALBA Group:**

The ALBA Group, one of the leading recycling and environmental services companies as well as raw material providers worldwide, operates with its two brands – ALBA and Interseroh – within Germany, Europe and Asia. In 2020 its divisions generated an annual turnover of 1.9 billion Euros and employed a staff of approx. 8,700 employees. In 2019 alone ALBA Group saved 4.2 million tonnes of greenhouse gases compared to primary production and at the same time 32.3 million tonnes of primary raw materials through its recycling activities.

Further information on ALBA Group can be found at [www.albagroup.com](http://www.albagroup.com).

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