



# A circular economy approach for lifecycles of products and services

## Communication Plan

### Deliverable 9.1

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## Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>Acronyms and abbreviations</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>1. CIRC4Life Project Overview</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Objectives of the communication plan</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Visibility of the project and branding</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>4. Target audience</b> .....	<b>7</b>
4.1 Trade associations and Industry stakeholders.....	7
4.2. Academic community: research and academic organisations .....	7
4.3 Decision-makers .....	8
4.4 Media.....	8
4.5 Consumer organisations and other civil society networks and organisations .....	9
4.6 Other ongoing or recent EU funded circular economy projects.....	9
4.7 Public in general .....	10
<b>5. Communication approach</b> .....	<b>11</b>
5.1 Project Website .....	11
5.2 Newsletters.....	12
5.3 Social Media .....	12
5.4 Printed materials .....	12
5.5 Media.....	12
5.6 Videos .....	13
5.7 Webinar .....	13
5.8 Final Conference.....	13
<b>6. References</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>ANNEX 1</b> .....	<b>15</b>

## Acronyms and abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
E.C	European Commission
CEBM	Circular Economy Business Models
CE	Circular Economy
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
M7, M18.	Month 7, 18 of the project duration

## 1. CIRC4Life Project Overview

This project aims to develop and implement a circular economy approach in order to create new sustainable products and services through their value and supply chains.

It will be demonstrated at a large scale in 4 sectors: electrical and electronic products (tablets, domestic and industrial LED lightning) and farming and agri-foods sectors (meat product supply chain and organic vegetables). Demonstrators will be held in the UK (Cornwall and Berkshire Counties) and Spain (Regions of Murcia, Basque Country and Valencia).

Three new circular economy business models will be developed during the project:

- (i) co-creation of products and services,
- (ii) sustainable consumption
- (iii) collaborative recycling and reuse

The Co-creation of Products and Services model will bring end-users closer to the design and manufacturing phases by identifying consumer preferences via Big-data online mining product reviews and evaluating product specifications and prototypes via Living Lab to customise end-user requirements.

The Sustainable Consumption model will develop a method to calculate the eco-points of products based on the outcome of the EU funded project myEcoCost by:

- assessing product environmental footprints (PEF)
- providing a traceability solution to monitor product's sustainability along the value chain
- supporting end-users and stakeholders to actively implement the circular economy via awareness raising and knowledge sharing activities

The Collaborative Recycling/Reuse model will develop a system for stakeholders to interact with each other in order to facilitate the use or reuse of end-of-life products and reduce waste and implement the eco-credits award scheme encouraging people to recycle or reuse.

An ICT platform will be developed to support the development, implementation, demonstration, and communication activities.

For more information: [www.circ4life.eu](http://www.circ4life.eu)

## **2. Objectives of the communication plan**

The current communication plan has several objectives:

- a. Communicate on what the circular economy (CE) is and raise awareness on its beneficial impacts for the environment and society at large
- b. Contribute to change behaviour in consumers, companies and decision-makers by conveying the message that a circular model is possible, and they should also promote it
- c. Increase awareness on the existence of CEBMs
- d. Communicate on the project goals, progress, expected results and challenges
- e. Benefits of the project's research in practice and possible next step actions
- f. Create synergies with other EU funded ongoing or recent CE projects which may enhance the visibility and the impact of the research

A way to measure it will be through the number of articles published in the press, the impact on social media, references in other websites such as other circular economy European projects etc.

### 3. Visibility of the project and branding

Considering the importance of the project visibility, having a recognisable visual identity for the project is key. The consistent use of the logo, the same font in all project communication materials and templates will contribute to this.

Therefore, we have designed a logo (see Figure 3.1) representing the link of CIRC4Life to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) using the SDG wheel as the project will aim at shortening supply chain length and reducing consumption of resources and materials. The International Resource Panel (IRP, 2015) found that 12 out of the 17 SDGs promote human well-being through the sustainable use of natural resources. In particular, this project will contribute to implement SDG 2, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13 and 15.

