

REGIONAL FORUM

ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE UNECE REGION

GENEVA | 1-2 March 2018



Towards a circular economy: innovation for sustainable value chains



Roundtable No. 9

1 March 2018, 4:30-6:00 p.m.

Lead organizers: UNECE and UN Environment

Room 14 (to be confirmed)

International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG)

Preliminary note as at 1 February 2018

Objective

The roundtable aims at:

- ✓ providing a mutual learning space where policymakers can interact with their peers and other relevant stakeholders to exchange experiences, propose solutions to identified problems and anticipate future developments to advance sustainable consumption and production patterns;
- ✓ identifying main lessons learned and compile a set of key action areas and good practices that can be shared with a wider audience;
- ✓ promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships to contribute to reduce food waste (SDG 12.3), encourage companies to adopt sustainable practices and integrate sustainability information and ensure consumers have relevant information for sustainable lifestyle (SDG 12.6 and 12.7), and identify ways of supporting transition economies to strengthen their capacity to move towards sustainable consumption and production (SDG 12.a).

Core questions

- (a) How to move from a linear to a circular economic system? What are the challenges and opportunities? What is the potential contribution of innovation, partnerships and infrastructure?
- (b) How can enhanced transparency and traceability of value chains and their environmental, social and health risks contribute to raising knowledge and awareness about sustainable production?
- (c) Which innovative practices can support information sharing among different stakeholders to ensure that consumers have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable lifestyle?
- (d) How can policymakers meet the target to halve per capita global food waste by 2030?

Case studies

- ✓ **Slovenia:** National Strategy for the Circular Economy - *Mr. Tadej Slapnik, State Secretary, office of the Prime Minister*
- ✓ **Italy:** The National Strategy on Circular Economy - *Mr. Andrea Innamorati, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea*
- ✓ **The Netherlands:** The International Green Deal North Sea Resources (NSRR) Roundabout - *Mrs. Robine van Dooren, Director General, Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment*
- ✓ **Czech Republic:** Food waste actions and interventions - *Mr. Jindřich Fialka, Director of Food Production and Legislation Department, Ministry of Agriculture*
- ✓ **Republic of Moldova:** Approaches to Sustainable Production and Consumption in the national landscape (tbc).
- ✓ **Montenegro:** Sustainable agriculture and rural development Strategy - *Mrs. Daniela*

- ✓ **Nordic Council of Ministers: Nordic Cooperation Project for green products** (Nordsyn) - *Ms. Anniina Kristinsson, Adviser Sustainable Development, Nordic Council of Ministers*

Stolica, Director General, Ministry for Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)

Target audience

The roundtable on SCP targets policy makers, business, civil society, international organizations, and academia, as well as other stakeholders involved in developing innovative solutions and partnership approaches.

Format

This roundtable offers the opportunity for a dynamic and interactive discussion around strategies and approaches for moving towards a circular economy, in support of more sustainable production and consumption patterns. A short presentation of selected case studies will provide examples of how countries have addressed specific challenges and a number of discussants from the international organisations, NGOs, Think Thanks and the business sectors will contribute to the roundtable by sharing their own experiences, reflecting on challenges and suggesting possible solutions.

Moderators:

Mrs. Andrea Brown, Director Circular Economy, World Business Council for Sustainable Development (*tbc*)

Mr. Geoffrey Hamilton, Acting Director, Economic Cooperation and Trade Division, UNECE

Rapporteur:

Mr. Andrea Innamorati, Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea, Italy

Discussants:

Ellen MacArthur Foundation: *Mr. Jocelyn Blériot, Executive Officer*

European Commission DG Environment: *Mr Hugo Schally, Head of Unit, Sustainable Production, Products & Consumption*

UNEnvironment : *Mr. Charles Arden Clarke, Head 10YFP Secretariat, UN Environment*

International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD): *Mrs. Laura Merrill, Senior Policy Advisor (tbc)*

Background

Current patterns of production and consumption are fast exhausting the natural resources, degrading ecosystems, and generating hazardous substances, waste and pollution.

By committing to SDG 12, Member States have pledged to respond to these challenges and steer economic and social systems for responsible production and consumption patterns. This involves moving from a linear to a circular economy approach, promoting resource and energy efficiency, reducing food waste along the whole supply chain, building a sustainable infrastructure, and providing access to basic services, green and decent jobs, for a better quality

of life for all. Essentially, it is about doing more and better with less.

A powerful lever for achieving SDG 12 and implementing lasting change is to join forces with all those involved in value chains and those regulating them. Such co-operation requires a systematic approach all engaging stakeholders, producers, manufacturers, intermediaries, traders and, retailers and the final consumer.

In recent years, national governments, international organizations and NGOs – have strengthened their commitment to face this historic challenge to meet the targets under SDG 12 in a win-win situation: less waste saves money and

feeds more; less negative impact on natural resources, climate and the environment creates better living conditions for all.

An ever-greater number of public and private-sector partners are measuring and disclosing progress made in these areas. When commitments are taken and reports are based on internationally agreed standards, it becomes much easier to benchmark and compare the results achieved by the different entities. For example, in 2016, several international organizations launched the Food Loss and Waste Accounting and Reporting Standard which not only helps governments cut their economic losses or reduce environmental impacts, but also to aggregate results across different countries and different sectors. Standards are also at the basis of the production and trading process both in manufacturing and agriculture.

However, countries with economies in transition often lack the capacity and funds to verify that commitments to sustainable consumption and production are honoured. For example, countries may not have the institutional and technical capacity to ascertain whether the emissions from cars are within the tolerated limits, or whether a home appliance indeed respect the required energy consumption limits.

Without this functioning institutional and technical infrastructure, a commitment to sustainable production cannot be achieved or independently verified.

This roundtable will look into such challenges and opportunities and will attempt to identify ways of supporting countries of the region to achieve their commitments under SDG12.

Linkages with other SDGs

Sustainable consumption and production patterns also enable several other SDGs and targets. For example, recovering just half of the food that is lost or wasted would be enough to achieve zero hunger (SDG2) and moving towards such patterns has a distinct beneficial economic effect on countries and businesses (SDG8). The higher level of water and energy use efficiency and their improved distribution will help meet water needs (SDG 6) and contribute to achieve universal access to affordable energy (SDG7), and to combat climate change (SDG13).
