

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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From mainstreaming ecodesign to fighting greenwashing and plastics pollution, to sustainable construction and sound sustainability reporting – 2023 brought many exciting developments.

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# ABOUT ECOS

ECOS, Environmental Coalition on Standards, is an international NGO with a network of members and experts advocating for environmentally friendly technical standards, policies and laws.

We ensure the environmental voice is heard when they are developed and drive change by providing expertise to **policymakers** and **industry players**, leading to the **implementation of strong environmental principles**.

Our successes consistently impact standards and laws promoting the environment, pushing for a shift to a sustainable use of resources within a circular economy, and ambitious actions to fight climate change.

We also work towards a more **inclusive, open and transparent standardisation system**, internationally and regionally, including European and national levels, at the same time ensuring an appropriate use of standards in support of environmental legislation and policy.

We are part of a number of impactful alliances and campaigns, such as the [Rethink Plastic alliance](#), [Coolproducts](#), [Right to Repair](#), the [Cool Coalition](#), [Platform for Electromobility](#), [Wardrobe Change](#), [Coalition for Energy Savings](#), [Alliance for Low-Carbon Cement & Concrete](#), [Better without Boilers](#), and the [One Planet Network](#), where we cooperate with other NGOs, progressive companies, and researchers, advocating for a greener future for all. We are also a member of the [Global Electronics Council's](#) EPEAT Advisory Council, and several important fora, such as Observer to the United Nations Environment Assembly, the EU High-Level Forum on European Standardisation, CBAM and Carbon Removals Expert Groups, or the Expert Group on Circular Economy and Sustainable Production and Consumption.

## HOW DO WE WORK?

For over 20 years now, ECOS has worked towards a healthy and clean environment, protected by **robust rules that respect nature and its resources**. Representing a network of more than 50 members, we bring our environmental expertise and vision to European and international discussions.



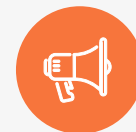
### Standardisation

We are the environmental voice in the standardisation system.



### Policy & advocacy

We advocate for a high level of environmental ambition for major legislative developments.



### Campaigns

We push for change to happen through numerous campaigns with members and partners.

# A FEW WORDS FROM JUSTIN WILKES

## OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The UN has declared 2021-2030 as the Decade of Ecological Restoration. The science has never been clearer: **the time to step up for nature, biodiversity, and humanity is now.** And this means wasting no time in putting into place an ambitious pathway to transform our societies and economies so that they operate in harmony with nature.

In 2023, **ECOS worked to do just that: we pushed to create momentum for ambitious political decisions,** which would bring us a step closer to tackling the triple planetary crisis: climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss.

Environmental issues are unconstrained by borders. We need global efforts that ensure environmental ambition – something ECOS has been progressively working towards as part of our international strategy. **In 2023 we worked to increase our impact globally.** We strengthened our cooperation with international organisations by becoming an observer to the United Nations Environment Assembly, joining the International Telecommunication Union (ITU-T), and contributing our expertise to the UN Plastics Treaty negotiations, to name only a few examples.

Meanwhile, with a number of new, ambitious laws, the EU took steps to make sustainable, non-toxic products the norm, and provide consumers with reliable information on the impact these products have on our planet. We were

there every step of the way – securing environmentally sound legislation, which was a win for our planet, but also for ECOS, following many years of tireless advocacy. **This could not have been done without our network of members and partners,** and the powerful alliances we forged together, be it on plastics, textiles or cement.

ECOS and its team of dedicated staff worked throughout the year to advocate for environmentally friendly policies, laws and standards. **I would like to thank our staff – without their relentless passion, expertise, and dedication we would not be where we are today.** We are also profoundly grateful to our experts, members, and funders for their continuous support, and for helping us make 2023 a success.



**In 2023, ECOS pushed to create momentum for ambitious political decisions, which would bring us a step closer to tackling the triple planetary crisis.**

# 2023 IN NUMBERS





# KEY MOMENTS

## JANUARY

### We set the tone for the year

Our annual work programme revolves around four priorities: moving away from fossil fuels, greening industrial processes, making sustainable products the norm, and efficiently guiding consumers towards them.



[Read more](#) >

### We kick off work with the High-Level Forum on European Standardisation

ECOS joins the High-Level Forum on European Standardisation, an expert group set up to identify EU standardisation priorities, and discusses ways to improve the European Standardisation System.

## FEBRUARY

### Making nanomaterials safe for all

Our event, accompanied by an influential report, points to the safety risks that nano- and advanced materials pose and the need for further regulatory developments to tackle them.

[Read & watch here](#) >

## MARCH

### Fighting greenwashing

We focus on green claims, aiming to help policymakers and standardisers ensure that climate neutrality claims become a thing of the past.



[Read here](#) >

[& here](#) >

## MAY

### Launch of the Alliance for Low-Carbon Cement & Concrete

Our multi-stakeholder Alliance believes that a robust policy, standards and financial framework is needed to create and scale up the market, making low-carbon cement and concrete the norm within the next decade. How?

[Read on](#) >

### Push for phase-out of 'stand-alone' fossil fuel boilers

Coordinating efforts from several NGOs, ECOS pushes for phasing out of 'stand-alone' fossil fuel boilers and making renewable heating the norm.



[Read more](#) >

## APRIL

### Burning question: why hydrogen boilers are not the answer

Hydrogen boilers under scrutiny! They are no silver bullet in our fight against fossil fuels in heating. Our Coolproducts report and webinar explain why.

[Read](#) > [Watch](#) >

### How can sustainable timber buildings help fight the climate crisis?

Ecological forestry and circular buildings are great contributors to climate mitigation. Are timber buildings part of the solution? We discussed with experts.

[Read & Watch here](#) >

## JUNE

### ECOS conference: The dos and don'ts of green claims

Time to make greenwashing a thing of the past! Our annual conference focuses on the reliability of environmental information and the need to eliminate misleading green claims.

[Read & Watch](#) >

### AGM & new Executive Committee

ECOS members meet at the Annual General Assembly and elected three new members to our Executive Committee.



[Read](#) >

[Become a member](#) >

### ECOS joins the International Telecommunication Union (ITU-T)

ECOS will strengthen the environmental voice in the ITU's Telecommunication Standardisation Sector, as a new sector member.

## SEPTEMBER

### We work to shape the Standardisation Regulation in Europe

The Regulation setting out the rules supporting EU's standardisation policy is now under evaluation. ECOS pushes to strengthen the role and input of environmental actors in standards work.

[Learn more](#) >

## NOVEMBER

### The future of repair: EU regulation on phones and tablets unmasked

Teaming up with Right to Repair Europe, ECOS pushes for new and improved policies that promote ecodesign, prevent anti-repair practices, and facilitate repair.