Due to the complexity of the project and the variety of actors involved we have included a visual representation of the 4 industry sectors where we will develop the new sustainable products and services.



Figure 3.1 CIRC4Life project logo

## **4. Target audience**

For each audience, a distinct strategy to approach and communicate the project will be developed using targeted messages, means and language. More information will be provided below.

A graphical representation of the different steps followed for communication purposes will also be developed. The main stakeholders and actors the CIRC4life project is aiming to communicate to are:

### **4.1 Trade associations and Industry stakeholders**

Trade associations and businesses will be the first key category to which the project and its outcomes need to be communicated. These business stakeholders will operate in the 4 sectors addressed by this project but also beyond.

We will approach them using several means such as the network of our industry project partners: ALIA has almost 900 members of Spanish agrarian transformation society, SWE has a network of more than 100 industrial companies, REC has a network of more than 1,300 companies requesting coverage of recycling WEEE, GS1 has produced a traceability solution user-base of over one million companies worldwide, and CEPS is a policy think tank with more than 100 corporate members.

In their work they are in regular contact with a number of industry networks and professionals and they will have a section on their website and communicate about the CIRC4life news through their communication channels: newsletters, presentations in trade fairs etc. More information is included in the dissemination plan.

Specific expertise from food producers, processors and retailers will be harnessed from businesses engaged by the recognised multi-actor approach. Sector-based Associations and Networks of electrical and electronic equipment (lighting products and tablets in particular) and farming and agri-foods industry (at national and European level). Examples of stakeholders to which the project and its results will be communicated are presented in Annex I. This list will be uploaded to an online file accessible to all partners and will be regularly updated (approximately 1-2 times per year) through the various project activities that will engage more business stakeholders.

We will also use their current contacts with trade media in the sector they operate and extend them providing them with relevant content to publish as they are usually looking for it.

The Twitter and LinkedIn accounts will be used specifically to target them with posts focusing on issues which are interesting for them such as the business opportunities the circular economy offers and the potential collaboration with other business partners. We will assess our progress through monitoring the number of industry professionals that follow us in the social media accounts.

We are planning to contact the Ellen MacArthur Foundation based in the UK and with a directory of more than 100 members including industry and an active stakeholder on the circular economy to inform them about the project. The idea is to start a collaboration with them and for instance ask them to publish an article on their website/ newsletter and use them as a multiplier.

### **4.2. Academic community: research and academic organisations**

Researchers and other experts in the field of sustainability will be targeted via our dissemination plan; however, some communication activities will also target the research community. For example, the team might prepare some targeted tweets to promote the project's research publications when they are published.



For this purpose, the tweets can be adapted with specific hashtags and tags in order to attract the research community.

Similarly, one of the project's newsletters may focus on the research/scientific results of the project in order to target the research audience. The project's poster will also be used for communication purposes in the scientific/academic Conferences in which the project partners will participate.

Moreover, the participation of the Centre for European Policy Study (CEPS) in the project consortium will contribute to reaching the audience of other think tanks/research organisations. CEPS is a policy think tank, with 100 corporate members ranging in various sectors. These members (businesses and national business associations etc.) will be informed about the results of the project/potential impacts. Additionally, CEPS is a knowledge partner of the Green Growth Knowledge Platform (GGKP), a large international network initiated by the OECD, the World Bank, UNEP and the Green Growth Institute. Participation in this Platform provides the option of communicating through the Platform's communication tools (twitter, website, newsletter) some of the key outcomes of the project (selected publications, events etc.).

### **4.3 Decision-makers**

Policy makers at the EU level working on the circular economy/sustainability but also national experts working in ministries represent another target group for Communication. Project partners will compile a list of relevant EU-level, national, regional, and local policy-makers in charge of food policies, waste, environment, circular economy and sustainability, and consumer policies, including European Institutions officials, national, regional and local government bodies. See the ANNEX 1 for a preliminary list. The list will be uploaded in a share folder and will be updated 1-2 times per year.

