



## Coordination Group meeting – 21 January 2022 from 09:30 to 12:30

### Participants:

- CG members: Alberto Arroyo Schnell (IUCN), Julia Blees (EuRIC), Mercè Boy Roura (Interreg MED Green Growth community), Núria Cases i Sampere (ACR+), Lieze Cloots (OVAM), Ladeja Godina Košir (Circular Change), Kari Herlevi (Sitra), Mark Hidson (ICLEI), Michael Kuhndt (CSCP), Michael Laermann (Ecopreneur.eu), Francesco Lembo (ACR+), Guido Lena (SMEUnited), Steve O'Reilly (Rediscovery Centre), Imke Schmidt (CSCP), Jean-Pierre Schweitzer (EEB), Agnieszka Sznyk (INNOWO), Daniel Torán (Generation Climate Europe), Anca Turtoi (Holland Circular Hotspot), Arthur ten Wolde (Ecopreneur.eu), Freek van Eijk (Holland Circular Hotspot), Carsten Wachholz (Ellen MacArthur Foundation), Marline Weber (INEC), Jana Žůrková (RREUSE)
- European Committee of the Regions (CoR): Maïlys Kahn, Tjisse Stelpstra, Jana Strien
- European Economic and Social Committee (EESC): Cillian Lohan, Maria Nikolopoulou
- European Environment Agency (EEA): Almut Reichel
- European Commission (EC): Patrick Child (ENV), Emmanuelle Maire (ENV), Petros Mamalis (RTD)
- ECESP secretariat: Janine Borg, Gaia Bottoni, Anna Cameron, Lukáš Ďurech, Satu Kankala, Alice Senga, Clara Villaresi, Caroline Verhelst, Hannah Robinson, Sara Zanfir Ioana, Christy Duckett

Item	Discussion	Decisions
<b>Welcome</b>	<p>- Chair of the Coordination Group, <b>Ladeja Godina Košir</b>, Circular Change Ms Godina Košir welcomed the CG members. The meeting would focus on summarising the achievements from the past year, including the recent Dubai Expo and what the ECESP had achieved there, future plans and the 2022 programme.</p> <p>- European Commission – <b>Patrick Child</b>, Deputy Director General, DG ENV Mr Child congratulated the ECESP on its Dubai events. His past work on the Green Deal and current focus in DG ENV on the zero pollution agenda tied in with the circular economy (CE). He welcomed the ECESP's outreach and role as ambassadors for the CE. There would be various key Commission initiatives over the coming year, beginning with the Sustainable Products Initiative (SPI). The Commission would also be promoting the right to repair, addressing greenwashing, working on key value chains (particularly textiles and plastics), tackling waste and labelling issues, and working on raising construction material performance. He hoped that DG ENV and the ECESP would be able to work effectively together on CE issues with a view to the Green Deal objectives and competitive opportunities for the EU.</p> <p>- European Economic and Social Committee – <b>Maria Nikolopoulou</b>, Member of the Employers' Group Ms Nikolopoulou praised the achievements of the ECESP which had become a reference point in this area. The EESC has observer status on the new Zero Pollution Stakeholder Platform, and she has been appointed for this role. She was confident that synergies could be developed between the two platforms.</p> <p>Ms Godina Košir was enthusiastic about this collaboration, which is a key added value of the ECESP.</p>	Meeting was opened at 9.30 a.m.
<b>Adoption of the agenda</b>	Adoption of the agenda for 21 January 2022 and approval of the minutes of the meeting on 16 March 2021.	The agenda was adopted and the minutes were approved
Results from WP 2021:	<p>Presentation of the Annual Activity Report by the secretariat The Secretariat presented the 2021 Annual Activity Report. The CG had worked in eight leadership groups (LGs) and 15 initiatives under their mandate of fostering debate, exchanging good practices and knowledge, acting as ambassadors and promoting interaction among stakeholders. The LGs reached out to other sectoral stakeholders using #EUCircularTalks (EUCTs). The CG initiatives included Circular Week 2021, biodiversity and climate issues. <a href="#">Circular Europe Days</a> was an opportunity for the CG to showcase the LGs' work in 2021 on the international level.</p>	

