

A new alliance between the waste management and manufacturing industries: The key to unlocking the circular economy's potential?

Brussels, 7 July 2023 – Yesterday, FEAD hosted an insightful in-person event, under the title, "**How to make the circular economy work? A new alliance between waste management and the manufacturing industries**". FEAD brought together experts, policymakers, and industry leaders, to explore ways in which EU institutions can enhance Member States' performance in achieving circular economy targets.

Kickstarting the event, Aurel Ciobanu-Dordea, the Commission's Director of Circular Economy, presented the **Early Warning Report (EWR) on waste**, and an overview of the institution's current actions and plans to achieve the circular economy targets. A first panel discussion followed, with Victor Dries from OVAM, Belgium, and Herwart Wilms, Vice-President of FEAD, joining the Commission official to address the necessary actions that EU must undertake to foster the circular economy.

Shifting to the industry, Leonardo Forner from the Sirmax Group presented a best practice example of 'plastics upcycling for automotive industry', before Almut Reichel introduced the audience into the European Environment Agency's work on secondary raw material markets. A second panel shed light on the importance of solidifying a synergy between the waste management and manufacturing industries, with MEP Sandro Gozi (Renew Europe, France), Cédric de Meeûs, President of Construction Products Europe, and David Lamy, FEAD Vice-President, joining the discussion. **FEAD concluded the successful event by unveiling its vision for the future of the waste management industry, pledging reflection, cooperation, and commitment to making the circular economy work.**

Claudia Mensi, *FEAD President* said:

"We need to re-define the way we see waste. Waste is a real, valuable resource. To address the shortcomings in the Member States' performance, FEAD pledges a 75% recycling target of all waste in the EU by 2035. To achieve this, concerted and ambitious action is required to boost the uptake of secondary raw materials into the economy."

Aurel Ciobanu-Dordea, *Director of Circular Economy, European Commission*, said:

"We should put a political price tag on a few benchmarks and take implementation more seriously, instead of just being focused on regulations."

Victor Dries, *International Affairs at OVAM*, said:

"The EWR results also show that it is feasible to reach the targets with the existing measures. Now, we need strong governance and more exchange between the Member States and the industries that can deliver."

Herwart Wilms, *FEAD Vice-President*, stressed:

"FEAD will support the EU Commission as best as possible in its goal of doubling the circular material use rate before the end of this decade. This will help Europe's resource independence and climate protection."

Leonardo Fornet, *Group Marketing & Sustainability Coordinator*, highlighted:

“To start new partnerships in a circular economy we cannot use the same mentality as 20 years ago. Let’s think together about what we can do better today.”

Almut Reichel, *Circular economy and waste expert, European Environment Agency*, noted:

“In terms of market barriers for secondary raw materials, there is a lot more to do at the design stage to phase out hazardous substances.”

Sandro Gozi, *MEP of Renew Europe, France*, said:

“For re-use and recycle, we have to rethink how the single market works. We cannot rely only on the market, because we need to link it to the policy choices we made, the circular economy and the Green Deal. I believe in the free choice of consumers, but to make a free choice, the consumer needs to be well informed.”

Cédric de Meeûs, *President of Construction Products Europe*, said:

“Having a dynamic single market is absolutely necessary, but it needs to be done in a smart way. Quality standards create market barriers when they are not commonly accepted.”

David Lamy, *FEAD Vice-President*, noted:

“An equation that does not reflect all the externalities is not correct. We need to ensure a fair share of the value for both parts, the manufacturing, and the waste management industries, with an equation that includes all externalities.”

We would like to thank all the speakers for their enriching perspectives and all the participants who joined us in Brussels, reiterating their commitment to making the circular economy work.

Find the event’s material [here](#).

FEAD is the European Waste Management Association, representing the private waste and resource management industry across Europe, including 18 national waste management federations and 3,000 waste management companies. Private waste management companies operate in 60% of municipal waste markets in Europe and in 75% of industrial and commercial waste. This means more than 320,000 local jobs, fuelling €5 billion of investments into the economy every year. For more information, please contact:

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