Regarding the communication approach for this target group, policy-makers are better involved through personalised emails and project events' invitations, followed by tagging them in Tweets and using the most appropriate hashtags depending on the topic such as #circulareconomy #zerowaste #sustainability etc. A number of policy-makers, and especially MEPs and MPs are good Twitter multipliers, i.e. they have many followers on Twitter, and are engaging on a regular basis. A retweet by such multipliers – apart from reaching out to their followers – is moreover an interesting endorsement of the project and its aims.

We will also invite them to our final conference and the mid-term policy workshop that will both take place in Brussels. Decision makers with a national interest will furthermore be invited to visit the demonstrators in the UK and Spain.

### **4.4 Media**

The role of media in raising awareness about the project and its results is very important specially for reaching policy makers and the general public.

We will select a number of journalists from EU based General Media (EU observer, Politico, Euractiv, etc), National Media interested in sustainability issues (La Vanguardia, the Guardian etc) and trade media in the 4 sectors (Agro-food, lighting and EEE) and will make direct contact with them. The idea is to create a relationship and provide them with relevant content when they write about sustainability issues. Besides trade media, journalists are not always willing to write articles on European research projects unless there is really something new to inform about and linked to their work. Considering the circular economy is one of the priorities of the European Commission, there is an increasing interest on this topic and the idea is to use the opportunities when Media will be writing about it to provide them with content of the project. For instance, when they will be reporting about the EU green week, EU sustainability week, SDG adoption anniversary etc.

Concerning specialised Trade Media we will target media working on circular economy, waste, E&E, Organic Food and farming, lighting, consumers, CSR, environment, sustainability etc. A list of contacted media to which the project and its results will be communicated are presented in Annex I. This list will be uploaded to an online file accessible to all partners and will be regularly updated (approximately 1-2 times per year) through the various project activities.

We will use our Twitter account to reach them using visual materials as this will be something they are looking for. We will address them tweets using hashtags relevant to them (#circulareconomy etc) on days where they are writing or planning to write on this issue. We can provide them with concrete examples on how to put the circular economy in practice using our demonstrators. We will also invite a selection of EU based media to our final conference in Brussels and other national/ local media to visit the demonstrators in the UK and Spain.

#### **4.5 Consumer organisations and other civil society networks and organisations**

The involvement of consumers is key in this project as it is required for the co-creation of products and services. Therefore, a specific strategy to reach consumer organisations, civil society and other multipliers is needed. We have selected a number of consumers organisations we are planning to establish a direct contact either through meetings, conference calls etc. BEUC and its Spanish (OCU), Polish, Finnish and British members. We already had a positive initial contact with OCU who is actively working on circular economy and sustainability issues and they can help us reach to the other members. We have asked them to insert information about CIRC4Life on their magazine and newsletters. This list could be expanded if we think is necessary for the project.

MMM as a civil society organisation is already in regular contact with some of the organisations listed below and is a member of SDG Watch Europe and The Social Platform and it will be easy to communicate about the project.

Other organisations and networks we will contact:

- Zero Waste Europe and Zero Waste Spain
- European Environmental Bureau (EEB)
- The Social Platform
- SDG Watch Europe
- WWF
- Friends of the Earth Europe
- Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF)
- European Women's Lobby

All the contacted organisations will be included in ANNEX 1.

We will also use Twitter and interested Facebook groups to contact consumers asking to make a post about the project and its news using hashtags #circulareconomy #circular #sustainability and #zerowaste.

#### **4.6 Other ongoing or recent EU funded circular economy projects**

We are in the process of connecting the coordinators of other circular economy projects to discuss the best way to collaborate and create synergies. We have already made an initial contact with R2pi and C-SERVEES "Activating Circular Services in the Electric and Electronic Sector". We are discussing about inviting them to our ACSI innovation cap in November 2018 and asking to inform about our project on their websites. We will also give visibility to their work on our website. It is expected that we will connect to the other coordinators in the next months.