	<p>Mr van Eijk presented the eight ECESP sessions at Dubai Expo. These included a statement by Frans Timmermans and a high-level panel with the five supporting countries stressing the importance of the CE in their countries. The sessions highlighted the importance of network governance, circular infrastructure, Fit for 55, matchmaking (showing the ECESP website), cities and regions, circular electronics, the future of the bioeconomy, circular taxation and circular procurement. The sessions demonstrated the EU's commitment to a global CE, made tangible in a joint statement. He stressed that ECESP needed to collaborate with other CE stakeholders.</p>	
<p>#EUCircularTalks 2021 review + new features for 2022: - presentation of <a href="#">new EUCT toolbox</a> (contractors) + debate/Q&amp;A (including responses from <a href="#">jamboard</a>) (40 min)</p>	<p>#EUCircularTalks 2021 review:</p> <p>The Secretariat noted that in 2021 26 EUCTs were organised by the LGs. The LGs then drew up reflection papers summarising the findings of the EUCTs, to be used as the basis for stakeholder conference workshops. The EUTCs were well attended; external stakeholders felt they were a valuable opportunity for dialogue and appreciated being able to propose new topics such as the digital passport and design principles. The ECESP reached out to stakeholders through the website, social media and the newsletter, and there was effective two-way communication. The Secretariat gave the figures for social media use, including the new YouTube channel and described the review process, which enabled stakeholders to give feedback on the EUCTs. The main findings were that people liked the concept, but felt that fewer speakers and more time for debate would be good. They had suggested topics for 2022.</p> <p>Ms Godina Košir encouraged members to give feedback through the chatbox on anything they would like addressed.</p> <p>Presentation of <a href="#">new EUCT toolbox</a> (Commission contractors, LGI):</p> <p>Ms Godina Košir said that for the next 18 months, DG ENV and the ECESP secretariat would be working with LGI's sustainable innovation consultancy which specialised in communication and event organisation. They would produce new interactive features to complement existing ones of the EUCTs.</p> <p>Ms Valette from LGI said that they were developing tools to be proposed as part of the EUCT process. They had experience with videos, podcasts and online campaigns. They proposed a series of EUCircularPodcasts, a tool which was very good for sharing content with a broad audience. The podcasts would focus on topics chosen by the CG and LGs, with the format to be agreed. The second new feature was EUCircularIdeas: promotional videos intended to inspire change, with very broad outreach, with the format still to be agreed. The third feature was</p>	<p>The EUTC concept was well-regarded, but members felt that there had been too many in 2021.</p>

EUCircularActNow, through which stakeholders could say what they are doing to be circular and encourage others to follow suit. Lastly, LGI would promote engagement with the EUCTs, generally boost ECESP's social media presence and find ways to encourage interaction after the EUCTs.

Ms Godina Košir asked whether there would be a communication plan to ensure consistency: Ms Valette agreed good organisation and coordination was important.

Mr O'Reilly pointed out that it was very difficult to build podcast audiences which were generally very narrow. It would be key to share the podcasts as far as possible or it could be wasted effort. He also felt that EUCircularIdeas and EUCircularPodcasts were very similar. Strongly promoted videos of CE initiatives in various countries might be more useful than the EUCircularIdeas concept. With a view to reducing the workload, he also suggested recording the EUCTs and using the content for the podcast. Ms Valette replied that building on existing synergies was important. Ms Godina Košir agreed that it was key to reach out beyond current CE actors.

Ms Žůrková asked about the practical arrangements for the podcasts. She felt that the CG members needed to be able to explain the new features and what they required in terms of workload to the LG members. She was concerned that the podcast format, with single interest group view points per episode, would lose the stakeholder discussion aspect. Even if it was branded as an ECESP podcast, NGOs would not be able to share an industry-led podcast on their social media and vice-versa, which could reduce outreach of these tools.

The Secretariat said it would continue to coordinate and a deadline of 15 February would be set for CG members to decide in their respective LGs which of LGI's features would be most appropriate.

Mr Wachholz felt that there had been too many EUCTs last year, and so the decision on the new features should not be left to the LGs, which would again opt for too many for the sake of visibility for their own organisations. The CG should choose 3-4 major themes for 2022: all the new features should feed into them, rather than becoming overly fragmented. He also said that the Ellen McArthur Foundation reused content in many different formats for the sake of efficiency.

Ms Godina Košir agreed that a clear communication strategy was paramount. Ms Valette said that each 10-episode season of podcasts could be structured around a common thread.

