



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

69th Session of the Commission



UNECE

Outcomes of the 69th session of the Commission: “Promoting circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources”

27th session of the Committee on Environmental Policy (agenda item 3)

Nicola Koch, Chef de Cabinet and
Secretary of the Commission
4 November 2021



Meeting report (E/ECE/1494)

High-level statement (E/ECE/1497)

- Decisions (on HL theme and other matters) E/ECE/1500 and Add.1
- Voluntary initiatives by member States in support of “Promoting circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources”

Cyber Monday – peer learning events related to HL theme, incl.
Batumi Talkshow: Scoring SDGs through Action on Green Economy and Clean Airon Batumi.

- Systematic engagement/follow up with subsidiary architecture
- Progress report at the next Commission session
- Under discussion: Designation of a future theme at end of a Commission year

High-level statement (excerpt)



2. We, the member States of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), therefore **commit to step up our efforts to promote circular economy approaches and the sustainable use of natural resources, namely by mainstreaming circularity and the sustainable use of natural resources in the existing relevant ECE sectoral work programmes – as appropriate**, and through the voluntary initiatives and capacity building cooperation opportunities that have been submitted to this session of the ECE, and other voluntary commitments that were made earlier in the Environment for Europe process.

3. **The work of ECE in relevant sub-programmes, sectoral committees and other subsidiary bodies can make an important contribution to foster circular and more resource-efficient economies and improve the management of natural resources in the region and beyond.** ECE's varied expertise, covering multiple thematic areas, provides a fertile ground for **cross-sectoral action and partnerships...** Such work could contribute to: advancing sustainable transport, building sustainable energy systems and advancing sustainable forest management as well as resource-efficient use of wood; **fostering environmental cooperation**; facilitating the alignment of trade and urban development with sustainable practices, including building resilience to possible future crises, and providing the statistical foundation for the better understanding of ongoing dynamics and the impacts of policy actions.

Decision by the Commission

E/ECE/1500



I. Circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources

...

9. Emphasizes the need to further strengthen its work in this field **within its existing mandate as appropriate and subject to available resources;**

10. Requests the **relevant Sectoral Committees** and bodies reporting directly to the Executive Committee, and their subsidiaries, to consider how **to enhance the impact of relevant existing ECE instruments**, in order to foster circular and more resource efficient approaches, **including by proposing ways to identify, assess and fill gaps in governance and good practices;**

11. Invites these subsidiary bodies to **replicate and scale up existing approaches** that facilitate broad and effective use of the appropriate instruments, **including through capacity-building and knowledge-sharing activities;**

Decisions by the Commission



12. Further invites these subsidiary bodies, as appropriate, to **consider developing proposals in their respective programmes of work, including possible collaboration across subprogrammes, for impactful and measurable solutions** that promote a circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources and that can facilitate attaining the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

13. Further requests that these subsidiary bodies **implement this decision without affecting their core mandate and activities carried out under each sectoral committee, and subject to available resources;**

...

17. **Encourages timely implementation of the voluntary initiatives submitted by member States** to the Commission session, to further accelerate the transition to a circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources, and further encourages member States who have not done so yet to consider taking concerted action in this regard; ...

Other issues calling for decision by the Commission



Other CE-related action items:

- **collaborate with other international organizations** towards a harmonized approach to measuring progress towards circularity including greater resource efficiency;
- **promote partnerships** to explore opportunities for synergies to broaden the use of relevant ECE instruments;
- **present a progress report** to the next Commission session

Other decision items of the Commission



Additional ECE69 decisions on

- Regional Forum on Sustainable Development
- Resource management, near-term acceleration of achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through action on gases and buildings, and study of the impact of subsidies as well as carbon pricing options
- Best Practice Guidance for Effective Methane Recovery and Use from Abandoned Coal Mines
- Updated United Nations Framework Classification for Resources

Issues for consideration by the CEP



The Committee may wish to

- take note of the information provided;
- consider including a standing agenda item on the follow up to the sessions of the Economic Commission in future meetings of the Committee.