

KEY PUBLICATIONS

## CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

### BACKGROUND

In times of increasingly scarce natural resources and growing environmental pressure we need to rethink our business models so as to minimise waste generation and resource use. The transition towards a circular economy promises benefits both to the environment and the economy: instead of becoming waste and a possible threat to the environment, the value of products and materials is maintained for as long as possible. When a product has reached its end of life, resources are kept within the economy; product materials or packaging are used again, creating further value.



In July 2014, the European Commission presented its initial Circular Economy Package, however withdrew the legislative proposal on waste included therein a few months later to rework it.

Together with an EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy that addresses the whole product lifecycle from design and production through consumption and waste management, the Commission put forward its revised Circular Economy Package in December 2015. It includes four legislative proposals amending key legal acts of the EU waste acquis (Waste Framework Directive, Landfill Directive, Packaging Directive, as well as the Directives on end-of-life vehicles, batteries and accumulators, and waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE)).

The Policy Department for Economic, Scientific and Quality of Life Policies (Policy Department A) supports the ENVI Committee's activities on the EU Circular Economy Action Plan throughout the legislative cycle by providing external expertise.

### INSIDE

This leaflet provides abstracts of a compilation of publications prepared by Policy Department A at the request of the ENVI Committee in relation to the Circular Economy. Page 4 gives a chronological overview of the legislative process and the different products. *Please click on the title or scan the QR code to access the publication directly.*

### CONTACT

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## PUBLICATIONS

### Green Public Procurement - July 2017



Every year, over 250,000 public authorities in the EU spend around 14 % of GDP on the purchase of services, works and supplies. Therefore, Green Public Procurement (GPP) has a key role in delivering a Circular Economy (CE) in Europe. Through their procurement policies public authorities can significantly contribute to the CE, by procuring more environmentally friendly products and energy; improving functional use and reuse; and encouraging high value recycling in line with the Waste Framework Directive waste hierarchy. This study provides an overview of the current uses and opportunities of GPP in the EU and explores the capabilities of interaction and cross-impacts between GPP and the CE, with a focus on the particular challenges in implementing GPP in the context of the European Commission’s Circular Economy Action Plan.



### EU Action to Combat Marine Litter - May 2017

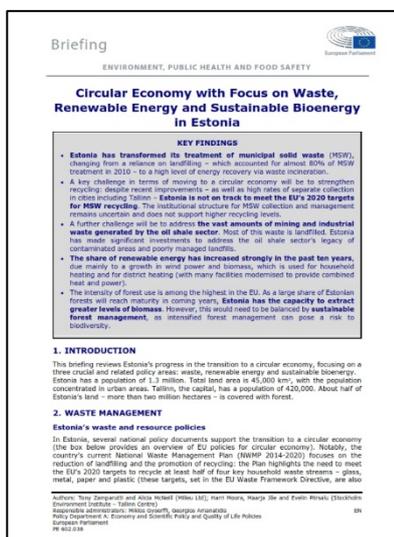


On 3rd May 2017, ENVI held a workshop entitled ‘EU Action to Combat Marine Litter’: Four leading experts discussed the need for systematic change in our approach to plastics and waste in the economy, summarised in these workshop proceedings.



The experts gave an overview of major flows, sources and leakages of plastics as well as their impacts on marine life and pointed to where the EU can play a key role in addressing marine litter. They highlighted the advantages of preventative versus clean-up measures, arguing for a better valorisation of plastics in the economy to keep it out of the oceans. Impacts and actions in different sectors were identified, underlining both their responsibility and their self-interest to act. One marine litter scientist, warning about unclear health impacts and costs from plastic pollution, called for political leadership in view of the systemic market failure.

### Circular Economy in Estonia - May 2017



This briefing reviews Estonia’s progress in the transition to a circular economy, focusing on three crucial and related policy areas: waste, renewable energy and sustainable bioenergy.



A key challenge for Estonia in terms of moving to a circular economy will be to improve separate collection of municipal solid waste and to strengthen recycling. Estonia is not yet on track to meet the EU’s 2020 targets for municipal solid waste, i.e. to recycle at least half of it. The share of renewable energy has increased strongly in the past ten years, due mainly to a growth in wind power and biomass, which is used for household heating and for district heating. The intensity of forest use is among the highest in the EU. As a large share of Estonian forests will reach maturity in coming years, Estonia has the capacity to extract greater levels of biomass which however need to be balanced by sustainable forest management.

## Secondary Raw Materials in a Circular Economy - February 2017



Better understand the role and opportunities for secondary raw materials in the implementation of the Circular Economy Action Plan. This was the aim of the workshop organised by Policy Department A for the ENVI Committee, held jointly with ITRE on 31 January 2017.

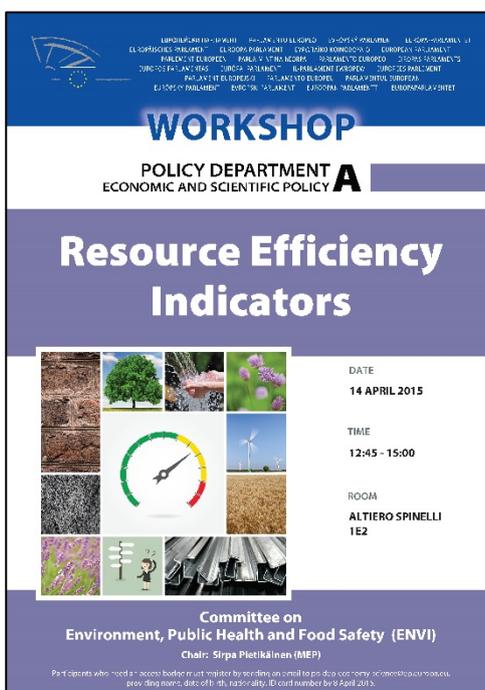


Four experts from different backgrounds discussed opportunities, regulatory barriers, production challenges and potential policy measures for secondary raw materials, summarised in these proceedings.

