

CIRCULAR ECONOMY



European
Commission



European Economic and Social Committee

Stakeholder Conference 20-21 February 2018

#EUIndustryDay #CircularEconomy #InvestEU #CEstakeholderEU

Delivering on the Circular Economy, What's Next?

Description of the workshops for Day 2

21 Feb 2018

SESSION 1

#KNOWLEDGE&BARRIERS

Roadmap to ICT- enabled circular economy

Increasing resource constraints necessitate a transition from linear economic models to circular models of production and consumption. It is essential to improve management of material flow and information flows. The exponential growth of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as Internet of Things, clouds, blockchains has created pervasive connectivity and offered powerful solutions to sense, store, interpret and communicate information. How might ICT unlock profound opportunities for circular economy transition? What might be the challenges for capturing their value creation potential? The session brings stakeholders together to look at the intersection between circular economy and ICT, develop proposals for addressing the challenges, and create roadmap to accelerating CE transition through ICT.

Focus questions:

- Why do we need a roadmap to ICT-enabled circular economy?
- How may digital technology enable systematic circular economy transition?
- What are the barriers for ICT to accelerate circular economy transition?
- How might policy makers create enabling environment?
- What core elements should be included in the roadmap?

Reparability and Serviceability Ratings of Appliances

As part of the broader circular economy efforts, products must become more durable, easy and affordable to repair, and information on these aspects clearly available to consumers. As one of the fastest growing sectors, electric and electronic products are the first candidates for better repair and serviceability to prolong their useful life time and allow for a broader range of circular economy options such as sharing, renting, reuse, refurbishment or remanufacturing.

As a starting point for our discussion with different stakeholders, we would like to focus on the following questions:

- Which perspectives need to be taken into account when rating aspects such as reparability and serviceability of products?
- What approaches are currently being used or investigated?
- Which future options can we consider to develop a harmonised approach towards Reparability and Serviceability Ratings of Appliances?
- How can we convey trustworthy and reliable information to consumers about this?

CIRCULAR ECONOMY



European
Commission



European Economic and Social Committee

Stakeholder Conference 20-21 February 2018

#EUIndustryDay #CircularEconomy #InvestEU #CEstakeholderEU

Circular bioeconomy – the regenerative story

Beyond the technical cycle, the circular economy offers great opportunities for closing nutrient loops, regeneration of natural capital, innovation bio-materials..

- Early signs show that this landscape is evolving, but what are the barriers to progress?
- What examples can we draw inspiration from?

#DIALOGUE

Product design for long-life products / industrialized maintenance and repair: what methods? What examples?

Industrial products that last long and are easy to maintain and repair have been designed for decades. The sectors that manufacture them, essentially in the B2B segment (rail, aeronautics, mechanical engineering, defense) have developed methods to ensure these features: failure analysis, simulation, accelerated ageing...

- How could these methods be transposed to the consumer segment (automotive, white goods, electronics)?
- How to organise the cross-sectoral skills transfer? How to convey these product features to the consumer?

Low carbon / low waste and the circular economy

Description to be published soon.

The real potential of the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

The European Commission's recent Plastics Strategy recognised the importance of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes in improving the efficiency of the recycling process; reducing waste and littering; encouraging design for recycling; and helping reduce plastic leakages into the environment. This session aims to provide a platform for participants to talk over the benefits and challenges of EPR systems in EU waste legislation, discuss ways to improve systems in Member States, and propose ideas for future actions that will strengthen EPR in Europe.

The session will provide a platform for participants to talk over the benefits and challenges of EPR systems in EU waste legislation, discuss ways to improve systems in Member States, and propose ideas for future actions that will strengthen EPR in Europe.

Key drivers and questions of this discussion could be:

- How will the Commission maximise new rules on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), included in the revised WFD, to harmonise the implementation of EPR across Europe?
- How can EPR schemes across Europe work together more to overcome existing difficulties and seize joint opportunities for the sector?
- EPR added value (holistic approach; operational and financial capabilities)
- Clarifying and strengthening stakeholders' roles and responsibilities across the value chain at national level

CIRCULAR ECONOMY



European
Commission



European Economic and Social Committee

Stakeholder Conference 20-21 February 2018

#EUIndustryDay #CircularEconomy #InvestEU #CEstakeholderEU

- Boosting recycling, addressing quality sorting and recycling and upgrading the EU's recycling capabilities, thus contributing to creating a opportunities for secondary raw materials (also in the light of the Chinese ban)
- Innovation for addressing materials' circularity through modulated EPR fees
- Empowering and educating consumers while preventing litter (infrastructure, consumer campaigns, citizens' involvement)

#PRACTICES

Circular approaches in the agri-food and forestry sector

How do we scale-up existing ideas and promote new ones?

