



# WORLD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT 2022

**TOWARDS A RESILIENT PLANET:  
ENSURING A SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE FUTURE**

February 16-18, 2022 (Virtual)



## Emerging Opportunities towards Sustainable Packaging Solutions

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### THEMATIC TRACK SUMMARY

Venue: Sariska

Date: February 17, 2022

Time: 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM (IST)

#### **Suggested Citation**

World Sustainable Development Summit (2022), Emerging Opportunities towards Sustainable Packaging Solutions, Thematic Track Summary (Rapporteur: Trinayana Kaushik), New Delhi: The Energy and Resources Institute.

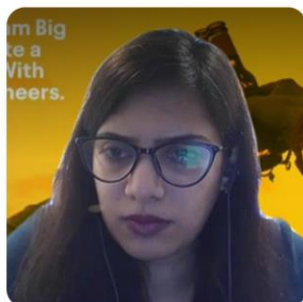
## Actionable Messages

**Message 1:** Aluminum is a more sustainable packaging option compared to other available options like glass and plastic; due to its infinite recyclability. In order to promote sustainability in the packaging industry, aluminum sector must be facilitated by industry partners and policy makers.

**Message 2:** There is a need to overcome the challenges related to pricing, as plastic bottles are cheaper and hence most preferred in a price sensitive market like India.

**Message 3:** Consumers today want to make sustainable choices and hence consumer awareness on aluminum products is also important. Consumer awareness on aluminium products is low and hence policy emphasis should be directed towards increasing awareness.

**Message 4:** Aluminum is a good packaging option from the perspective of food safety due to negligible toxicity value. There is a huge potential for aluminum packaging in airline, tourism and hospitality sector.



## Narrative

The session began with opening remarks by **Dr Anupam Agnihotri, Director, JNARDDC, Ministry of Mines, Government of India**. He did an excellent context setting by highlighting the importance of aluminum for pursuing sustainability in the packaging industry. Aluminum has successfully passed the test across several parameters like resource and energy efficiency, circular economy due to its infinite recyclability, light weight, better storage and improved beverage quality in terms of freshness and taste. One of the major reasons for aluminum's high recyclability is the high value of aluminum scrap. There are three very important Es associated in any sustainability goal: Energy, Environment and Economy. From the energy point of view, aluminum has high energy efficiency as recycling aluminum cans saves up to 95% of energy compared to using virgin aluminum. Out of the total aluminum ever resourced, 75% is still in use, indicating that its impacts on the environment is very less compared to other substrates. From an economic point of view, aluminum does face a challenge due to its cost which limits its penetration in a price sensitive market like India. The per capita consumption of aluminum is just one per year in India which is much lower than other regions like Brazil or China. However the Government of India has taken several policy measures in recent times to help out the industry in its goal of sustainability. The need is to further find opportunities to increase aluminum cans' market.

The panel discussion started with initial comments with **Mr Amit Lahoti, Senior Director and General Manager-Asia, Ball Beverage Packaging**. He remarked that growth without incorporating sustainability is not possible and we might end up like countries like China which has seen massive environmental degradation of like Nigeria which has several unfulfilled aspirations despite efforts. He also mentioned that consumers today have become increasingly aware and want to make sustainable choices. According to a survey done by Ball Corporation 81% consumers wanted sustainable products; 70% were buying eco-friendly products compared to what they were consuming 5 years ago. 83% wanted reuse and recycle to be incorporated in products they consume. Mr. Amit highlighted the several needs for recycling of packaging: High rate of collection which is directly dependent on high end of life value, easy separation of components parts, needs for high recycling yield. Thus the scope for aluminum is very bright. Brands like it as it serves as a 360 degree marketing tool, retailers like it due to its light weight, storage efficiency and consumers like it for it keeps the freshness and taste of the beverage intact, and also scope for contamination is very low.

**Mr Mitesh Pandya, AVP-Sustainability and CSR, Vedanta Limited-Aluminum Business** spoke next and pointed out the need for closed loop recycling in all sectors including aluminum. He once again highlighted the importance of aluminum packaging and brought to forefront novel points including high thermal and electric conductivity of aluminum and negligible toxicity which makes it a great option from the food safety point of view. He also gave some insights from the consumer's perspective. Aluminum can attract young consumers as it is an on-the-go product, enables fascinating designs and due to higher environment consciousness of young people.

**Mr Ankur Chawla, Director, Fabonest Food & Beverages Pvt Ltd** drew from his field of expertise and gave insights on the hotel's and corporate's perspective. For a long time now, these sectors want to move away from plastics and are looking at alternatives. While on one hand glass is considered as an alternative, it is associated with several functionality and handling issues when it comes to high volume management. Other sectors like airlines, cinemas which use massive amount of plastic is on a similar crossroad. Cost is very important factor considered by profit seeking sectors and hence aluminum needs facilitation in this regard. He pointed out his own efforts in this front by making a product where he tapped fresh spring water in aluminum cans. However he also said that there is still a very long way to go in terms of education and action.

**Mr Rajiv Sangoi, Co-founder, Rio Beverages** cited with evidence from his own company that usage and acceptance of aluminum cans has increased manifold in that last decade. While his company started their new beverage product in both glass bottles and aluminum cans, they completely shifted to aluminum cans in 2016 owing to several challenges associated with glass. He emphasized on how economics is the single major challenge for aluminum cans and in continued presence of cheap single use plastics may hamper its growth. Hence the need is to have regulatory single use plastics laws.

Finally **Ms Kreena Patel, Associate Director, AB InBev** spoke about how sustainability is indispensable in today's time. The major challenge in the much needed aluminum penetration is awareness among consumers. Even if consumers want to make sustainable choices, they are unaware of what goes behind production and disposal of individual substrates. Ms. Patel gave some very valuable insights of how the consumer should be given the choice of consumption but at the same time, they must have the knowledge of sustainable products so as to make informed choices. Her recommendations included facilitation from government's side and simple rating system across beverage packaging options along the lines of star labeling for electronic products. These simple measures can efficiently and simplistically communicate sustainability information to the masses.

## **Making Words Count @WSDS 2022**

“ When one talks about sustainable development in the packaging industry, one cannot ignore aluminum as it is the infinitely renewable metal. Aluminum has passed the test on all parameters in terms of existing packaging options. Depletion rate of resources must not exceed its recycling rate.

***Dr Anupam Agnihotri***  
***Director, JNARDDC, Ministry of Mines, Government of India***

“ Environment is filled with mystery and opportunity. Plastic Packaging pollution has reached crisis levels. Ball Corporation is not just a supplier but a sustainability partner.

***Mr Amit Lahoti***  
***Senior Director and General Manager-Asia, Ball Beverage Packaging***

“ Importance has to be given not just to recycling but to closed-loop recycling. Aluminum is the metal of the future.

***Mr Mitesh Pandya***  
***AVP-Sustainability and CSR, Vedanta Limited-Aluminum Business***

“ Hotels and corporates want to shift away from plastics and are looking for alternatives. We still have a long way to go in terms of education and action. Laws regulating single use plastic (SUP) can affect transition into aluminum cans.

***Mr Ankur Chawla***  
***Director, Fabonest Food & Beverages Pvt Ltd***

“ Massive growth of Aluminum cans is seen in the last decade. Aluminum is also the way forward for startup companies.

***Mr Rajiv Sangoi***  
***Co-founder, Rio Beverages***

“ Importance of moving to sustainable development is no more a choice. We need a lot of partnerships across the value chain so that ultimately simplistic information can be provided to the consumers.

***Ms Kreena Patel***  
***Associate Director, AB InBev***