[Read more](#) >

### Recycling claims on plastic bottles under scrutiny

Together with BEUC and ClientEarth, ECOS takes aim at potentially misleading recycling claims on plastic bottles.



[Read more](#) >

### ECOS Members & Experts Training

We bring together our members and experts for a training on standards and the environment – an opportunity for networking, learning, peer-exchange and... fun!

[Learn more](#) >

## OCTOBER

### World Standards Day 2023

We celebrate World Standards Day – a great opportunity to reflect on the important role that standards play in our transition to an environmentally sustainable world.

[Read more](#) >



### Why standards matter for environmental protection

Together with our member ZERO, we organise a hybrid workshop focusing on why and how civil society should get involved in standardisation.

[Read & watch here](#) >

### Global Plastics Treaty negotiations

In Nairobi we contribute to the discussions on the “zero draft” of the Plastics Treaty, aimed at ending plastic pollution globally.

[Learn more](#) >



## DECEMBER

### Ecodesign revolution

The EU Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) activates a new era for sustainable products.

[Read more](#) >



“The science has never been clearer: the time to step up for nature, biodiversity, and humanity is now. And this means wasting no time in putting into place an ambitious pathway to transform our societies and economies so that they operate in harmony with nature.”



# OUR IMPACT

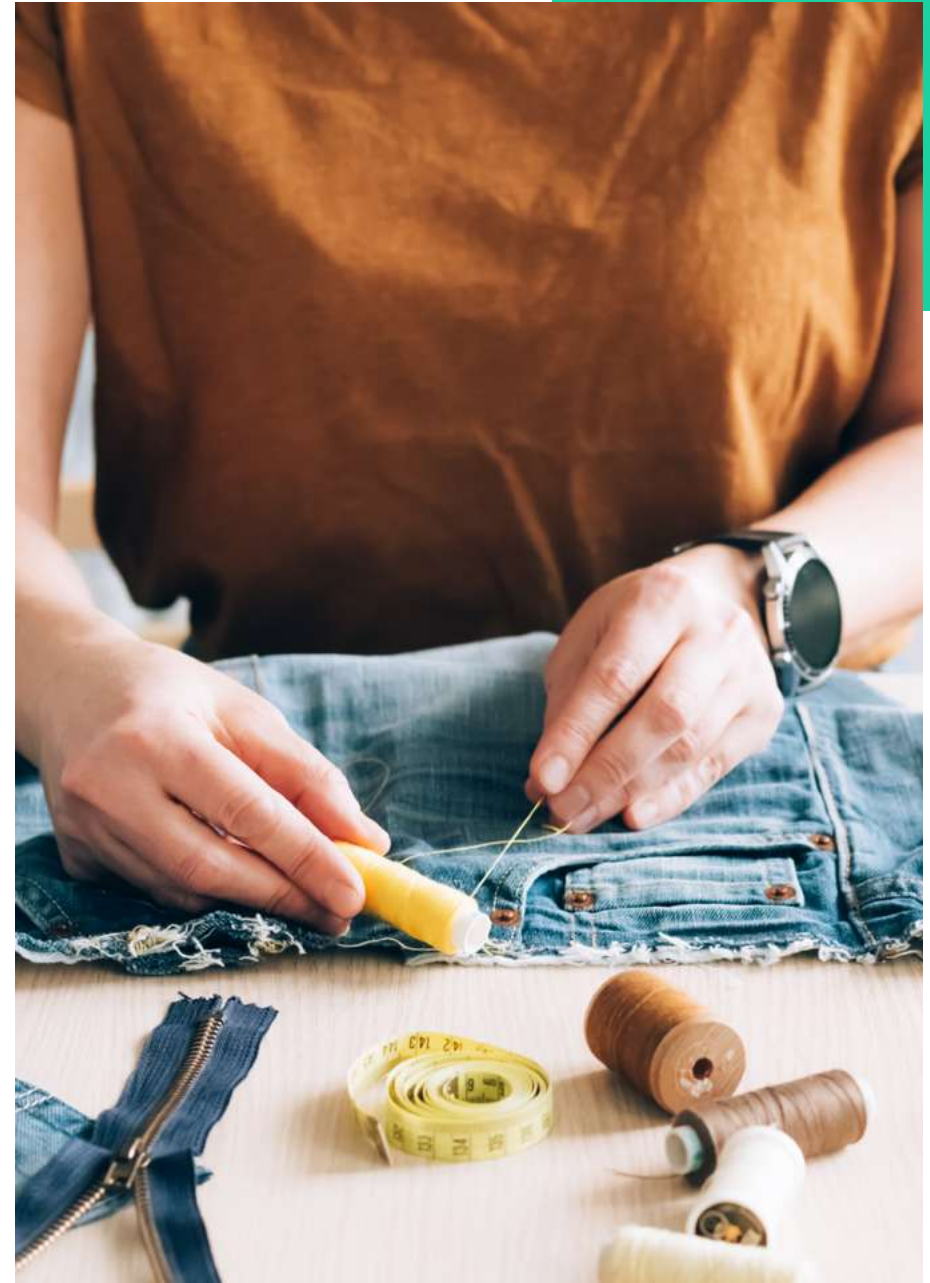
## 4 years in the making! The ecodesign revolution with the ESPR is here

We need sustainable products to be the norm – a long-standing priority for ECOS. Short-lived, disposable, toxic, and unrepairable items must become a thing of the past – to reduce wasted resources and limit the impact products have on the environment at every stage of their lifecycle. Enter ecodesign.

[Read more](#) >

### What difference did we make?

- We secured a very ambitious **Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation** – a ground breaking piece of legislation, which will ensure sustainability is built into product design on an extensive, unprecedented scale.