One of them stressed the importance of collecting and sharing data on the sustainability and reusability of materials. Another one highlighted different barriers, such as the lack of definitions, unclear recycling targets, hard numerical limits in product quality within EU legislation and the lack of or conflicting implementation actions at Member State level. The

need for a better understanding of the SRM value chain as well as the need to overcome feedstock supply limitations was underlined. Finally, policy incentives were called for together with an invitation to seize the opportunities SRM bear.

## Resource Efficiency Indicators - May 2015



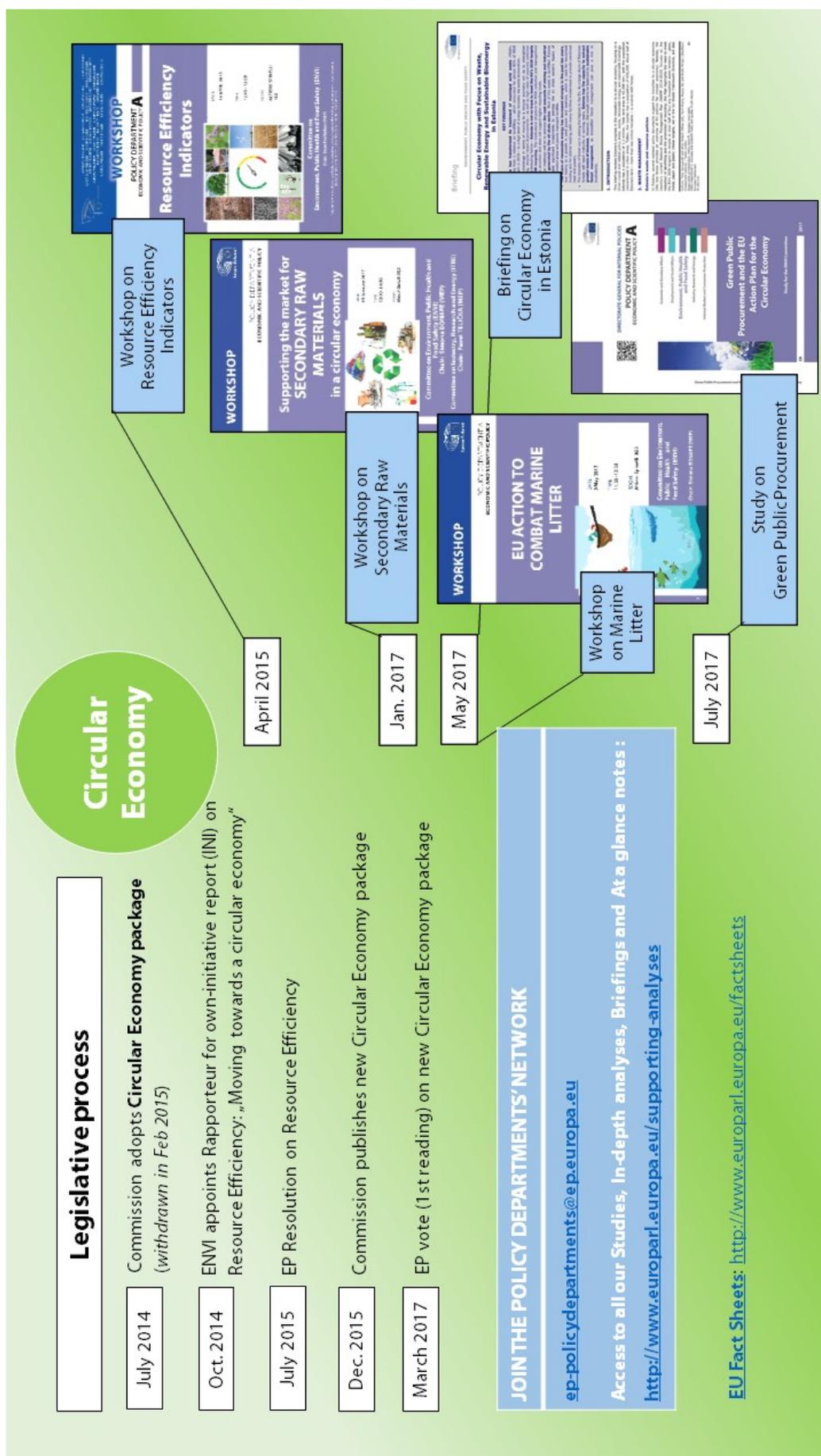
Eight experts from research and international and EU institutions presented their work and ideas on the measurement of resource efficiency and an appropriate set of resource efficiency indicators during a workshop held on 14 April 2015, summarised in this report.



There was general agreement that world economic growth will soon be limited by the earth's carrying capacity. In order to have a system for steering the necessary policy measures a set of resource efficiency indicators is needed. In this indicator set priority should be given to most needed indicators. In addition, footprint type indicators, which take into account indirect flows, are needed.

Common understanding prevailed that ongoing policies like supporting renewable energy or the eco-design of products have to be harmonized with resource efficiency policy. Further conclusions were: Resource efficiency in public procurement

needs to be strengthened; The tax burden needs to be shifted from labour to resource use and the use of eco-system services; Investments are needed in resource efficiency and in new business models selling services instead of products. It is expected that these investments will pay off, not only in ecological terms but also in micro-economic terms and in additional jobs created.



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