

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 November 2020 11:54
To: wastecomments
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED] - Deposit Return Scheme
Attachments: Ireland deposit-return consultation_v1.0.pdf

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Dear Sir/Madam

Cisco Ireland in partnership with 99Bridges are pleased to submit our response to the public consultation titled 'Deposit Return Scheme – Consultation on Potential Models for Ireland'.

Cisco would like to thank the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications for the opportunity to supply this response. We trust that our response will prove to be of value and look forward to assisting at any level requested. An overview and demonstration of the solution approach referenced in the document has been scheduled for Friday 20th November @ 4PM with the Circular Economy unit within the department.

Please contact the following people with any queries in relation to this response:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

Warm Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Cisco & 99Bridges Response to Deposit Return Scheme – Potential Models for Ireland

10th November 2020



Disclaimer

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this response to this Consultation Process. Cisco and 99Bridges are not responsible for any inadvertent errors in our response.



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Introduction

Cisco welcomes the opportunity to submit comments to this timely Public Consultation on working models for a Deposit Return Scheme. At Cisco, we believe environmental sustainability is critical for economies and for all global citizens. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions, preserving biodiversity and natural resources, and designing our products to minimize waste: these important actions are factored into every aspect of our business.

99Bridges is a Cisco partner that is passionate about applying IoT and other advanced technologies to solve sustainability problems. 99Bridges chose 'Sustainability' as its anchor and believe technology can bring significant progress to improve our planet for future generations. At its core, 99Bridges is a software-as-a-service company with a portfolio of solutions to help businesses and organizations accelerate the transition to a more sustainable future.

As a partner of Cisco, 99Bridges is leveraging Cisco's advanced IoT, networking, data centre, collaboration, and security technologies to industrialize its solutions.

While this Public Consultation specifically addresses the issue of guidance for a Deposit Return scheme, there is a wider role that Government can play to encourage sustainable behaviour in collaboration with the private and public sectors, in recognition of its contribution to achieving numerous public policy objectives.

It will be important for Government to lead the way, for example by developing a strategy, addressing any legislative gaps, publishing clear guidance, and fostering a supportive culture, as well as encouraging and incentivizing investment in the necessary technological infrastructure. The result will be to create the best possible conditions for sustainability and ensure that Ireland captures the benefits it offers.

The comments below reflect Cisco's experience globally in supporting and enabling governments, organisations and individuals to adopt and adapt sustainable business practices.

The Report recommends a centralised, operational model for Ireland. Do you agree with this recommendation?

According to the [Eunomia report](#), a centralized operational model has worked for many other European countries, including Norway, England, and The Netherlands, which have successfully implemented a DRS. In the initial stages of such a program, we believe that a centralized approach is more advantageous as there are fewer number of stakeholders involved, which can increase speed and precision, and the container producers have more direct control for the end-to-end process and data collection. Moreover, producers can be incentivized to join the DRS if the government chooses to implement grants. In many cases, we are seeing private corporations leading the way to publicly declare sustainability goals.

Partnering with the private sector can accelerate the transition. A good example is Charlotte, North Carolina in the United States. The city is partnering with Coca-Cola Consolidated to pilot a new plastic bottle and aluminium can program called [Recycle Revolution](#). Cisco and 99Bridges are the chosen partners to enable this program announced last month. The goal of Coca-Cola Consolidated is to have 100% of their bottles recycled.

The solution brings several innovations to the city:

1. In a first of its kind, a sustainability social app, serves as a platform to drive social engagement, especially targeting the Millennial and Gen-Z digital generation. The app allows Charlotte to implement waves of complimentary sustainability initiatives to create a network effect – the sum is larger than its parts!
2. The app is called MOSAIC. The app implements a reward system to encourage engagement along with gamification features such as earning different levels of sustainability badges to further accelerate point accommodations. While we fully recognize that rewards for recycling has not worked for many countries as stated in the Eunomia report, we believe that design and ease of use play a critical role in its success. Moreover, other research such as that mentioned in this [Greenbiz article](#) showcases how various organizations have been successful at creating sustainability programs by rewarding their customers.
3. A critical component to our solution is the Personal Sustainability Score. We help users understand the impact they can create by providing them with DATA – Carbon Dioxide emission (CO2e) data. Every time a user recycles, MOSAIC shows their contribution to CO2e reduction in layman terms everyone can understand – miles of driving reduced or mobile phone charges avoided. Suddenly, people have visibility to their effort. For the socially conscious generation, this is a significant development. It is like providing the public with dietary data on the food they consume. Greater access to information, though data, is the first step in driving behavioural change and more responsible and sustainable consumption patterns. We believe the same effect would apply in providing CO2e data to the users. See sample screen shots below.