## OUR IMPACT

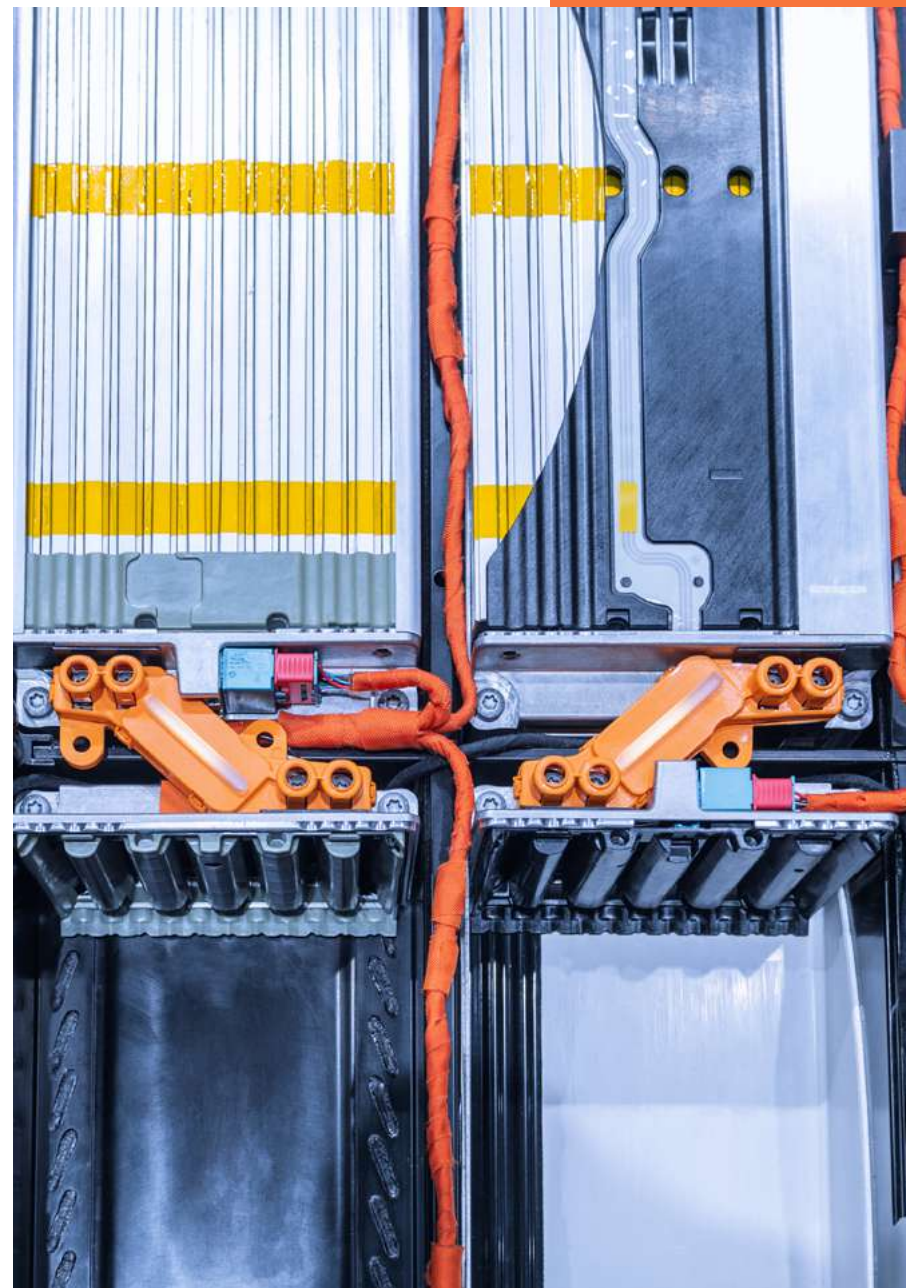
### The positive side of batteries

Batteries are the make-or-break of decarbonisation. But they also come at an environmental cost, which is why it is crucial to reduce their negative impacts. Luckily, one region of the world is taking the much-needed steps to ensure sustainability and circularity across the board: the EU Battery Regulation is the first-ever product policy that covers the entire product value chain. In 2023, ECOS saw this work through – and celebrated the outcomes.

[Read more](#) >

#### What difference did we make?

- We teamed up green NGOs, **calling for a comprehensive regulation**, as the European Commission announced its ambition to be a global leader in sustainable battery production in 2018.
- Our visionary approach to extending ecodesign principles to new sectors was reflected in the EU's **Circular Economy Action Plan**.
- We pushed for strong standardisation to support battery sustainability.
- **We worked with policymakers to improve** the proposal text. As a result, this ambitious piece of legislation will make our batteries circular and sustainable.



## OUR IMPACT

### Initiating the beginning of the end for greenwashing?

Consumers increasingly want to reduce their environmental impact by choosing the least environmentally damaging products. However, they face a barrage of inaccurate and unverifiable claims – otherwise known as greenwashing. From climate-neutral flights to bananas, showcasing a product's environmental friendliness – regardless of how reliable the information really is – has become a dubious marketing strategy. But thanks to our efforts in 2023, we could soon see an end to this wild west of green claims. No more dubious 'planet-friendly' or '100% green' slogans presented alone on a billboard.

[Read more](#) >

#### What difference did we make?

- Strengthened **key legislation at the European level** – the Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition and Green Claims Directives – to protect consumers from greenwashing by requiring companies to make better environmental claims, including a ban on claims based on offsetting carbon emissions.
- Campaigned with civil society organisations to **ensure the environmental voice is heard**. Our external alert – with BEUC and ClientEarth – to the European Commission and network of consumer authorities on single-use plastics made waves globally.
- **Supported policymakers with timely resources and recommendations** to stamp out greenwashing once and for all.





## OUR IMPACT

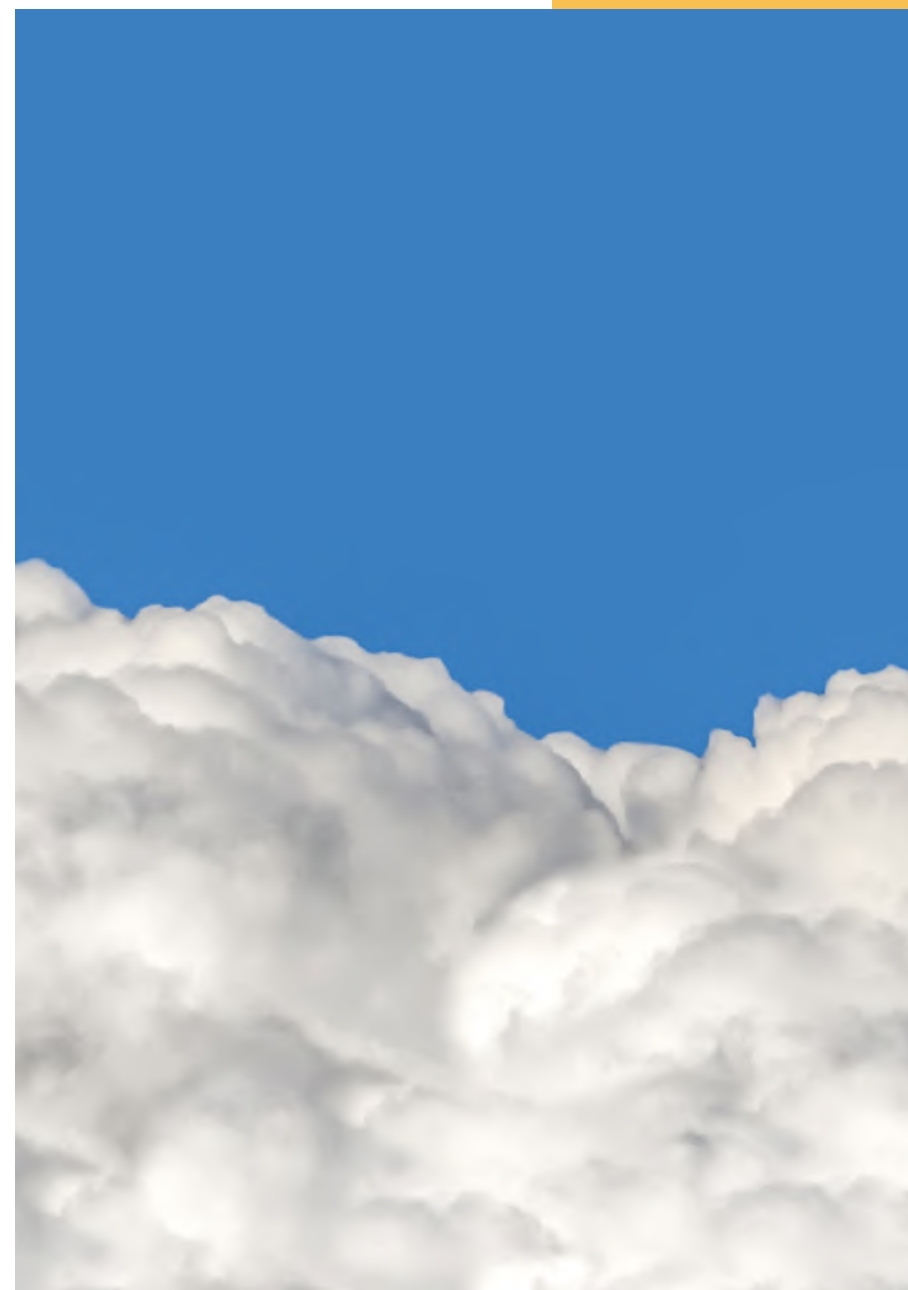
### The beginning of the end for climate-damaging fluorinated gases

