

Conclusion

As mentioned this morning in the introduction, the objective of this conference was to find ideas to come to something concrete regarding circular economy.

Because many of you will agree: the concept of circular economy is quite simple and obvious but the main question is: how to get practically started?

Marcus Zils explained us that we need 3 basics:

- how to create value and what are possible pain points?
- How to capture value? How to integrate it into the system?
- How to redistribute value ? How to come to a Win-win-win situation?

In Brussels we decided to focus our regional circular economy strategy on reuse and repair and apparently many local and regional authorities did the same. Not only it is high on the waste hierarchy but, as Louise from Zero Waste Scotland said so wisely, reuse and repair are the beating heart of circular economy. So as local and regional authorities, we need to support reuse and repair activities on our territories.

How? We heard in the presentations examples of such actions developed by la/ra like upstream involvement of stakeholders in developing the strategy, creating quality standards or integrating reuse criteria in public procurement - an idea that I really found particularly interesting and I really think we should work on these criteria of reparability or life time extension in public procurement rules. (Cf. furniture resto)

Secondly, how can we convince the consumers? Circular economy needs to be attractive; it's about a new way of consuming not about more consuming. It is possible to combine both : consumption and sustainable development.

More and more examples arise that show that consumers are willing to be part of the movement and can become real actors in the model, like the examples shown by ifixit, the repair cafes or peerby.

However these initiatives are so much depending on the design phase and on the economic model, still based on selling more instead of encouraging products to last longer. This is where we need initiatives at EU level (on specific targets, on eco-design and reparability, on public procurement, ...) and that is why we need networks and exchange fora like the one who is co-hosting this event today to develop further ideas and actions so that we keep reuse and repair in the very heart of circular economy.

So ladies and gentlemen, I want to thank you very much for your presence and interest. Thanks to the speakers and thanks to you James for your inspiring contributions.

Thanks to the translators and thanks to the teams of ACR+ and Brussels Environment for the organisation. And in this a special thank you for Maëva from ACR+ and Anja from Brussels Environment!

Invitation to the awards ceremony