



Strengthen the circular economy instead of slowing it down – retreading is active climate protection

Willich, March 10, 2026. The current discussion in France about increasing the role of retreaded passenger car tires within the nationwide end-of-life tire management system Aliapur highlights how central the tire industry is to the success of a true circular economy.

The Allianz Zukunft Reifen (AZuR) expressly welcomes political initiatives aimed at strengthening **retreading** and thereby advancing resource conservation, CO₂ reduction, and supply security in Europe.

Die Retreading is a proven industrial process with measurable environmental benefits: studies—including those by the Fraunhofer Institute UMSICHT—show that manufacturing retreaded tires saves more than 60 percent of CO₂ emissions, around two-thirds of raw materials, and approximately 50 percent of energy compared to new tires.

Especially in times of growing dependence on low-cost imports and volatile raw material markets, extending product lifecycles is a strategic lever for increasing resilience in Europe.

The debate must not be reduced to short-term market mechanisms. Anyone who takes the circular economy seriously must enable innovation and create planning certainty. Without reliable policy frameworks, investments in sustainable technologies such as modern retreading processes, devulcanization, or high-quality material recycling will be slowed down.

A functioning circular economy begins at the end of a product's life—with the collection, inspection, and targeted reuse of casings. If this cycle is weakened, the industrial foundation for sustainable innovation will also be lost in the future.

AZuR is convinced:

The ecological transition requires pragmatism—but also the courage to transform. Retreading passenger car tires is not a symbolic instrument, but a concrete contribution to climate protection, resource efficiency, and industrial value creation in Europe.

Strong criticism from AZuR network partner RIGDON

AZuR network partner RIGDON has also reacted with strong criticism to the recent statement by the management of Point S in France. As a full shareholder of Point S Germany, Managing Director Günter Ihle uses clear language:

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“These statements are fundamentally incorrect and must be withdrawn. There is no alternative to the circular economy if we care about future generations. That is why passenger car tire retreading is the future technology that society, policymakers, and the market must rely on.”

This strong reaction is understandable given RIGDON’s extensive commitment: the company is currently investing heavily in expanding its production capacity, particularly in a new highly automated passenger car tire retreading facility. This forward-looking flagship project stands for sustainable mobility, resource conservation, and technological innovation—and is being funded under the German government’s Environmental Innovation Program.

The AZuR network sees itself as an active driver of sustainability and transformation in the tire industry. Network partner RIGDON underscores this vision through its current investments in quality, environmental responsibility, and strengthening Germany as a business location.

AZuR’s position is clear: all tires suitable for retreading should be retreaded—this also applies to passenger car tires. Companies, policymakers, and society are called upon to promote and support this proven technology in the spirit of the circular economy.

About the Allianz Zukunft Reifen (AZuR)

Since 2020, AZuR has been committed across Europe to a sustainable tire circular economy. Used tires should be reused or recycled as close to 100 percent as possible in order to avoid waste, reduce CO₂ emissions, conserve natural resources, and protect people and the environment.

More than 80 AZuR partners from industry, SMEs, trade, and academia cover all sectors of the sustainable tire circular economy—from sustainable new tire manufacturing and certified end-of-life tire collection to repair, regrooving, and retreading, as well as mechanical and chemical recycling of tire materials. Through interdisciplinary collaboration, new pathways and solutions are being developed for an ecologically and economically viable tire circular system. Universities within the AZuR network play a particularly important role by providing valuable input through scientifically sound studies and research to help close material loops.

In November 2025, AZuR received the special “Cooperation” award at the NRW Resource Efficiency Prize presented by the Efficiency Agency NRW. In September 2025, AZuR was honored with the German Award for Sustainability Projects 2025. In the category “Overall Concept – NPO,” the jury recognized the network as a unique, Europe-wide initiative offering a comprehensive and practical solution for implementing a climate-friendly tire circular economy.

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AZuR network coordinator Christina Guth was awarded the Recircle Award 2025 in the category “Women’s Award for the Tyre Retreading Sector.” In November 2023, AZuR received the European Transport Award for Sustainability 2024 for its study on the positive environmental impact of retreading.

The AZuR success model of a tire circular economy is gaining global recognition and can—and should—be transferred to other industries and waste streams. More information: <https://azur-netzwerk.de>

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