Agriculture and forestry are based on natural cycles. Water, nutrients and soil are key factors in production. Fostering the circular approach by enhancing productivity while making efficient use of available natural resources results in significant sustainability and competitiveness benefits for these sectors.

The circular economy is also a great opportunity to strengthen cooperation between various actors in the value chain, to work closely with researchers and advisors and to find innovative solutions together.

The event will fuel a lively debate, promoting an exchange of best practices and networking.

Questions:

- What are the benefits of the circular economy for the overall sustainability of the sector?
- What is the role of innovation and research in finding new solutions to enhance the role of circular approaches in agriculture and forestry?
- How can the rural networks continue to promote more interactions on this topic between relevant stakeholders?

Risk and Reward. What over 6 million SMEs in Europe are thinking and doing about circularity. From the frontrunners to the laggards.

Spanning the spectrum of SMEs in Europe, UEAPME representing the volume of traditional small businesses, and Ecopreneur speaking for certified frontrunner companies who have already adopted circular business models – this circle will outline what linear and circular companies both ask for to grow sustainably in the future (eg diversified access to finance, technical assistance, upskilling both on production and procurement side).

At this circle, you see the spectrum of difference between SMEs who are profitable leaders in their field and circular, and those who are not yet adopting methods. We will discuss their roadblocks and needs, and also what impact certain regulatory frameworks will have on the forerunners, and the laggards alike.

We will compare and contrast what we see with our SMEs about why and how they are taking their next steps and what industry, regulation and business support can engage to nudge them into the next sphere.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY



European
Commission



European Economic and Social Committee

Stakeholder Conference 20-21 February 2018

#EUIndustryDay #CircularEconomy #InvestEU #CEstakeholderEU

#KNOWLEDGE&BARRIERS

The circular economy and the international level

The Circular economy principles and models are assessed positively with regard to the environmental, social and economic impacts in Europe, and often referred to as a model to achieve Sustainable Developments Goals at global scale. However, there are still too scarce evidences on this assumption and on possible conditions to associate to circular practices implementation to grant this straight link.

This open space circle session will attempt to gather thoughts and ideas on the following questions:

- Could CE implementation have negative consequences globally?
- How could we try to identify the risks and document them?
- How could we take them into account when designing EU policies and business models and collaborating with other economies?
- What directions to ensure CE development will be inclusive at EU and global level?

Participants could benefit from consulting the following reports:

[Virtuous circle Tearfund](#) (2016)

[A wider circle Chatham House](#) (2017)

[The CE and developing countries Dutch consortium](#) (2016)

[Circular Economy Rebound Zink and Geyer](#) (2017)

Social dimension of the Circular Economy: what impact on the nature and volume of work?

The transition to a Circular Economy can be expected to have the following consequences on the production system:

- fewer items being manufactured
- smaller waste flows
- more work incorporated in the design phase of products
- more work incorporated in the production, maintenance, repair and recycling of each item
- more stringent requirements on products leading to a potential competitive edge of EU producers
- industrial raw materials with a lesser carbon footprint (because they incorporate more secondary raw materials).
- What are the additional foreseeable consequences of the Circular Economy on work?
- What is the relative weight of these phenomena, in the whole economy and in each sector?

Overcoming Cultural Challenges in the Circular Transition

The objective of the participatory circle is to discuss cultural challenges on circular economy transition and ways to overcome them.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY



European
Commission



European Economic and Social Committee

Stakeholder Conference 20-21 February 2018

#EUIndustryDay #CircularEconomy #InvestEU #CEstakeholderEU

Circular economy requires a mindset shift - producers moving from "take, make, waste" to "reduce, reuse, recycle", and consumers moving from consuming more to consuming better, more efficiently, collaboratively, more sustainably. Mindset is embedded in culture - consumer preferences are highly influenced by collective understanding and shared norms, which are often shaped by what's on the shelf. Today, the collective consumption habits and norms are starting to be challenged and gradually changing through disruptive innovations, such as Airbnb and Lyft. This session convenes stakeholders to look into the cultural barriers for circular economy transition, possibly using specific cases (e.g. plastic representing convenience-oriented consumption culture) and to explore solutions together.

