

HOW WE MAKE

CIRCULAR  
ECONOMY

A REALITY

# ECOS and Circular Economy

ECOS helps to make circular economy a reality, not just a political goal. We contribute to the development and strengthening of policies and legislation, as well as of standards and technical specifications which ensure the highest level of environmental protection and support the transition to a circular economy.

ECOS works at both European and global level for an ambitious transition to a circular economy which:

Respects planetary boundaries relating to resource use and recognises all species' right to equal access to natural resources

Avoids and minimises negative impacts of resource use including biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution, and impaired human health

Places consumption and production in a healthy context of satisfying fundamental needs for wellbeing

Encourages innovation in the service of societal challenges, balancing needs with uncertainty stemming from development of novel materials and processes

Recognises that economic capital is dependent on and intrinsically linked to the continuing health and resilience of nature and humans



## FROM WASTE TO RESOURCES



### WE AIM...

to ensure that EU consumption of natural resources and the resulting environmental impacts are pulled back within planetary boundaries.

- Hierarchies of material uses to maximise reuse and avoid land use change or competition between food, fuel & fibre;

## WE FOCUS ON

- Sustainable use of virgin & secondary raw materials, and their capture for circularity;
- Land use change (direct and indirect) due to a shift to more bio-based materials;
- Problematic chemicals that prevent recyclability and increase dispersion in the environment;
- Safe reuse and recycling of waste materials, and use of recycled content in new products;
- Adequate nutrient recovery for land-spreading and other soil supporting activities;
- Characterisation of behaviour of pollutants to avoid negative environmental impacts;
- Plastic recyclability, reusability, compostability & biodegradability, and reduction of (micro) plastic pollution.

## PRODUCTION



### WE AIM...

to mainstream environmental thinking in product design and production processes to reduce EU consumption of natural resources and its environmental impacts.

## WE FOCUS ON

- Ecodesign of products for better environmental performance, use of resources, circularity, energy efficiency and elimination of hazardous substances;
- Strict sustainability criteria for materials, reduced use of plastics, and credible chain-of-custody approaches where relevant;
- Robust environmental measurement systems including lifecycle assessment and environmental footprints.



## WASTE MANAGEMENT



### WE AIM...

to reduce environmental impacts of human behaviour by preventing waste generation, reusing and recycling quality materials, and treating waste safely to avoid further negative environmental impacts.

## WE FOCUS ON

- Collection systems that favour materials for reuse and recycling and minimise landfilling or incineration;
- Safe collection systems and methods for reuse and recycling of waste electronics, as well as recovery and reuse of raw materials;
- Characterising waste to ensure it is treated appropriately for reduced environmental impact.

## CONSUMPTION

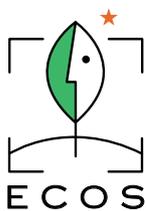


### WE AIM...

to ensure that people behave more sustainably by campaigning to make environmentally-friendly products and information about them more available.

## WE FOCUS ON

- Ecodesign and energy labelling policies, as well as ambitious legal measures as drivers for product manufacturers towards environmentally high-performing products;
- Good and reliable information to consumers about the environmental impacts of products to help them make environmentally-friendly and informed choices.



### ECOS [The European Environmental Citizens' Organisation for Standardisation]

Founded in 2001, ECOS is the only organisation worldwide working to defend the environmental interests in standardisation. Supported by almost 50 environmental NGOs across Europe and beyond, and with a strong pool of independent experts, ECOS contributes to the development of standards at European and international level, and to related laws and policies.

### How do we work towards circular economy?

With circular economy objectives defined by policy, new terms are introduced such as repairability, upgradeability, recyclability and reusability. Standards can provide definitions for these terms, as well as test and measurement methods for their monitoring, control and comparability. Standards can also set out design requirements for products in a circular economy for example on durability, repair, reuse or recycling, and avoiding toxic substances. At the end of a product's long useful life, standards can again come in to ensure waste becomes quality recycle that can be safely used as a raw material for a new product. All these efforts are supported by global environmental management standards. ECOS is involved in the development of these standards, and many more, to make circular economy a reality.

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