F-gases, not commonly known but commonly used in household appliances like fridges, air conditioners, and heat pumps, will finally be phased down in the EU – with some types of F-gases banned completely. A success for ECOS, as we strongly pushed for this to happen, but above all - a great success for our planet.

[Read more](#) >

#### What difference did we make?

- We have been **advocating for an efficient uptake of natural refrigerants** for over a decade, working on standards and policy alike to ensure clean solutions.
- We shaped **positive narratives about natural solutions** and forged powerful alliances to echo them.
- We **debunked myths and called out industry narratives** for what they were: scaremongering, all the while providing policymakers with reliable, science-based evidence on the viability of natural refrigerants.
- We closely **followed the legislative process of the EU F-Gas Regulation**, contributing to a positive outcome for our planet.



## OUR IMPACT

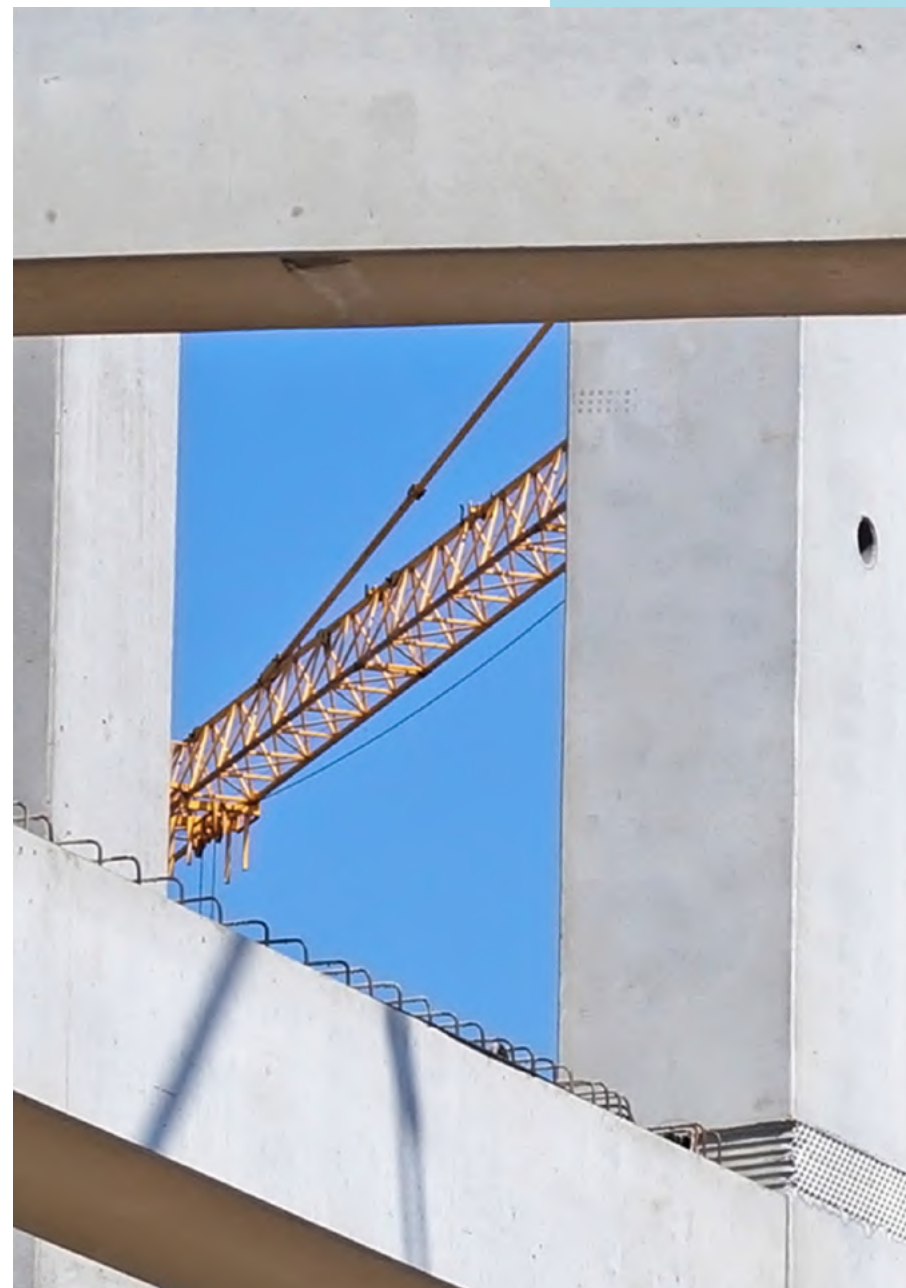
### The future depends on how we build it: decarbonising construction

Construction products are among the most significant environmental polluters with an annual carbon footprint of 250 million tonnes in the EU. A growing demand for construction products makes decarbonising the sector as urgent as ever. And the solutions to do so exist! Our work in 2023 has paved the way to make them the norm.