Mr van Eijk said that the ECESP needed to really act as a network of networks, raising the question: what could be done to leverage each member's own followers? Ms Valette replied that being a network of networks was both a weakness (because each member organisation had its own priorities) and a strength (because it was made

	<p>up of components which could work together). Effective communication was key: each member should automatically pass on ECESP content. Ms Godina Košir agreed that the ECESP had to deliver value for members and ensure that they benefitted from being part of the platform. Mr Wachholz felt that ECESP content needed to fit into the individual organisation's communication strategy, and not vice versa.</p> <p>Ms Weber asked what type of response LGI hoped to achieve with EUCircularActNow. Ms Valette replied that each call should target a specific audience (such as cities) with stakeholders that could learn from each other.</p> <p>Mr Kuhndt said that an effective strategy was important, as was working together to support the Commission. The ECESP should therefore gear its communication and work plan to that of the Commission.</p> <p>Mr ten Wolde said that it was also important to gear the ECESP's agenda to that of the European Parliament.</p> <p>Ms Maire said that the Commission's main priorities for the first half of 2022 would be transforming the way we produce and consume, textiles and construction, climate and biodiversity, and youth. Plastics would be the major theme for the second half of the year. Ms Godina Košir said that the ECESP had access to producers and consumers and needed to flag up options to change current lifestyles.</p>	
<p>Workplan 2022: - Leadership Group themes 2022 (<a href="#">jamboard</a>) - Initiatives by CG members for 2022 (<a href="#">jamboard</a>)</p>	<p><b>Leadership Group themes 2022</b></p> <p>Ms Godina Košir said that the members would now focus on the themes for 2022, working to strike a balance between the public governance agenda and what the ECESP could achieve. The CG themes (<a href="#">jamboard</a>) and LG themes had been proposed, and would now be discussed in turn.</p> <p>Mr Wachholz suggested to start a jamboard on the big themes for 2022, aligning with the EC agenda but limited to the CEAP. He suggested circular design (instead of focusing on SPI and PPWD only), digitalisation and consumers, climate and biodiversity.</p> <p>Mr Arroyo Schnell said that four CG members (Ellen McArthur Foundation, SITRA, INEC and IUCN) had been very active together: they had participated in the World Conservation Congress with a talk on biodiversity, and had excellent plans for the future. Ms Godina Košir agreed that the biodiversity? in the CE was an important topic for the future.</p> <p>Ms Cloots said that the LG on public procurement should be kept up as the members had relevant expertise. Mr Hidson agreed, and said that ICLEI intended to support it and link their activities.</p>	<p>It was proposed that the economic incentives, buildings and infrastructure, textiles, biodiversity, and procurement LGs would be retained and the new LG on enabling circular behaviour through digitalisation would replace the current LG on consumers, retailers and skills. Sectoral LGs could be linked and the new theme of social economy and social enterprise explored. Cross-cutting issues such as climate, biodiversity and youth could be mainstreamed into</p>

	<p>Mr Kuhndt said that the LG on consumer behaviour was keen to develop their activities and interact with the Commission, moving onto how digitalisation could support circular behaviour.</p> <p>Mr Schweitzer suggested that given the coming work on ecodesign for smartphones/computers, right to repair, circular electronics, product passport, etc., a broader LG on digitalisation and circular electronics might make sense, although this would then lose the original focus of the LG on consumer behaviour. It would allow for close cooperation with DG Connect though.</p> <p>Mr Arroyo Schnell said that his LG's work on biodiversity tied in with various international events and the Green Deal and had been very productive, with the members coordinating to good effect. He felt that LGs should be set up with a specific timeline, rather than an open-ended mandate, and that it might be possible to link groups with an overarching topic, such as climate change.</p> <p>Mr van Eijk felt that LG themes should be linked to the French Council presidency's priorities in a top-down approach, including climate, as there was huge momentum on that issue. Bottom-up themes such as buildings and infrastructure had to be covered as they had such a big impact. He suggested four single-focus groups and four cross-cutting groups, rather than too many groups with a consequent loss of focus. Mr Arroyo Schnell said that he was in close contact with the French Council presidency which could be useful.</p> <p>Ms Žůrková said the Textiles LG should continue given the relevant policy developments. She also suggested more synergies between LGs for the EUCTs, which would help reach a broader audience. Mr ten Wolde said that media support could help explain EPR to the general public.</p> <p>Ms Dalenstam suggested drawing up an events calendar for the year's major events in which the CG would be involved.</p> <p>The Secretariat explained the timeline: the first cycle of EUCTs had finished in December 2021 and would feed into the Annual Conference; the next cycle would begin in March 2022.</p> <p>With regard to matching momentum, Mr O'Reilly said that Dublin would be hosting the Circular Hotspot in 2023, so it would be good if the hotspot could shine a spotlight on the ECESP's activities. Dublin would be focusing on the built environment, manufacturing and innovation, bioeconomy and food, and social enterprise.</p>	<p>proposed LG themes or made the theme for dedicated LGs. The deadline for feedback on LG themes was 15 February.</p>
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Also with a view to building the ECESP's visibility and developing synergies, Mr Herlevi spoke about the World Circular Economy Forum: they could hold early discussions with the ECESP on potential topics. He also felt that LG themes needed to be more aligned with current mega trends.

