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Amid increasing attention from the media, public, government and industry, Innovation Forum hosted the event “How business can tackle plastic pollution”. The event, sponsored by Sancroft, took place in October and brought together industry leaders, government and NGOs to discuss partnerships, innovations and technologies to reduce plastics waste. Sancroft Director, Felix Gummer and Senior Consultant, Dom De Ville were invited as guest speakers to share their insights and experiences from their work supporting business in this area. Some key takeaways from the event included:

1) Investors are calling for business to play a bigger role in introducing transparency.

Measuring, monitoring and reporting on plastics will generate a deeper understanding of where its role is necessary in the supply chain and how to shape and meet future commitments on plastics reduction.

2) Efforts to encourage a behaviour change must go hand-in-hand with legislation.

Consumers and industry need to be educated on the impact of plastic pollution and the correct process for recycling. Steps need to be taken to pinpoint the habits that must be addressed, along with the target audience and desired outcomes for behaviour change.

3) The landscape is evolving and becoming increasingly confusing for consumers.

The emergence of new polymers, whilst offering the possibility of new solutions, are seen to be creating confusion on how to correctly dispose and recycle our plastic waste. We are now faced with the trade-off between simplicity and marginal gains in functionality. Coupled with this, the absence of clear definitions for biodegradable plastics means consumers are at risk of being misinformed.

4) **Life-cycle assessments (LCA) fail to capture meaningful information.**

As a tool for informing product and packaging decisions, LCAs estimate the environmental impact of materials during their life. However, the mismanagement or leakage of materials out of the system are not factored into these assessments. Therefore, we need to rethink and create a robust approach for taking into consideration littering and materials that are theoretically recyclable but in practice fail to be collected, sorted or recycled.

5) **Transitioning to a future with chemical recycling.**

Chemical recycling can provide a solution for materials that are considered too difficult to be recycled using conventional mechanical recycling. Investment needs to be channelled to ensure we overcome the barriers of scalability and waste is collected and managed correctly.

How can Sancroft help your company?

Sancroft works with a range of key plastics players, including trade associations, manufacturers, retailers and wholesalers. Sancroft's commercial experience is complemented by knowledge of relevant legislation, allowing for a clear understanding of the current state and direction of the plastics industry. By providing consultancy services and forming strategic partnerships, Sancroft is able to contribute to discussions on, among other things, challenges concerning resource use and waste management, high level policy, responding to changes in legislation, and stakeholder engagement.

We can help you:

- Evaluate position - understand the plastics landscape and where your business sits
- Identify actions - determine what steps can be taken to future-proof your business
- Voice approach - respond to relevant consultations and communicate progress to stakeholders