Guiding questions:

- What are the cultural barriers to transitioning to a circular economy from citizens and consumers perspectives?
- What are the cultural norms that consumers and producers need to improve to become more circular?
- How can we accelerate the cultural shift in consumers, businesses and society as a whole?
- How can policy makers create an enabling environment?

#DIALOGUE

Bottom-up initiatives: Creating a problem-solving community for circular economy business challenges

Throughout the session, we would like to introduce a broad challenge or issue that a business is facing. We will then share knowledge and insights about the circular economy in practice related to the challenge to inspire and evoke innovation-driven collaboration amongst the diverse group of participants. Participants will identify high-level opportunities for the company to engage in the circular economy by referring to concrete cases and practical business examples. At the end of the workshop, the organisation whose challenge has been examined will have a greater understanding of the challenge they face and what specific opportunities they can be explored further.

Structure: Split up in at least 2 groups (10-15 people per group) or more. We will guide the discussion and have exercises to help spark ideas for the challenge at hand. Each of the groups will look at one of the company's challenges or a common challenge for both companies.

Green financing of SMEs – how the market for 2018 is looking

Alyssa Jade McDonald-Baertl and Astrid Geiger will present an outline of what close to market investing in circularity looks like and how public (European Commission) and private institutions (private investment/funds) are contributing to this for SMEs. They will

- Overview of the LIFE programme (biggest European environmental funding programme), and approach to circularity.
- Overview of incubators and green investment funds in comparison.

Discuss the tensions and opportunities between public and private investment in developing SMEs, role of risk, time to market, regulatory constraints / incentives, expectations/ definition of success, selection of promising ideas. Openly show strengths and weaknesses in both models, and outline what possible collaborations could bring CE forward with green financing. Circle is focused on small and medium size enterprises, innovation in CE and start up + green turnaround. Out of scope for the circle: infrastructure funds, EIB, world bank.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY



European
Commission



European Economic and Social Committee

Stakeholder Conference 20-21 February 2018

#EUIndustryDay #CircularEconomy #InvestEU #CEstakeholderEU

Remanufacturing

Remanufacturing “as good as new” means ‘rebuilding’ a component, product or system to specifications of the originally manufactured product using a combination of reused, repaired and new parts. Typical products are SUCs, collectors’ items and technology heritage objects.

Remanufacturing with technology or fashion upgrading means bringing products up to state-of-the-art specifications of new products. Typical are B2B components, products and systems, such as combustion engines, railway rails, vending machines, trains, aircraft, lighthouses.

- How to transfer the existing technical and economic knowledge accumulated in SMEs and fleet managers, to class rooms, vocational training institutions and boardrooms to proliferate reman activities?
- How to open the market of ageing infrastructure (water, sewage, energy networks, bridges and tunnels) for periodic remanufacturing?
- How to promote the “pars-pro-toto” advantages of remanufacturing?

#PRACTICES

Urban Agenda – Circular economy partnership

This participatory circle will focus on introducing the circular economy partnership as part of the urban agenda process, including:

- Aims and process
- Developed actions by the partnership in the areas of water, waste, bio waste, one-stop shop, collaborative economy
- Discussing some actions with audience, receiving feedback and inviting participants for potential involvement

How circular are SMEs over Europe

Arthur ten Wolde will go through a functional and very helpful checklist to define how circular a product/service is – and if it sustainable in the first place. This checklist is ready for implementation but not yet launched for further piloting. The circle will explain and illustrate five key aspects of circular business, and illustrate how small and large businesses alike could use this tool for strategic planning in product development, and also for green turn-around for companies who want to go circular. Importantly, the list could also inspire to integrate circularity in existing sustainability checklists.

Paola Canfora will outline why collection of BEMPs at the Joint Research Centre is practical guidance and information (to inspire other companies to follow the example) based on the analysis of a number of case studies (from frontrunner companies) and on the interaction with several experts and companies. He will also explain what collection and study is being done now, and how it can help industry, business, regulators and financiers how to better support SMEs in their bid to grow circular.