

Circular Economy

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party convening in Warsaw, Poland on 1 to 3 December 2016:

Is convinced that:

- the transitioning to a circular economy may be the biggest revolution and opportunity for how we organise production and consumption in our global economy by protecting businesses against scarcity of resources and volatile prices, helping to create new business opportunities and innovative, more efficient ways of producing and consuming;
- the circular economy goes beyond current linear extractive processes consuming resources to exhaustion;
- providing a sustainable economic model of growth that maintains value, builds capital and generates new jobs.

Keeps in mind that:

- an essential contribution to the EU's and other European countries' efforts to develop a sustainable, resource efficient and competitive economy is the transition to a more circular economy where the value of products, materials and resources are maintained in the economy closing the loop of product lifecycles, greater recycling, reparability, remanufacturing and re-use of waste materials;
- such a transition will generate new and sustainable, competitive advantages for Europe and bring benefits for both the environment and the economy.

Notes with satisfaction that:

- the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals and the COP21 agreement in Paris necessitate effective common solutions to fight climate change and to provide access to resources to more people, there is an increased focus – politically and among corporations – on circular economy as a key strategy to deliver a low carbon economy;
- at the same time, it may save energy and help avoid the irreversible damages caused by using up resources at a rate that exceeds the Earth's capacity to renew them in terms of climate and biodiversity, air, soil and water pollution.

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Recognises that:

- the circular economy will boost Europe's competitiveness by allowing European countries to free themselves from the dependency of importing raw materials thus strengthening the production capacity of Europe. Thus strengthening businesses by making them more resilient to scarcity and volatile prices;
- Green Public Procurement by Europe's public authorities acts as a strong stimulus for eco-innovation as it creates a critical mass of demand for more sustainable goods and services which otherwise would be difficult to get onto the market.

Expects that:

- innovation by digital technology will allow for new business models based on circular economy, e.g. relying on selling a service (use of product) rather than the product itself, providing more efficient ways of producing and consuming.

Emphasises that:

- it will also create local jobs at all skill levels and opportunities for social inclusion and cohesion as resources are being reused locally rather than imported from global extraction;
- in December 2015, the EU Commission agreed on a Circular Economy Package (CEP), the goal of which is to boost competitiveness and create jobs and sustainable growth in Europe;
- the action plan focuses on action at EU level, but making the circular economy a reality will require long-term involvement at all levels, from Member States, regions and cities, to businesses and citizens;
- Member States are invited to play their full part in EU action, integrating and complementing it with national action. The circular economy will also need to develop globally.

Calls on:

- all member parties of ALDE, based on the above actions taken by the EU and other European countries, to promote and support in their respective countries this vision of a circular economy and the creation of suitable frameworks to drive the transition forward in terms of industrial partnerships, public-private partnerships, funding for research, task-forces to advise businesses on the transition to circular economy and urging public authorities to include the circular business model in the public tendering processes.

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