

Common Press Statement on the Circular Economy

As Rapporteur and Shadow rapporteurs on the review of the waste framework directive, we support focusing on those areas where the EU has a clear added value. Therefore we support EU action to improve resource efficiency and to minimise the environmental impact of waste as we stimulate the transition towards a circular economy. The circular economy is the transition to a resource efficient economy, decoupling resource use and its environmental impacts from economic growth and deals with access to resources and materials, environmental protection, the re-industrialisation and further digitalisation of Europe, as well as the creation of new jobs and opportunities.

The circular economy package is not only fully compatible with the Commission's jobs and growth agenda, but will even strengthen it, as demonstrated by the Commissions' own Impact Assessment, and reinforces EU competitiveness. As the circular economy is about a systemic change European business needs a clear policy in order to channel future investment. Therefore a paradigm shift is needed that goes beyond the question of waste; and the waste policy should ensure that waste can be used as a valuable resource. We would like to remind the Commission of the priority objective of the 7th Environment Action Programme to turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy, which requires the full implementation of Union waste legislation throughout the Union, based on strict application of the waste hierarchy and covering different types of waste and additional efforts to reduce waste generation. In order for a new proposal to be considered more ambitious by the European Parliament at least the points following should be included:

Waste Policy

- Full implementation of existing waste legislation; the Commission needs to make full use of its powers as 'guardian of the Treaties' to ensure complete application by Member States of the provisions of existing waste legislation;
- Increase of legally binding recycling and preparation for reuse targets for municipal waste, certain waste streams therein, and packaging waste for 2020, 2025 and 2030 based on one solid and harmonised method preventing to report discarded waste (landfilled or incinerated) as recycled waste;
- Mandatory separate collection of bio-waste and construction and demolition waste in 2020 and an assessment of the possibility to extend the obligation of separate collection to textiles;
- Energy recovery should be limited to non-recyclable materials and a landfill ban for recyclable and biodegradable waste is needed, which should be followed by a landfill ban for recoverable waste that has to be seen in conjunction with recycling and preparation for reuse rates in order to avoid an increase of incineration.
- No financial support from Union funds for landfilling and incineration

Circular Economy Policy

- Clear political guidance to move into a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy is essential, requiring a systematic and strategic approach. Therefore we need an ambitious EU resource efficiency headline target for 2030 and accompanying sub-indicators to measure resource consumption;
- Identify legislative, economic and financial barriers that impede the transition to a circular economy and implement an integrated strategy to eliminate identified barriers;
- Support and improve the development of high quality secondary raw materials markets;
- Further implement the existing Ecodesign Directive, and assess the adoption of resource efficiency requirements for non-energy related products;
- Set binding minimum requirements for Extended Producer Responsibility in order to create a level playing field;
- Substitution of hazardous substances and materials, in particular of substances of very high concern, via REACH and RoHS, as a key contribution to non-toxic material cycles;

Establishing a true circular economy in the European Union responds to key policy challenges such as the creation of jobs and growth, improving the global competitiveness of our companies, securing our material supply, reaching the goal of 20% reindustrialisation of the European economy and protecting our climate and biodiversity.

Simona Bonafé

Karl-Heinz Florenz

Mark Demesmaeker

Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy

Davor Skrlec

Rapporteur S&D

Shadow Rapporteur EPP

Shadow Rapporteur ECR

Shadow Rapporteur ALDE

Shadow Rapporteur the Greens/EFA