



Spanish EU Presidency & Circular Choices Coalition propose new approach on how to make competitiveness and the EU Green Deal work

Brussels 26, September - Together with the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU, a coalition of European trade associations representing 20% of the EU's manufacturing companies launched a debate on how a circular bioeconomy could enable a more competitive Europe, while at the same time helping the EU navigate through global challenges including climate change and a move away from fossils.

Opening the floor at the Coalition's launch event today, Alberto Ruiz, Counsellor for Industry at the Permanent Representation of Spain to the EU, highlighted industrial competitiveness and innovation as the priorities of the Spanish EU Presidency. Mr. Ruiz also identified the often-overlooked role bioeconomy and circularity actors already play in delivering on these priorities.

Several of the most innovative companies from across Europe representing providers of high-quality wood-based products, paper and board products and packaging, and renewable energy solutions, were invited to present real-life examples on how the use of renewable bio-based resources already supports the EU's green growth engine, and the objective of reaching carbon neutrality by 2050.

Speakers and the audience took stock of the status of the EU bioeconomy sector, and gaps to be addressed in view of the 2024-2029 legislative cycle, where expectations are high for bioeconomy actors to help turn the radical transformation EU Green Deal's legislative package into action. A lively panel discussion touched upon current drivers and barriers for a green industrialisation, future trends and opportunities, and long-term actions to ensure a globally competitive and resilient EU bioeconomy sector.

Ilkka Hämmälä, Cefi chairman and CEO of Metsä Group, stated: *"I am proud of what the Circular Choices Coalition represents, we are a coalition of believers bringing together 20 EU trade associations to develop an open cross-sectoral cooperation. Our promise is for our sectors to mitigate carbon emissions in the EU to the equivalent of at least 30% of EU fossil emissions by 2030, if EU policy decisions are made to support this direction."* Hämmälä underlined that to achieve the industry's targets, *"attention to legislative coherence across the different policy areas as well as to the cumulative impacts of EU regulations is key."*

The EU bioeconomy transformative potential will need the right regulatory environment to scale up: *"If we want the EU to lead on circular bioeconomy, we need to start working now for the creation of the right market conditions in the EU's single market, as well as globally"* said Alberto Ruiz, Counsellor for Industry, Permanent Representation of Spain to the EU.

Hans Ingels, Head of Bioeconomy Unit in DG GROW concluded: *"The EU Bioeconomy Strategy is key in achieving the EU Green Deal's objectives. It is important that we work together with the industry to deliver to the next generations a new societal and economic model that is based on the circular use of bio-based and renewable resources."*

Another panellist, Spanish Confederation of Business Organisations (CEOE) Head of EU Affairs Isabel Yglesias, stated: *"We need to ensure that we make the right regulatory and financing choices to enable that European industries that are front runners in sustainability are able to keep investing in Europe and to compete globally, making the EU more resilient to future shocks. For this, ensuring the skilling and upskilling of our workforce is equally central."*



About the Coalition:

The Circular Choices Coalition comprises 14 EU trade associations supported by a further six trade associations that represent EU forest owners and managers. The Circular Choices members collectively represent experts in the EU forestry sector, the wood, fibre-based paper, and board products industry, and in renewable energy provision. The coalition represents 4 million direct employees, turns over €520 billion and sequesters, and helps stores and substitutes 806 Mt CO₂ eq annually, equivalent to 20% of EU total fossil emissions. We offer circular and affordable solutions to deliver a net-zero economy by optimising the use of sustainable and renewable wood and wood fibre-based products and energy in a responsible and resource-efficient manner. Caring for the EU's forests means caring for people's needs. Sustainable forest management has been a success thanks to the commitment and efforts of forest owners and managers. Their decisions today will echo far into the future. Find out more [here](#).

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