[Read more](#) >

#### What difference did we make?

- **Guided civil society** – at national and EU levels – in pushing for a more sustainable construction sector.
- **Brought together policymakers** from across the political spectrum and industry actors from across the value chain on our key advocacy messages. Our **Alliance for Low-Carbon Cement & Concrete** –launched in May 2023 – is a **flagship** example.
- Influenced the revision of the **Construction Products Regulation** from start to finish. And it's a stronger legislative instrument because of our interventions.
- **Ensured the environmental voice was heard** in the CPR Acquis Technical Group as the only environmental NGO at the table.



## OUR IMPACT

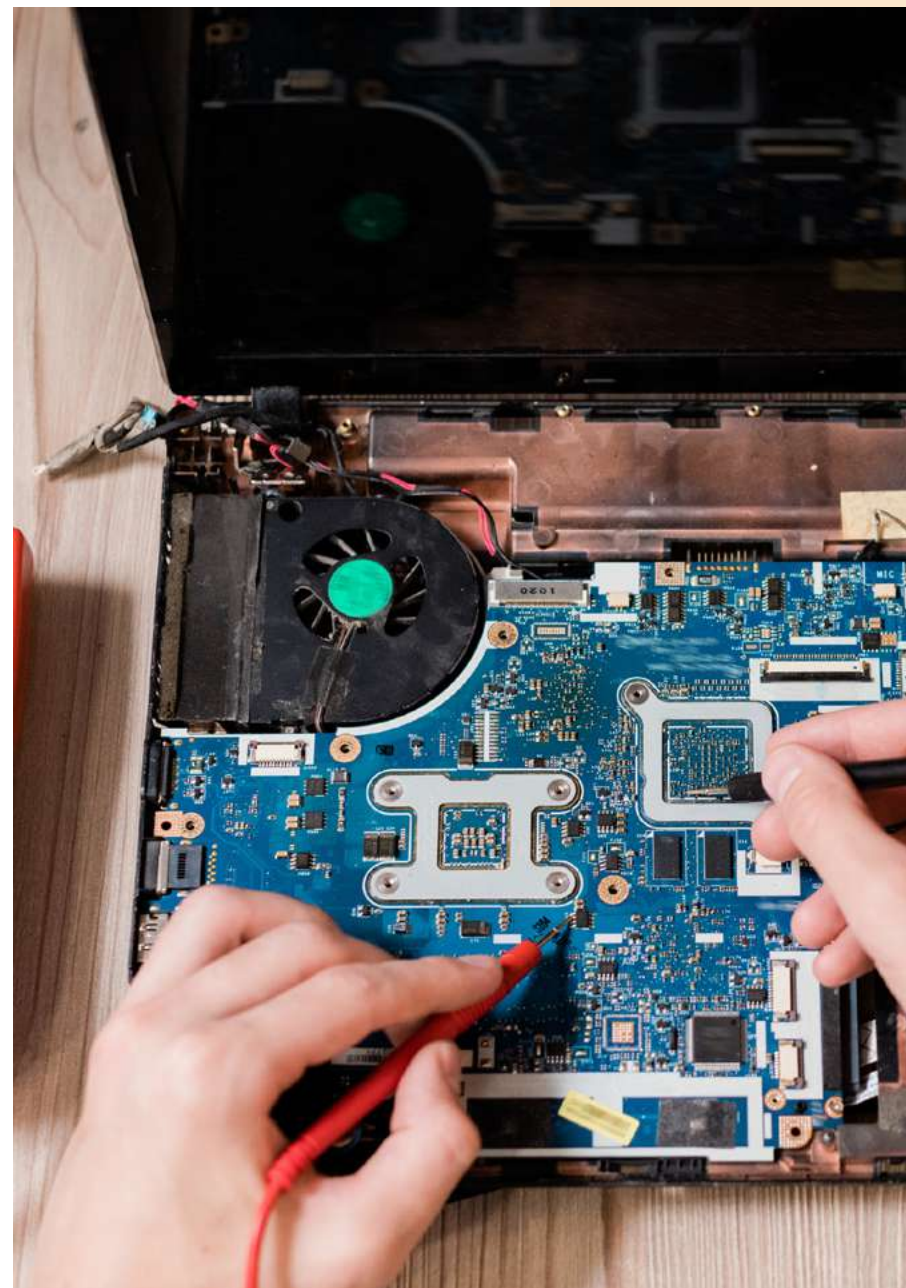
### Better electronics will be a big win for the environment

Our lives and homes are full of electronic products – much of which eventually becomes waste that has never been properly recycled. To limit the growing impact of electronic products, they must become cheaper and easier to repair, reuse, and, eventually, recycle. Building on our longstanding efforts, ECOS helped shape a greener future for electronics in 2023.

[Read more](#) >

#### What difference did we make?

- We continue to **shape the narrative on the material efficiency** of electronic products in the EU, leading a coalition calling for a horizontal approach to cover all electronic products.
- We contributed to a strong European Parliament position on the **Right to Repair Initiative**, which included most of our requests.
- We **positively influenced EU ecodesign and energy labelling requirements** for various products, including electronic displays, computers, servers and data storage products, and imaging equipment.
- We **coordinated dozens of environmental NGOs to call for stronger action on e-waste** in the EU's WEEE Directive.
- We contributed to an international standard on the sustainable management of e-waste, due to be published in 2024.
- We **helped draft an international ecolabel** to push for the market uptake of more sustainable ICT products.





## OUR IMPACT

### Plastic pollution knows no boundaries – ECOS expands its work and impact

The growth of single-use, throwaway culture has drastically escalated the accumulation of plastic in our environment. In 2023, ECOS worked to curb this growing problem – in different parts of the world.

[Read more](#) >

#### What difference did we make?

- We pushed for an ambitious UN global **Plastics Treaty**, providing expertise and advice on how standards can help achieve its the goals.
- We fought for the **ambition of EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation**, and environmentally ambitious standards which will support it.
- We expanded our **impact to different parts of the world**, pushing for environmental ambition and building impactful alliances. We were active in the global Break Free From Plastic movement, cooperated with its EU branch, the Rethink Plastic alliance, and teamed up with key organisations such as the Mekong Institute in Khoan Kaen, Thailand, where we work to reduce single-use packaging on local street food markets.