Mr Wachholz felt that creating one cross-cutting LG to tackle climate, biodiversity, pollution etc. could be more productive than many fragmented ones. He felt that the role of the LGs merited further discussion: what exactly were they aiming to achieve? Further alignment with the various DGs was key. He also felt that more than one CG meeting was needed in 2022 to ensure coordination.

Ms Cloots said that cross-cutting LGs carried the danger of lack of focus; Mr Wachholz felt that a clear timeline for priorities (shifting from climate change to biodiversity) would do away with this danger.

Mr Lembo said that the remit of the Cities and Regions LG was inherently cross-cutting as the interests of these stakeholders covered a very broad area. They were keen to focus on reaching small and new cities and regions and supporting the scaling up of circular solutions. This involved working with existing initiatives (one example was their cooperation with DG RTD on the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative), so they were enthusiastic about collaborating with DG CLIMA, DG ENV, etc.

Mr van Eijk asked if anyone wanted to be part of, lead (or co-lead) the LG on Buildings & Infrastructure. As regards horizontal topics, this topic was linked to climate, biodiversity, critical resources for Europe (resource security), digitisation, etc. Four EUCTs could be held just on these horizontal topics for B&I alone. Mr O'Reilly expressed an interest.

Ms Godina Košir agreed that cooperation with the DGs was very important: it would be good to be briefed in advance on their programmes.

The Secretariat said that there were clear proposals to continue with the economic incentives, buildings and infrastructure, textiles, biodiversity, and procurement LGs. There was also a proposal of a new LG on enabling circular behaviour through digitalisation to replace the current LG on consumers, retailers and skills. There was also a proposal to link sectoral LGs and to explore the new theme of social economy and social enterprise. Cross-cutting issues such as climate, biodiversity and youth could be mainstreamed into proposed LG themes or set up as separate ones. There was also a proposal of an international LG. The deadline for feedback on LG themes

would be 15 February. The secretariat would set up an online document where members could add or adapt the themes, and express interest to lead or participate in the LG.

Ms Godina Košir said that feedback could also deal with how to address the horizontal themes.

Mr Kuhndt suggested that when proposing a theme, it should be spelled out how that theme tied in with the EU agenda and other international events.

#### **Initiatives by CG members for 2022**

The Secretariat shared the [jamboard](#) which represented different proposals and the chat displayed various proposals between CG members to forge synergies. The following proposals were posted on the jam board: organise a webinar on transversal topics such as CE-Climate, strengthen collaboration with international initiatives and organisations, CE monitoring, etc.

Ms Cloots introduced a joint study by OVAM and Deloitte on International Treaty on Natural Resources Management. She would like to start the discussion on how to integrate the international dimension in the next CE Action Plan and how to bring the ideas to the table. Furthermore, the study will explore what measures are needed to transform the Waste Framework Directive into a materials directive that integrates prevention measures and is linked to other related EU CE initiatives. The project will foresee interaction with stakeholders. She added that OVAM would like to see an exchange with the Commission on their Flanders CE monitor tool and invited the other members of the CG to collaborate on the projects.

Ms Godina Košir said that an overview of different ongoing projects and research papers of the CG members would be useful for information transfer. The Secretariat added that stakeholders beyond the CG members are also interested in ongoing research and projects in order to avoid duplication of effort.

Mr Wachholz asked more clarification about the difference between the work carried out by the LG and CG initiatives and would like to see relevant international policy processes in the form of a LG.

