

A Circular Economy Leaders Community Workshop

Introducing Green Value Chain Connect: From WCEF Learnings to Value Chain Action

Online: 8 October 2026, 9:00 – 10:30 CEST

[Register here](#)

Background:

The [Green Growth Knowledge Partnership \(GGKP\)](#) is implementing an EU funded circular economy project to enhance cross-fertilization of knowledge and experience between national, regional and global circular economy initiatives, by facilitating **peer-to-peer exchange** and establishing a **digital knowledge-sharing network**.

As part of this work, GGKP is currently **developing Green Value Chain (GVC) Connect**, a facilitation mechanism to strengthen collaboration between corporations, technical assistance initiatives and suppliers around sustainability action in global value chains through improved access to knowledge and support information (see background note below for more details). This workshop session will draw on **emerging priorities and lessons from the World Circular Economy Forum (WCEF)** to inform the ongoing development and future direction of GVC Connect.

An initial GVC Connect pilot has been started for the agri-food sector in collaboration with the GEF Financing Agrochemical Reduction and Management ([FARM](#)) programme. This pilot involves exploratory discussions with retailers and food brands to co-design an initiative to support the sector in advancing sustainable management of agrochemicals and agri-plastics.

This online workshop will **present the current GVC Connect approach and gather feedback** on its proposed objectives, design and potential areas for improvement, as well as explore how the approach could be relevant to other sectors, such as electronics and its related critical raw materials dimensions.

Workshop objectives:

- Present the Green Value Chain Connect approach and initial outcomes from its agri-food pilot through the GEF FARM programme.
- Share key learnings and emerging priorities from value chain related sessions at the World Circular Economy Forum (WCEF).
- Gather feedback from on the GVC Connect approach, including opportunities, challenges and potential areas for collaboration.
- Explore how GVC Connect could be implemented across other value chains, in particular in electronics.

Registration: https://zoom.us/meeting/register/UEKzql-8SgWvP_a1gUzTBw#/registration

Agenda:

Time	Description	Speakers
9:00 – 9:05	Welcome and introduction	Hannes Mac Nulty, GGKP
9:05 – 9:20	Overview of Green Value Chain (GVC) Connect: • Introduction to GVC Connect concept • Initial results from agri-food sector pilot • Overview of expansion into electronics and other sectors	Hannes Mac Nulty Helena Rey de Assis, GEF FARM
9:20 – 9:40	WCEF learnings: • Insights from WCEF sessions dealing with value chains • Summary of key learnings relevant to GVC Connect	Tapiwa Nxele, UNEP EU CERC (TBC) Zubeida Zwavel, CARES
9:40 – 10:25	Moderated open-floor discussion: Real-time polling and guiding questions. Discussion and initial reactions to the proposed GVC Connect approach, expansion into other sectors and how learnings from WCEF can help shape it going forward.	All participants
10:25 – 10:30	Next steps	Hannes Mac Nulty

Green Value Chain Connect Background Note

About the Green Growth Knowledge Partnership (GGKP)

GGKP is a **global knowledge broker** led by UNEP, UNIDO, the World Bank, OECD, and GGGI. Its mission addresses a fundamental challenge: the world already knows how to build a green and circular economy, but this knowledge is scattered, fragmented, and not easily translatable into action. GGKP exists to connect knowledge sources and experiences at speed and scale, empowering the policy, industry, and finance communities to compare, contextualise, and apply solutions that work across different sectors and contexts.

GGKP is delivering this mission through a new **AI and API-powered knowledge ecosystem**. At its core is a federated global library that connects the knowledge platforms, project databases, and expert networks of GGKP's knowledge partners into a single, continuously updated source. On top of this connected foundation, AI-powered tools make the full library genuinely accessible: rather than a static database, users enter through personalised pathways, by role, topic, or geography, and the system intelligently surfaces the most relevant knowledge, projects, tools, and expertise for their specific needs. The result is a dynamic ecosystem that not only makes existing knowledge visible and actionable, but also reveals patterns across it, identifying what works where, surfacing gaps and collaboration opportunities. Green Value Chain Connect builds on this knowledge ecosystem to enable the kind of cross-sectoral and cross-institutional learning that fragmented systems have always made impossible.

The Challenge: Fragmented Support across Value Chains

Across global value chains, the actors responsible for setting sustainability requirements, providing implementation support, and actually implementing change operate largely in isolation. This fragmentation is one of the most significant and often least addressed barriers to sustainability progress at scale.

Suppliers in developing countries face growing pressure to meet corporate sustainability standards, but requirements are often technical, inconsistent across buyers, and disconnected from available knowledge and support. **Technical assistance (TA) initiatives** delivered by development organisations and NGOs frequently operate in silos, duplicating effort and delivering inconsistent guidance to the same suppliers.

Corporations must navigate an increasingly complex regulatory, standards and voluntary commitment environment, almost all of which depend on supplier-level action. They engage with TA initiatives in a fragmented, duplicative way and cannot easily harmonize procurement criteria with other corporations sharing supply chains, due to competition law constraints requiring neutral intermediaries.

Policymakers and financiers lack reliable intelligence from the private sector on how regulations work in practice. Governments design frameworks and financiers allocate capital without structured feedback on whether interventions are achieving their effects, while the operational experience that corporations and suppliers accumulate on what works, what burdens arise, and what adjustments would help rarely reaches decision-makers in any organised form. Governments in developing nations also lack tools to assess their own policy maturity and connect gaps to targeted support.