## OUR IMPACT

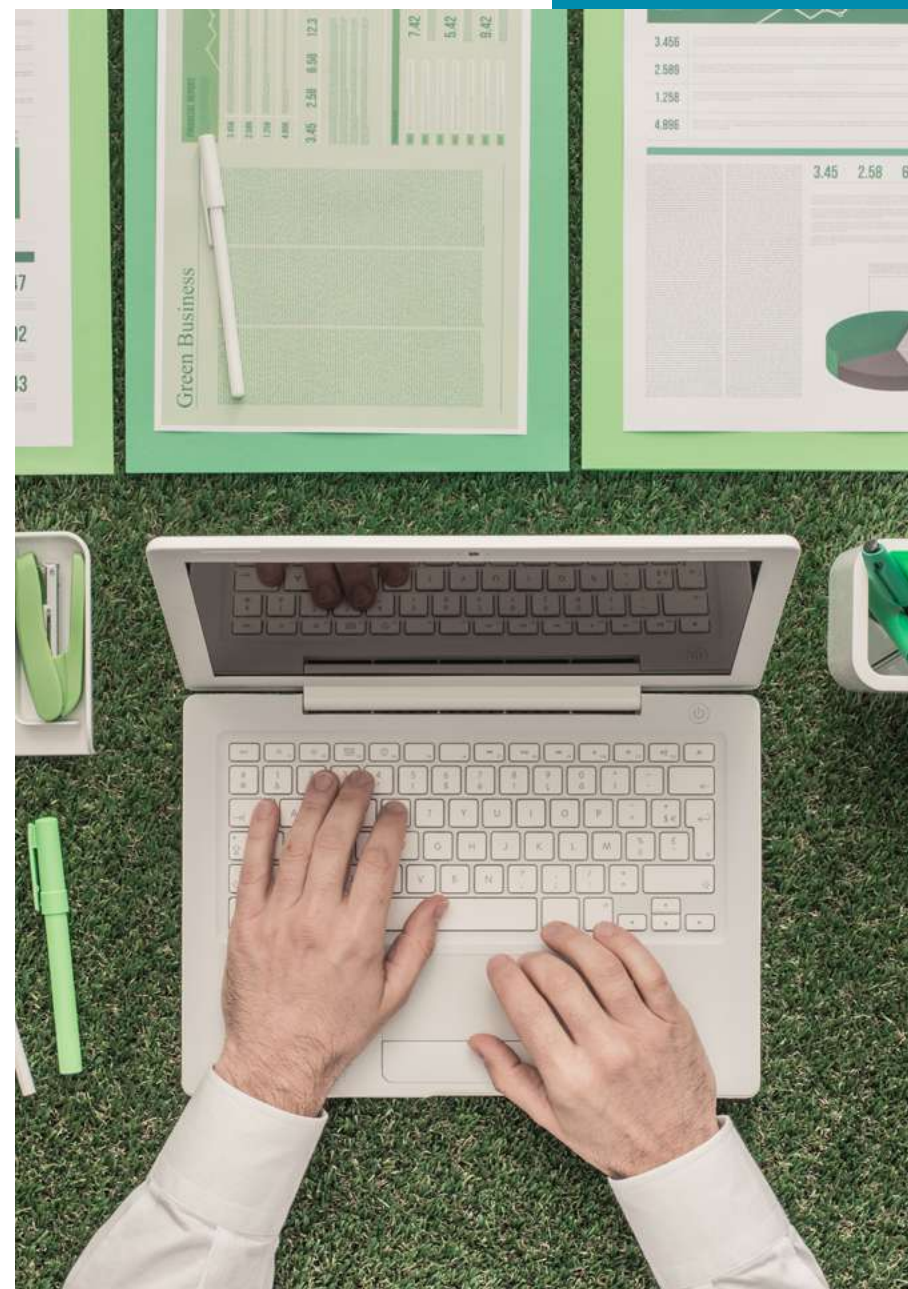
### Circular economy reporting standards - a key piece of the circular economy puzzle

A regenerative circular economy is key to mitigating the climate crisis, protecting biodiversity, and promoting the well-being of people and the planet. Guiding companies in disclosing their true environmental impacts incentivises strong sustainability performance. Our strategic interventions laid the foundation for a more robust and inclusive circular economy reporting framework worldwide, steering the course towards a real transition to a circular economy.

[Read more](#) >

#### What difference did we make?

- We expanded the focus of global circular economy **standards beyond recycling** to include reduction of resource extraction, circular design, and management of hazardous substances.
- We **helped high civil society participation** in an international standard development process by mobilising and accompanying partners as they got engaged in the standards work.



# PUBLICATIONS

## NATURE HEALTH

- **REPORT** Seeing the forest through the trees: How sustainable timber buildings can help fight the climate crisis

## ENVIRONMENTAL TRANSPARENCY

- **REPORT** Greenwashing, certified? How to ensure new laws and standards do not rubberstamp dubious climate neutrality claims
- Joint report | 100% Greenwash? Green Claims on PET Beverage Bottles in Europe
- Joint report | Unbottling greenwashing: Lifting the lid on plastic bottle recycling claims
- **FACTSHEET** Too good to be true? The do's and don'ts of green claims

## SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION & PRODUCTION

### Ecodesign

- Position | Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation | Priorities for trilogues
- Deep dive: Standards to measure textile durability

### Critical Raw Materials

- **JOINT POSITION** How to reduce our dependency on critical raw materials by stimulating circularity
- Joint position | A Turning Point: The Critical Raw Material Act's needs for a Social and Just Green Transition

### Nanomaterials

- **BRIEFING** Making nano- and advanced materials safe for all
- Factsheet | Test guidelines for manufactured nanomaterials

### Plastics

- Joint briefing | Beyond Recycling: Reckoning with Plastics in a Circular Economy
- Factsheet | Microplastic pollution: The new runway trend for season 2023-2050

### Waste

- **JOINT POSITION** Revision of the Directive on Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment
- Joint factsheet | Prevention and reuse - the only solution to record levels of packaging waste

## CLIMATE CHANGE & ENERGY

### Smart charging & EVs

- Factsheet | What is the environmental impact of electric cars?

### Clean energy & heating

- **REPORT** Burning question: why hydrogen boilers are not the answer
- Factsheet | Let's end the sales of fossil fuel boilers through ecodesign
- Position | Let's end the sales of fossil fuel boilers through ecodesign

### F-gases

- **REPORT** The true face of hydrogen: How robust definitions and chain of custody systems can help unmask fossil hydrogen in disguise
- **BRIEFING** How many times must history repeat itself? Why new fluorinated refrigerants are still not the solution

## BUILDINGS & INDUSTRY

- **REPORT** Fast-tracking cement decarbonisation
- Factsheet | How SCMs can help make low-carbon cement and concrete

# OUR MEMBERS

## National member organisations

### Austria

- Global 2000
- Umweltdachverband

### Belgium

- Bond Beter Leefmilieu Vlaanderen (BBLV)
- Canopea
- RepairTogether
- Repair & Share

### Bulgaria

- Institute for Ecological Modernisation (IEM)

### Cameroon

- Association Camerounaise pour le Développement, l'Entraide Sociale et la Protection de l'Environnement (ACDESPE)

