

ECTD's Contribution to the UNECE 69th Commission Session (20-21 April 2021) on the topic of the Circular Economy and the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

As contribution to UNECE's 69th Commission Session, ECTD organized two high-level Roundtables which discussed how economic cooperation, trade and supply chains, together with innovation and digitalization can support the transition to circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources in the UNECE region. Policy makers, private sector stakeholders and representatives from

international organizations, discussed the challenges and opportunities faced in creating an enabling environment for circular economy and highlighted the important role of economic cooperation and trade within and across economies in this transition. Benefitting from the moderation by outstanding thought leaders representing two of world's leading organizations on circularity, the Ellen MacArthur (EMA) Foundation and SITRA, the Finnish Innovation Fund, panelists provided insights and examples on ongoing initiatives to support the transition of circular economy within the UNECE region. The 69th Commission Session also featured other areas of the Division's work, notably our work on "Nexus", covered e.g. during the Cyber Monday.

Sixty-ninth session of the Commission, 20-21 April 2021

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Promoting circular economy and sustainable use of natural resources in the UNECE region

20 - 21 April 2021

Geneva, Switzerland



69TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

PROMOTING CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN THE UNECE REGION

20-21 APRIL 2021 | ROOM XVII | PALAIS DES NATIONS | GENEVA

Supply Chain Traceability and Sustainability, 20 April 2021



Panelists of Roundtable 2 discussed how supply chain traceability and sustainability in crucial sectors (textiles, bio-economy, agri-food, waste or services etc.) can support a more circular economy and sustainable use of natural resources in line with SDG 12. The role of trade and economic cooperation in scaling up circularity was also addressed. Panelists noted that making circular, sustainable and responsible choices easier for both businesses and consumers is essential. Transparency and traceability can help verify environmental, social or human rights claims made about a product and support informed decision-making. Digital and innovative solutions can support traceability, making it important to close the digital divide and leave no one behind. Panelists agreed that ECE, through its normative instruments and convening power, can make an important contribution and foster policy coherence. Multi-stakeholder collaboration and coordination between relevant international organizations are also key. The 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties in Glasgow and Italy's G20 presidency provide further opportunities for addressing circularity.

Recording - Roundtable 2 Supply Chain Traceability and Sustainability (from 01:45):

- English: <http://webtv.un.org/search/2nd-meeting-69th-session-of-unece/6249522812001/?term=UNECE&sort=date>
- French: <http://webtv.un.org/search/2nd-meeting-69th-session-of-unece/6249521545001/?term=UNECE&sort=date>
- Russian: <http://webtv.un.org/search/2nd-meeting-69th-session-of-unece/6249522971001/?term=UNECE&sort=date>

Business Perspectives, 21 April 2021



Panelists of Roundtable 3 elaborated on the responsibility of policy makers in facilitating and guiding the private sector contribution (including through trade/supply chains, investment and innovation) to the transition to a more circular economy. The UNECE region shows great potential for furthering this transition, including both in advanced economies that are spearheading circularity, such as those in the European Union and those who are now embarking on this transition. The United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), for example, can provide an avenue for supporting the circular transition in Central Asian countries. Discussions highlighted the need for systemic change, supported, among others, through the right incentives, with market regulation and standards playing a key role. Discussions also emphasized the relevance of innovation, economic cooperation and trade integration between countries and sub-regions in converting challenges faced into opportunities realized.

Recording – Roundtable 3 Business Perspectives:

- English: <http://webtv.un.org/search/3rd-meeting-69th-session-of-unece/6249655936001/?term=UNECE&sort=date#player>
- French: <http://webtv.un.org/search/3rd-meeting-69th-session-of-unece/6249659552001/?term=UNECE&sort=date#player>
- Russian: <http://webtv.un.org/search/3rd-meeting-69th-session-of-unece/6249655818001/?term=UNECE&sort=date>