

Connect @Alpine Space 2021+



Circular economy

10 May 2021 | 14:00 – 16:15 | Online event



PROGRAMME

- 14:00 –14:10 **Welcoming words and introduction**
- 14:10 –14:20 **Keynote by Julija Kekstaite**
- 14:20 –14:50 **Panel discussion with Sara Poupart, Luca Mion, and Igor Kos**
- 14:50 –15:15 **Questions & Answers**
- 15:15 –15:25 **Break**
- 15:25 –15:35 **Wrap up and introduction to the networking sessions**
- 15:35 –16:15 **Virtual networking in Zoom breakout rooms**
- 16:15 **End**
- 16:15 – open end **Virtual networking on wonder.me: informal meet & match**



Draft priorities for 2021-2027

Priority 1: Climate resilient and green Alpine region (PO 2)

SO iv: promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and disaster resilience

SO vii: enhancing biodiversity, green infrastructure in the urban environment, and reducing pollution

Priority 2: Carbon neutral & resource sensitive Alpine region (PO 2)

SO i: promoting energy efficiency

SO vi: promoting the transition to a circular economy

Priority 3: Innovation and digitalisation oriented green Alpine region (PO 1)

SO i: enhancing research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies

SO ii: reaping the benefits of digitisation for citizens, companies and governments

Priority 4: Cooperatively managed and developed Alpine region

Enhance institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders to implement macro-regional strategies and sea-basin strategies ("Interreg specific SO")

Policy objectives (PO) and specific objectives (SO) come from the EU (draft) regulations. **Priorities are defined by the programme and are subject to modification until approved by the programme task force.**

PO 1: A smarter Europe - innovative and smart economic transformation
PO 2: A greener, low-carbon Europe



The speakers

- **Julija Kekstaite**, Policy Officer for Social Affairs at RREUSE network
- **Sara Poupart**, Regional Council of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, National Coordinator of the Interreg Alpine Space programme
- **Luca Mion**, HIT - Innovation Hub Trentino, Action Group 2 of the EU Strategy for the Alpine region (EUSALP)
- **Igor Kos**, WCYCLE Institute Slovenia, Interreg Alpine Space Project GREENCYCLE





Panel discussion

The keynote speaker Julija Kekstaite and the panellists Sara Poupart, Luca Mion, and Igor Kos shared their very interesting and valuable views on how we can boost circular economy for a fair and sustainable growth.

Watch the event recording here: https://youtu.be/xstPpNJ_5h8





Zoom breakout rooms

The topics listed below were discussed during our breakout sessions. Please note that the following slides summarising some statements made during these discussion do not reflect the position of the Interreg Alpine Space programme, but are comments made by participants.

- “Sustainable restart” of the social and economic system
- Bioeconomy and green economy
- Education and training
- New value chains (small cycles, farm to fork, regional resources)
- Obsolescence vs. re-use
- Post-carbon lifestyles
- Repair, reuse, recycle and upcycle
- Sustainable building
- Waste recycling and valorisation





Messages from the breakout rooms I

“Sustainable restart” of the social and economic system

A main challenge is how to change the business model after the pandemic.

It is important to focus on social and circular economy, which starts with concentrating on small initiatives.

Interreg programmes have to be the bridge to new solutions.

Bioeconomy and green economy

A main challenge is to better deploy bioeconomy in the Alpine Space.

We should set up synchronised funding schemes with regards to bioeconomy.

The question is what kind of economic activities can be implemented in degraded areas? We need adapted programmes for bioeconomy production (e.g. biomass)





Messages from the breakout rooms II

Education and training

Transfer the concept of farm to fork to next level: food to fork, from rural to urban.

The question is, if traditional SMEs change after training. If so, what is the impact of the training in the company, are there changes in processes or production? What is the impact on the territories?

Traditional enterprises often small scale, situated in rural areas, are very different from city located enterprises. Bridging regions (urban+rural) is important.

New value chains

Circular 4.0 toolkit: train operators on how to support SMEs to implement circular business transformations

It is important to involve different disciplinary approaches and to spread the idea that value chains mean many things. A main challenge is to shift the economic reasoning from money as its measure unit to value as a new concept.

We need to capitalise on past projects.

New value chains could also be new ways to valorise local traditions and traditional products.





Messages from the breakout rooms III

Obsolence vs. re-use

Bio plastic: We found new ways to create new plastic, but how to recycle it? The life cycle is not yet developed.

Energy efficiency can be supported by technology, but this also creates new waste.

How to reduce the waste production? Waste prevention!

Post-carbon-lifestyles

It is not only a matter of “from linear to circular”, but more generally the need for sustainable lifestyles (e.g. when it comes to travel). Understanding our lifestyles and its impact is key.

People have the intention to act sustainably, but they act differently. It is still mainly the price setting their decision.

Consumers are more prone to buy from socially responsible companies, but green washing is an issue in CSR. Often it is misused as mainly being a strategy for good PR.

We have the knowledge, now what is the right way to tackle it?



Messages from the breakout rooms IV

Repair, reuse, recycle, upcycle

Let's start with small changes on the citizen level not with large ones. That's why we need education of the citizens for use and reuse.

Reuse of existing buildings is key. Not demolish but reuse – to preserve the land and to centralise buildings not to have them scattered in the countryside.

It is important to involve people in the transition to implementation in reality, not just discuss on political level.

Sustainable building 1

There are many challenges: many people cannot afford sustainable building. We need a common understanding of sustainable building in the EU, including common frameworks. The costs of materials are very high. There is a loss of skills regarding sustainable material and building skills and a loss of cultural heritage.

Spread knowledge, educate people about sustainable building, the reuse of natural materials, up- and recycling!

Building is the sector that produces the most pollution. Younger generations are interested in climate and sustainability. Here, training and education is essential, the demand is there.

Messages from the breakout rooms V

Sustainable building 2

It is important not only to consider one building alone, but rather the entire neighbourhood. There is no use of having a green building if everyone has to drive by car to reach it.

Recycled is not necessarily better than not recycled, it depends on the material, its provenance, its way of being produced, etc. It is very hard for the citizens or for the contracting authorities to know what is best.

The separation of demolition waste is very complicated and expensive. Buildings could be built in a way that make it easier to reuse the materials when it is demolished. And a database for urban mining could be set up, where the materials used in the different buildings are listed, for instance on the basis of the tenders.

Waste recycling and valorisation

Demonstrate the importance of circular economy to the authorities (local and other) and show them the potential impacts.

We need to collect data, build up know-how and develop new ideas.

Let's find new cooperations.



Next steps for the programme

- June/September 2021: finalising the programme 2021-2027
- September/October 2021: info days in Alpine Space countries
- November 2021: planned launch of the first call for project proposals
- 22-23 November 2021: closing/kick-off conference in Salzburg and online

Stay tuned at <https://www.alpine-space.eu/2021!>