### Croatia

- DOOR - Society for Sustainable Development Design

### Cyprus

- Terra Cypria – The Cyprus Conservation Foundation

### Czech Republic

- Zelený Kruh (Green Circle)

### Denmark

- Green Transition Denmark (Rådet for Grøn Omstilling)
- The Danish Society for Nature Conservation (DN)

### France

- CLER - French Energy Transition Network
- Ethikis
- Halte à l'Obsolescence Programmée (HOP)
- Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF-France)
- Zero Waste France

### Germany

- Bund Für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland (BUND)
- Bundesverband Bürgerinitiativen Umweltschutz (BBU)
- Deutsche Umwelthilfe
- Deutscher Naturschutzring (DNR)
- Nature Friends Germany (NaturFreunde Deutschlands)
- Runder Tisch Reparatur

### Greece

- Ecocity Greece

### Hungary

- Clean Air Action Group (CAAG)

### Ireland

- Community Reuse Network Ireland (CRNI)

### Italy

- Giacimenti Urbani
- Kyoto Club
- Legambiente

## International member organisations

- Bellona Europe
- European Environmental Bureau (EEB)
- Friends of the Earth Europe (FoEE)
- Health Care Without Harm Europe (HCWH)
- European umbrella for social enterprises with activities in reuse, repair and recycling (RREUSE)
- European Federation for Transport & Environment (T&E)
- WWF – European Policy Office (WWF-EPO)
- Zero Waste Europe (ZWE)

### Latvia

- Friends of the Earth Latvia (Zemes Draugi)

### Lithuania

- Žiedinė ekonomika

### Luxembourg

- The Luxembourg Ecological Center (Oekozer Lëtzebuerg)

### Malta

- Circular Economy Malta (CircE)

### Netherlands

- Stichting Natuur en Milieu (SNM)
- Leefmilieu

### Norway

- Bellona Norway

### Poland

- Polish Foundation for Energy Efficiency (FEWE)
- ClientEarth Poland

### Portugal

- Circular Economy Portugal
- ZERO

### Romania

- 2Celsius

### Slovakia

- REPAIRABLY

### Spain

- ECODES

### Sweden

- The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC/SNF)

### Switzerland

- WWF Switzerland

### United Kingdom

- Energy Saving Trust (EST)
- UK Sustainability Network for Standardisation

### USA

- Green Science Policy Institute



# OUR PEOPLE

## SECRETARIAT

### Executive Management Team



**Justin Wilkes**  
Executive Director



**Chloé Fayole**  
Strategy Director



**Kasia Koniecka**  
Communications  
Director



**Stefania Macchioni**  
Operations Director



**Nerea Ruiz Fuente**  
Policy Director



**Pamela Tarif**  
Global  
Engagement  
Director

### Climate & Energy Department led by Nerea Ruiz Fuente



**Rita Tedesco**  
Head of Energy  
Transition



**João Antonucci  
Rezende**  
Right to Repair  
Trainee



**Luka De Bruyckere**  
Senior Programme  
Manager



**Fernando Tartaglia**  
Climate & Energy  
Trainee



**Marco Grippa**  
Programme  
Manager



**Mathieu Rama**  
Programme  
Manager



**Anastasia Tsougka**  
Programme Officer

### Sustainability Department led by Chloé Fayole



**Valeria Botta**  
Head of Circular  
Economy & Nature



**Mathilde Crêpy**  
Head of  
Environmental  
Transparency



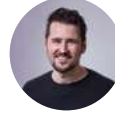
**Jean-Luc Wietor**  
Head of Buildings  
& Industry



**Emily Best**  
Programme  
Manager



**Luca Boniolo**  
Programme  
Manager



**Tudor Cherhat**  
Programme  
Manager



**Mathias  
Falkenberg**  
Programme  
Manager



**Margaux Le Gallou**  
Programme  
Manager



**Mariana López  
Dávila**  
Programme  
Manager



**Stéphane Noel**  
Technical  
Manager



**Samy Porteron**  
Programme  
Manager



**Federica Pozzi**  
Programme  
Manager



**Fanny Rateau**  
Programme  
Manager



**Laura Väyrynen**  
Programme  
Manager



**Joren Verschaeve**  
Programme  
Manager



**Martina Forbicini**  
Programme  
Manager



**Thea Lyngseth**  
Sustainability  
Trainee

# SECRETARIAT

Global Engagement Department led  
by Pamela Tarif



**Marxine Waite**  
Programme  
Manager

Communications & Membership Department led  
by Kasia Koniecka



**Alison Grace**  
Press &  
Communications  
Manager



**Cécilia Rolland**  
Membership &  
Network Manager



**Lloyd Evans**  
Communications  
Manager



**San Nguyen**  
Membership  
Trainee



**Katarzyna Krok**  
Communications  
Manager



**Ayşen Yaman**  
Communications  
Trainee

Operations Department led  
by Stefania Macchioni



**Olivier Lion**  
Head of Finance



**Chloé Vanacker**  
HR Manager



**Anna Arcuri**  
Senior Manager,  
Partnerships &  
Development



**Umair Zaman**  
Finance Officer

We would also like to acknowledge our  
colleagues who left in 2023:

- Ivo Cabral, Press & Communications Manager
- Erwin Cornelis, Programme Manager
- Sabela González García, Communications Manager
- Carolina Koronen, Programme Manager
- Cristina Mariniuc, HR Manager
- Elisa Martellucci, Programme Manager
- Michael Neaves, Programme Manager
- Ioana Popescu, Head of Circular Economy
- Kami Tiba Baptista, Administrative Officer

Our Trainees:

- Darragh Bree
- Polina Peredera
- Regina Buono
- Elea Kunz





## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Emilie Carmichael**  
Energy Saving Trust  
**President**

