

Role of Global South in enabling a global circular transition

on 31 May 2023 from 16:45 to 18:15

Room Number 206 of the Messukeskus in Helsinki, Finland

Circularity is critical in the urban context of the Global South. Rapid urbanisation in the region has led to significant challenges related to housing, transportation, and waste management. While many cities in the Global South are adopting sustainable urban planning approaches, waste management practices, promoting recycling and composting to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills, these practices are helping to promote inclusive economic growth and social progress.

International Council for Circular Economy hosted a roundtable at WCEF2023 on the role of Global South in enabling a global circular transition in Helsinki on 31 May 2023.

The roundtable would be the first of its kind of initiative that was led by the south for supporting the global circular transition. The roundtable was attended by 25 key global leaders in Circular Economy. Discussions highlighted the unique combination of traditional knowledge and latest technology that is helping the global south to make significant transition to become circular.

Ms Shalini Goyal Bhalla, Managing Director of International Council for Circular Economy chaired the roundtable with **Mr Chris Whyte** of African Circular Economy Network and **Mr Petar Ostojic** of CIEC. Ms Shalini highlighted the importance of a collective action and collaboration towards inclusionary pathways to 'net neutrality'. "Efforts rooted in and trimmed for the needs of Global South nations are urgent, if we aim to create a truly equitable and inclusive communities for a global circular transition", said Ms Bhalla.

Mr Chris Whyte, Director, ACEN discussed how the intra-regional trade, especially in developing Asia, dominates South-South trade. This region consistently accounted for approximately 75 per cent of the trade between developing countries over the 1995-2015 period. "Interregional South-South trade has increased from 14.1 per cent in 1995 to 20.1 per cent in 2015", said Chris.

Mr Juhani Damski, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of the Environment of Finland said that traditional knowledge presents an opportunity for Global south to make a big leap to transform linear structure to more resilient, regenerative and nature positive.

Ms Astrid Schomaker, European Commission, Directorate -for Environment, EU Commission discussed the importance of Mission LiFE which has been initiated by India's Honourable Prime Minister, Mr Narendra Modi. She also said that EU should change its inward-looking approach.

Ms Valerie Hickey, Global Director Environment, Natural Resources and the Blue Economy, World bank highlighted that the circular economy is a way we accelerate and leapfrog the slow growth to pull the countries out of poverty.

The roundtable saw active participation from leaders across the globe who actively participated in the discussions and worked on modelling a futuristic approach for global circular road map and approach to 2050.



A cooperation document was signed

A cooperation document between 7 organisations was signed. The collaboration will contribute to increased value creation in local and regional business and industry by providing companies with knowledge and expertise on circular economy and assistance in implementing new solutions on both a pilot scale and an industrial scale. The parties see that the activities can be complementary and will help to strengthen the interactions between the environments.

At the global level, the cooperation would help bridging the Global South and the Global North, breaking cultural and lifestyle barriers through solutions and best practice of mapping circular policies, economic incentives and business models. It also proposes joint planning with North and South partners for a global dialogue.

Lead role

1. Shalini Goyal Bhalla, Managing Director, International Council for Circular Economy, India

Lead Partners

1. Chris Whyte, Director of African Circular Economy Network, Africa
2. Petar Ostojic, Founder and Director, Centro de Innovación y Economía Circular – CIEC, Chile

Signing Partners-

1. **Bonmwa Fwangkwai** of African Circular Economy Alliance (ACEA)
2. **João Nunes** of CECOLAB, Latin America
3. **Beatriz Luz** of Exchange4Change of Brazil
4. **Andree Henriquez** of Circular Economy Technological Centre (CircularTec)