4. Another innovation we are bringing to the solution is the smart bag with washable RFID and QR tag. It enables us to automate the process and track recycles for each user. It is a much lower cost and effective alternative than building new collection kiosks as shown in some examples of the Eunomia report.

Our solution is multi-phased and expandable. It allows the city to implement a broad-based strategy over several years to impact meaningful and lasting change.

An overview and demonstration of this solution has been organised with the circular economy unit within the department and is scheduled for later in November.

If not, do you favour a decentralised/financial DRS or a hybrid model

Decentralized and hybrid approaches could be an option when the size of the implementation is at a scale where the centralized model becomes a bottleneck for speed and innovations. We would not recommend it at the initial stage.

As for the financial model, a public private partnership model similar to what Charlotte has done would help get the initiative off the ground quickly.

The approach in Charlotte can be expanded to be inclusive of all relevant brands maintaining a similar reward and gamification experience for citizens and business.

Are there other models you believe could work in an Irish context?

A centralized model is the most effective way initially. It allows for corrective adjustments to be implemented to refine the operational model. In addition, we recommend a phased approach to test-refine-expand. We believe each country and city has its unique characteristics. A level of flexibility in the model to accommodate moderate level of customization must be considered.

What role should waste collectors play in the operation of a DRS?

The new model, in most cases, disrupts waste collectors' existing business model. It might also undermine the huge investments they have made in the MRF for sorting recycled materials. In our view, the new operational model should start with new thinking and re-examine/trial other options. For example, the Recycle Revolution program we are implementing for the City of Charlotte represents a new and promising alternative model. On the other hand, some progressive waste collectors might see it as a new revenue opportunity with this new program.

The DRS study proposes a deposit per container of €0.20. Do you think this is appropriate? If not, should it be higher or lower or should different deposit rates apply depending on container size?

According to the Eunomia report, other countries like Norway, Lithuania, Estonia, The Netherlands, and Germany have higher deposit rates. We believe a slightly higher deposit rate would encourage consumers to return the bottles.

Consumers need to see a DRS being implemented before it becomes operational – do you have any suggestions as to how best the introduction of a DRS can be communicated to the public?

In today's day and age, we have a lot of options to create awareness amongst consumers about such programs. Social media is a great way to reach out to a lot of people. Additionally, a few flyers at the checkout counter of retail stores selling these bottled beverages is a good approach. The store

employees can also start verbally making people aware of the DRS. The important point here is to know who you are targeting. In our view, the Millennials and Gen-Z generations are the target! That is why we designed the solution to be fully digital, mobile, with gamification features to make it engaging for participants.

What enforcement measures should be considered in parallel with the introduction of a DRS?

In addition to a higher deposit, rewards can also be provided to the consumers to gamify the experience. In this way, they would be encouraged to participate in returning the bottles. Additionally, the program has to be made easy for the consumers. The focus should be on education and incentives.

How should cross-border issues be treated to ensure producers are not at a competitive disadvantage relative to producers in Northern Ireland?

Many research studies are pointing to the fact that consumers are willing to pay a premium on environmentally friendly products. Northern Ireland is already considering a DRS itself and moreover, as the Eunomia report suggests, it should be about making consumers aware that the deposit is not a price increase and that they can receive it back when they return the bottles. Notwithstanding political considerations, every effort should be made to ensure that any DRS schemes introduced both in Ireland and in Northern Ireland are inter-operable.

Recommendations on next steps

We believe Ireland's circular economy initiative and the DRS initiative are both timely and relevant. The arrival of COVID-19 has put the world on alert to global issues affecting the economy and the planet. Sustainability and green recovery is now front and centre for every nation and every business. Cisco and 99Bridges would like to partner with the Department to pilot the solution that is being implemented for the City of Charlotte. Cisco is also in a position to potentially fund a pilot by using our Country Digital Acceleration (CDA) fund.

Subject to a successful demonstration of the solution later in November and assuming this approach is beneficial, we would welcome exploratory sessions with your key stakeholders to discuss a pilot proposal.

Summary

Cisco would like to thank the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications for the opportunity to supply this response. We trust that our response will prove to be of value and look forward to assisting at any level requested.

Contacts

Please contact the following people with any queries in relation to this response:

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References

99Bridges: www.99bridges.com

Envision Charlotte Recycle Revolution: <https://envisioncharlotte.com/revolution/>