**Esra Tat**  
Zero Waste Europe  
**Vice President**

**Gianmarco Santirocco**  
CircE  
**Treasurer**

**Robert Brett**  
Independent capacity

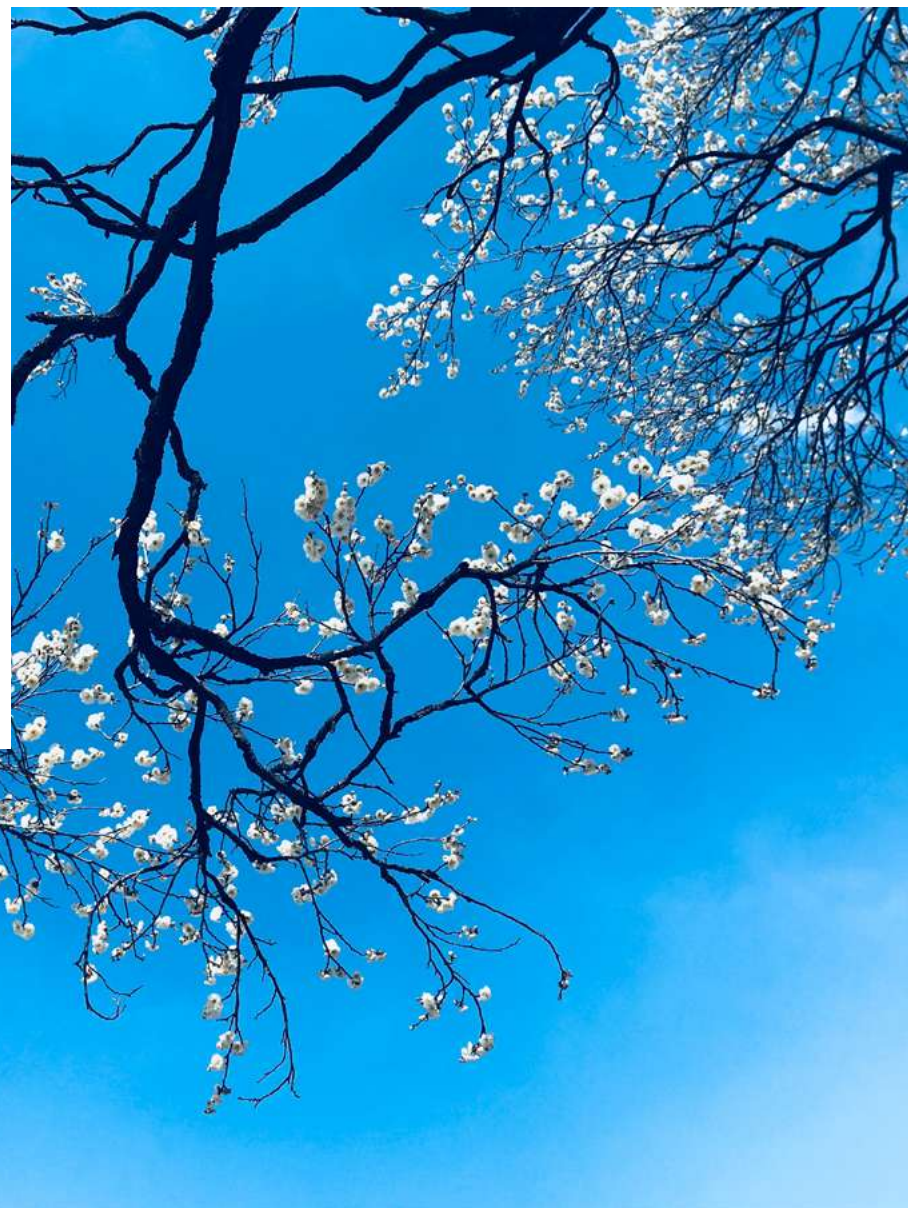
**Carlos Calvo Ambel**  
Transport & Environment (T&E)

**Julika Dittrich**  
Independent capacity

**Francisco Ferreira**  
ZERO

**Anthi Pournara**  
Ecocity

**Jean-Pierre Schweitzer**  
The European Environmental Bureau





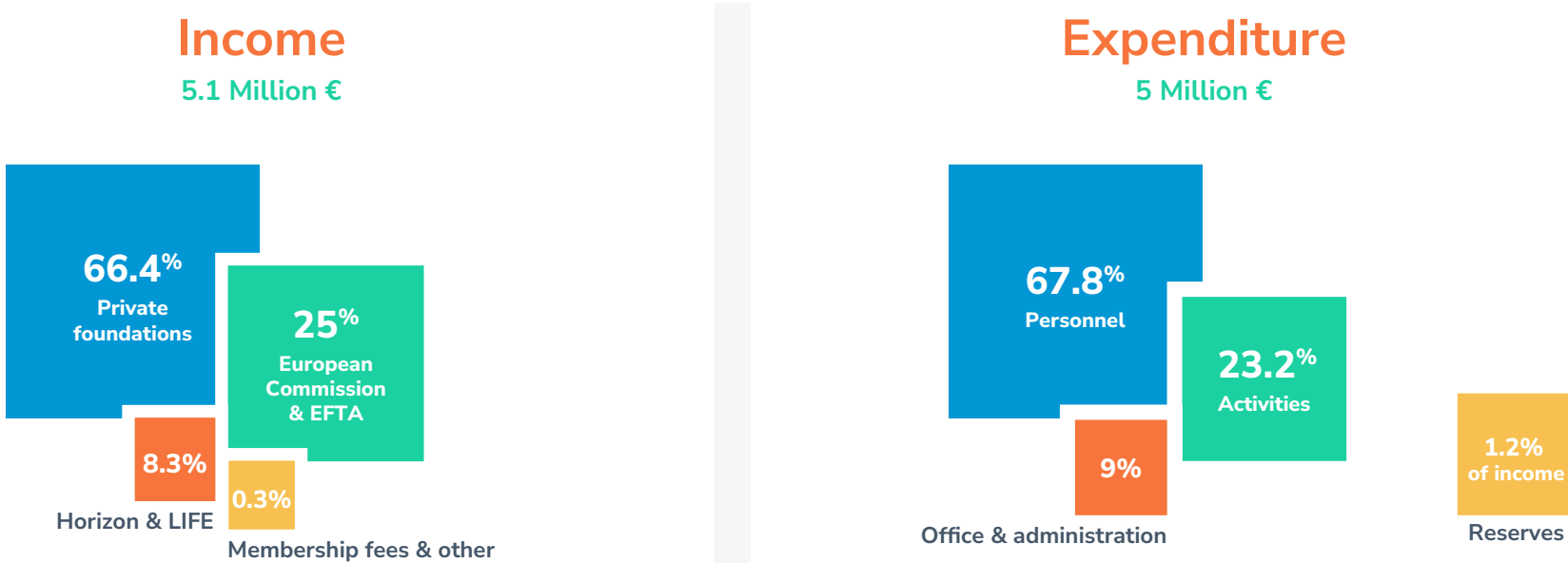
# OUR FUNDERS

We are grateful for the trust placed in us by the following organisations and entities who support our activities and make our work possible.

- Adessium Foundation
- Breakthrough Energy
- Built by Nature
- ClimateWorks Foundation
- European Climate Foundation
- European Commission
- European Free Trade Association (EFTA)
- Horizon Europe, the EU research and innovation programme
- KNU
- Kristian Gerhard Jebsen Foundation
- Laudes Foundation
- LIFE Programme
- Norwegian Retailers' Environment Fund
- Open Society Foundations
- The Pew Charitable Trusts
- Plastic Solutions Fund
- Umweltbundesamt



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



Total annual income  
Million €



The financial information is provisional and subject to audit and AGM approval.

## ENVIRONMENTAL COALITION ON STANDARDS

WeWork

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