After Ms Godina Košir reiterated the different roles of the work of the LG and CG initiatives, Mr van Eijk provided feedback on the contribution of CG members to the Dubai Expo as a combined action with an international and transversal reach. He also said that each LG could come up with recommendations that require a larger international stage to advance beyond the EU.

	<p>Ms Žůrková supported the idea of a 'global' LG, as it could more quickly mobilise people from the different groups and liaise with other international events such as the Dubai Expo. Ms Cloots added that the international dimension is more than outreach activities alone, it also includes policy issues such as how to integrate CE in international climate policy (NDCs) and monitoring models, how a global treaty on resources or on plastics could look like, an EU export ban of waste, and the EU strategic dependency of raw materials.</p> <p>Mr Hidson pointed out the need to clarify the purpose of policy and advocacy work at the international and global level so that they can be better coordinated. CE is a solution to climate problems, and therefore its importance should be profiled at global climate conferences such as COP.</p> <p>Mr O'Reilly said that communication outputs should be aligned to boost the outputs of the ECESP (e.g. toolboxes, podcasts) if they reflect the themes of bigger international events.</p> <p>Mr Arroyo Schnell recommended creating a timeline outlining the different objectives and initiatives from the groups.</p> <p>The Secretariat said it would streamline all the information and communicate the next steps the week after.</p>	
<p>Stakeholder Conference, 1-2 March 2022 - Day 1 Programme update from Commission - State-of-play of Day 2 Programme</p>	<p><b>2022 Circular Economy Stakeholder Conference</b></p> <p>Ms Emmanuelle Maire introduced Day 1 of the Conference. It will be held online, however speakers will speak in-person from the Charlemagne building.</p> <p>The following high-level speakers are confirmed: EVP Frans Timmermans, Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner Didier Reynders, EESC President Christa Schweng, and French Environment Minister Barbara Pompili.</p> <p>Agenda of the plenaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- moving to a joint agenda on sustainable products</li> <li>- making sustainable products a reality: experiences and perspectives from key product categories</li> <li>- consumers in the circular economy: new milestones to boost sustainable consumption</li> </ul>	

Parallel sessions will also be organised on biobased and biodegradable plastics, contribution of CE to tackle climate issues and EU market for secondary raw materials/recyclates (tbc).

The role for the CG will be to 'report' from the #EUCircularTalks. She added that it is important to have concrete examples of SMEs and NGOs to reach the citizens on circular economy.

Mr van Eijk introduced Day 2 of the conference, where the results of the LG, the lessons learnt and the way forward will be presented.

The Secretariat gave an overview of the programme flow:

8:30 – 9:30	welcome moderators/delegates
9:30 – 10:00	opening plenary (EESC and EC representative, French EU Council Presidency, CG Chair)
10:00 – 11:15	session 1 (4 LG workshops)
11:30 – 12:45	session 2 (4 LG workshops)
12:45	interactive lunch break
14:30	highlights from morning workshops
15:00	cross-cutting issues in circular economy (biodiversity and climate)
15:45 – 16:40	circular economy in practice – making sustainable products for sustainable consumption
16:40 – 17:00	closing sessions (circular celebrity)

Since the LG workshops will be organised in parallel, Mr van Eijk asked the organisers to identify overlapping agendas and adjust the order of the programme.

Regarding the integration of the youth aspect in the conference, Mr Torán explained that young people should have a seat in all debates in order to make their voice more heard in the climate and environmental decision-making processes at EU level. In light of the European Year of the Youth and accompanying intergenerational debate, he proposed to include a youth representative in the opening or closing remarks of the conference on day 1 and to incorporate a youth actor (e.g. entrepreneur, activist, researcher or politician) in each workshop on day 2. As a CG member, GCE can actively collaborate with the other CG members and the European Commission to ensure a structured youth engagement.

Mr Schweitzer supported the proposal from GCE. He asked if the CE in practice session would focus exclusively on producers or if value retention actors such as re-use and repair could also be covered.

	Ms Cameron invited people to share their suggestions as there is room for flexibility. Mr van Eijk added that the focus will be on the business side; either small or big companies that can bring circular change.	
<b>Closing remarks from the Chair</b>	Ms Godina Košir thanked the CG members and invited to share their ideas for the CE in practice session. She expressed her gratitude for Mr van Eijk's support as Co-chair and announced that he will lead as Chair of the ECESP Coordination Group as of February 18.	The meeting was closed at 12:23.

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