

PLASTIC WASTE PLEDGE BY KOÇ HOLDING
INSPIRED BY THE THEME OF THIS YEAR'S ISTANBUL BIENNIAL

**KOÇ HOLDING WILL PUT AN END
TO THE CONSUMPTION OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC
BY THE END OF 2020!**

The use of plastic has been recognised as one of the most significant environmental problems associated with climate change in the 21st century. It causes damage to human well-being, the environment, and the economy. Giving up single-use plastics is understood to be the first step toward reducing plastic consumption and the pollution it entails. The theme of this year's Istanbul Biennial, one of the foremost art events in the world, takes its name, "The Seventh Continent," from the name that scientific circles have given to the huge mass of waste that floats in the ocean. With the pledge made by CEO Levent Çakıroğlu, Koç Holding has demonstrated its determination to solve this global problem, once again on everyone's agenda thanks to the Istanbul Biennial, of which Koç Holding is the primary sponsor. Çakıroğlu announced that "We are pledging to put an end to single-use plastic consumption at all of Koç Group's companies and institutions, where over 90,000 of our colleagues work, by the end of 2020."

The use of plastic, recognised as one of the most significant environmental problems associated with climate change in the 21st century, has become a global issue. In 2016, plastic production reached 396 million tons, which translates to 53 kilograms of plastic for every single person on the planet. Notably, more than half of the plastic waste threatening the environment and human well-being today is single-use plastic produced in the past twenty years.

The Istanbul Biennial, organised by the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts and sponsored by Koç Holding from 2007 to 2026, took as its theme this year "The Seventh Continent," the name given by scientific circles to the huge mass of waste floating in the earth's oceans. The

16th Istanbul Biennial used art to challenge individuals to confront their own plastic consumption and to take bold steps, as a consequence of which Koç Holding has taken this noteworthy step of its own. Koç Holding CEO Levent Çakıroğlu explained that they see today as an important starting point, announcing their pledge regarding single-use plastic consumption at a conference where he was joined by Corporate Communications and External Affairs Director Oya Ünlü Kızıl and Human Resources Director Özgür Burak Akkol.

Levent Çakıroğlu: “Through the Istanbul Biennial, we are contributing to the development of our country’s cultural and artistic life.”

Speaking at the conference held at the Koç Group Sports Club, Levent Çakıroğlu stated: “Since our foundation, we as Koç Group have worked with an approach that sees economic and social development as a unified whole. We are very pleased that, through the Istanbul Biennial, we are able to contribute to the development of our country’s cultural and artistic life. It ranks among the most significant contemporary art events in the world. Through the support we have provided up until now, we have made it possible for the Biennial to become a free exhibition for all visitors and consequently, for record numbers of art lovers to visit the Biennial. This year, the Biennial will continue to welcome visitors until the 10th of November. I find it quite significant that the Istanbul Biennial has already been experienced by over 400 thousand people. I encourage anyone who hasn’t yet visited to add the Biennial’s venues to their weekend plans.”

Levent Çakıroğlu: “We cannot fathom the amount of plastic waste that has turned into pollution threatening the environment as well as human well-being. As Koç Group, we are resolved to take steps that will contribute to a solution of this problem.”

“As Koç Group, we are making significant investments for the sake of contributing to the economic and social progress of our country and leaving our mark for future generations,” continued Levent Çakıroğlu. “This year’s Istanbul Biennial, which we have sponsored through 2026, drew attention to this very significant global issue. This year’s theme, “The Seventh Continent,” comes from the name of a huge mass of trash located in the middle of the Pacific Ocean that is, unfortunately, composed of waste produced by humans. The Istanbul Biennial drew our attention to this problem, one of the most significant problems confronting us and one that is in need of a global solution. It once again confronted us with our habits of consumption, as well as the impact that these habits have on all the other living things on the planet. We realised once again the gravity of how our plastic waste affects the biomes of living things by damaging their ecosystems and how it diminishes biological diversity. While single-use plastic is used for an average of twelve minutes, its natural decomposition takes centuries, and as a consequence, it is at least as important for institutions as it is for individuals to take action. We know that the plastic mass in the Pacific Ocean is more than 3 million square metres in size. The amount of plastic pollution has become so large it is almost impossible to fathom, and it threatens the environment as well as human well-being.

Art is, without a doubt, a very effective vehicle for expressing how humanity has, by its own hand, inflicted significant damage on the world, its sole source of life, and how that damage threatens our future. This global issue, which the Istanbul Biennial called our attention to, has for some time been on our agenda as Koç Group. Together with our colleagues, and drawing on the strength of the Koç Group Companies, we are resolved to take steps that will contribute to a solution of this problem. With this goal in mind, we see single-use plastics as an important starting point and we have created this pledge that encompasses the entirety of the Koç Group.”

Levent Çakıroğlu: “We pledge to put an end to single-use plastic consumption at all of Koç Group’s companies and institutions, where over 90,000 of our colleagues work, by the end of 2020.”

Explaining that Koç Holding would start a series of projects at the same time in order to realise this pledge in the next year, Çakıroğlu stated: “We pledge to put an end to single-use plastic consumption at all of Koç Group’s companies and institutions, where over 90,000 of our colleagues work, by the end of 2020. We will first and foremost specify alternatives that can be used in place of single-use plastic, and we will expand reuse and recycling. We will systematically monitor and review our performance in trying to achieve the goals we set, and we will work to improve our efforts and share our progress with the public. We realise that we will be able to bring about this change only with the support of our more than 90,000 colleagues. In this regard, we will organise internal education and communication projects within the Group and we will work in-house to ensure these projects are embraced.

Çakıroğlu: “This pledge is just the beginning. We will soon be expanding the scope of our efforts concerning plastic even wider.”

According to Çakıroğlu, by beginning with Koç Group employees, Koç hopes a change in behaviors regarding the consumption of single-use plastic will spread in waves through their families and into wider society: “This pledge is just the beginning. We will soon be widening the scope of our efforts concerning plastic even more. There are already efforts in different focus areas within Koç Group companies, from reducing the use of plastic to producing alternatives to plastic and establishing sustainable systems. We will take as our focus escalating and accelerating these projects, and we will develop a road map in order to do so.”