The result is misalignment at every level: corporations set varying requirements, TA initiatives deliver parallel activities, suppliers receive mixed signals, and policymakers and financiers act without sufficient implementation evidence

What Green Value Chain (GVC) Connect does

GVC Connect is a global facilitation mechanism hosted by GGKP that bridges these gaps by connecting TA initiatives, corporations, and suppliers through a shared, AI-powered knowledge ecosystem. It does not duplicate existing initiatives, instead, it provides the connective tissue that allows existing efforts to work together more effectively, through three mutually reinforcing components:

Component 1 - Connecting TA Initiatives and Knowledge with Each Other: GVC

Connect automatically maps and connects TA projects and knowledge resources (e.g. tools, guidance, training materials, and case studies) across geographies, sectors, and themes. Alongside regular peer-learning exchanges, this enables TA initiatives to identify complementarities, reduce duplication, and build on each other's evidence and experience. The result is a more coherent, better-coordinated landscape of support that can engage collectively and consistently with corporations and suppliers.

Component 2 - Connecting Corporations with TA Support and Knowledge: Through structured bilateral engagement and platform-based matching, corporations gain visibility of what TA support and knowledge exists by geography, sector, and theme, and connect directly with the supporting programmes, tools, and guidance most suited to their supplier contexts. Where corporations share supply chains, neutral facilitation through collective TA initiative efforts enables development of common sustainable procurement criteria without triggering competition law concerns.

Component 3 - Connecting Suppliers with Coordinated Support and Knowledge:

Corporations are supported to actively direct their suppliers to relevant supporting programmes, knowledge tools, and resources, turning a passive requirement into a practical offer of help. Suppliers receive consistent, aligned guidance and direct access to the diagnostics, training, and implementation support they need. Local business support organizations (BSOs) play a critical bridging role, embedding knowledge and capacity within supplier communities for continuity beyond individual project lifecycles.

Alongside this facilitation, GVC Connect generates systematic private sector intelligence, from large EU-based corporations to SMEs in developing countries, on how regulations work in practice, what challenges arise, and what adjustments would improve policy effectiveness. This intelligence flows to policymakers and financiers, providing the ground-level evidence needed to inform regulatory design and direct capital toward high-impact interventions.

Dedicated Tools For Every Value Chain Actor

Alongside dedicated peer-to-peer experience exchange facilitation, GVC Connect will be made operational at scale through a suite of purpose-built digital tools, each following the same logic: assess the user's situation, provide analytics on gaps and priorities, and recommend the most relevant knowledge and support. Together they will serve corporations, suppliers of all sizes, TA initiatives, governments and financiers.

Sustainable Supply Chain Navigator - for corporations and large suppliers (Design stage): An AI-assisted maturity assessment across key supply chain domains (e.g. Governance, Supplier Engagement, Standards, Traceability, etc.) and benchmarked against relevant regulatory and voluntary frameworks. It will generate a prioritized Sustainable Supply Chain Roadmap connecting each identified gap to specific TA projects, knowledge resources, and supplier-facing support.

I-GO Assistant - for SMEs (Deployed): An accessible self-assessment and knowledge navigation tool (www.igosolution.org) that directs SMEs to tailored knowledge, practical guidance, and locally available TA support matched to their specific context, sector, and

geography. BSOs can deploy their own branded version, enabling scale across their SME communities.

Development Intelligence Platform - for TA Initiatives, Corporations, Policymakers and Financiers (Design stage): An AI-powered intelligence layer on top of GGKP's existing knowledge ecosystem that will aggregate project, funding, and knowledge data across the development ecosystem to map who is doing what, where, and for whom. It will then surface duplication and co-financing opportunities, and most importantly synthesize lessons learned at scale to simplify effective project design, de-risk corporate investment decisions, and inform donor and government strategies.

Policy Support System (PSS) - for Countries (Deployed): The PSS enables countries to assess national sustainability policy maturity across multiple domains (currently waste, circularity and critical minerals), receive visual diagnostics and gap-severity analysis, and access AI-curated knowledge and recommendations. An upcoming cross-module portfolio view will also reveal which weaknesses are specific to a sector and which are systemic, enabling country-level actors to direct improvements at the right level rather than repeating parallel sectoral fixes for the same underlying gap.

Why GVC Connect is different

- Not a new initiative - empowers existing actors to work together more effectively, leveraging what already exists rather than adding to fragmentation.
- Digital and peer-to-peer facilitation combined - AI-powered knowledge access is paired with structured peer learning, and facilitated matchmaking, because technology alone does not change behaviour.
- Closes the intelligence gap - systematic private sector feedback and country-level policy evidence flow to policymakers and financiers, closing the feedback loop that regulatory design and capital allocation currently lack.
- Integrated intelligent tools at scale - purpose-built tools serving every actor type, connected through a shared knowledge ecosystem, and designed to reach large numbers of users efficiently.
- Strictly neutral - GGKP acts as a neutral facilitator, empowering each actor with tailored knowledge and enabling practical and effective collaboration between the different actors.

Current status

Partnering with the GEF-funded [FARM programme](#), GGKP is currently piloting the GVC Connect approach since Q3 2026 in the Agri-food value chain, focusing initially on connecting with retailers and food service companies around the topics of agrochemical reduction and circular economy. Existing sustainability policies overwhelmingly concentrate at production or consumption ends of the chain, largely overlooking the middle stages, e.g. food processors, retailers, and food services, that most significantly shape what farmers produce and what consumers buy. GVC Connect directly fills this gap.

In 2027, building on the learnings from its initial agri-food value chain pilot GVC Connect will be expanded to other value chains, starting with electronics and a focus on critical raw materials, e-waste management, and circular economy. It is expected to then rapidly apply GVC connect to all key value chains over the course of 2027.