## 4.7 Public in general

Communicating to the general public about the circular economy will be a challenge as they are not always familiar with the concept. Our approach when using Media and social media will be to choose some key messages which will be to the point, relevant, understandable avoiding jargon. We will explain how the outcomes of the project are relevant to their everyday lives. We will use among others the hashtags #sustainability and #zerowaste and other emerging ones as the general public is not so familiar with the concept of circular economy. We will look for other hashtags which may have increased visibility. By the number of followers, views, RT we will be able to see the impact of our digital communications.

We will highlight that it is a project made possible thanks to the cooperation of several partners and EU funding and will also make the connection to the sustainable development goals (SDGs). A first step in this direction is the design of the logo which makes the link with the SDGs.

We will use bloggers and influencers who write about zero waste and have many followers. We will also identify FB groups who are interested on these topics which are for a non-expert audience. The zero waste communities usually managed by bloggers in Facebook are also a good way to connect to the general public.

In particular we will target, consumers who are more open to buying sustainable products such as EU ecolabel products. These are generally middle-aged, with medium to high level education and generally urban dwellers. According to research lower education is associated with reduced attention toward eco-label products<sup>1</sup>.

Mothers with small children is also a group who is more open to buying sustainable products and concerned about the environment which we will target as being important in deciding which everyday products to buy for their families. There are several groups of women/ mothers at national or local level in Facebook exchanging tips on how to put the circular economy in practice and we plan to connect to them.

We will also make some videos and infographics and post them on social media/ website to communicate on the project and its outcomes using a simplified language.

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<sup>1</sup> Paying attention to eco-labels in purchase decisions: socio-economic and demographic determinants  
Georgios Papastefanou March 2001

[https://www.gesis.org/fileadmin/upload/forschung/publikationen/gesis\\_reihen/zuma\\_arbeitsberichte/01\\_03.pdf](https://www.gesis.org/fileadmin/upload/forschung/publikationen/gesis_reihen/zuma_arbeitsberichte/01_03.pdf)

## 5. Communication approach

We consider that communication activities have to occur during the whole duration of the project on a regular basis as it is a continuous process. All project partners will be involved using their usual communication channels (social media accounts, websites etc) and networks to inform about the project and its main results.

Different tools and methods will be selected based on the target audience and the purpose of the communication as described in the previous section. We will aim at using visual materials when possible by using infographics, pictures etc to facilitate the communication and make it more social media friendly.

Certain periods during the project will require more intensive communication activities. For example, during the first months of the projects communication activities will aim to inform about the foreseen activities and raise awareness on the project, while during the end of the project they will aim to communicate the results.

In addition, there will be key moments/ milestones to communicate more specifically such as:

- M7 Ecopoints method available
- M10 Living labs available for implementation
- M18 Results of the consumer surveys and completion of three CEBMs development
- M33 Demonstration of three CEBMs with LED lights, tablets, vegetables, and meat production and Policy recommendations
- M24 Mid-term Policy Workshop
- M35 Final Conference

In any case the communication plan will be consistent with the dissemination plan targeted more at an audience who can directly use the results.

The channels that we will be using are:

### 5.1 Project Website

The Website will be used to inform the general public and all target audiences about the project aim and objectives, description of the partners involved in the project, an overview of the project results, and the deliverables that can be disclosed to the public. The Website is linked with a “.eu” domain [www.circ4life.eu](http://www.circ4life.eu)

Furthermore, a Web-based system of task management is integrated such as SharePoint, for internal communication within the consortium members.

The website will have a separate section called results so they are easy to find and a link to other circular economy projects to create synergies and maximise the impact of our mutual work.

The visibility of the EU funding has been included at the bottom of the homepage.

It will be mainly in English with a description of the project, some articles and its main results may be translated into Spanish.

We will use several tools to analyse how many visitors we have, where they are located and the sections which attract more attention in order to measure the impact of our work.

## **5.2 Newsletters**

Regular newsletters will be prepared (around 2 per year) in order to inform all audiences about the progress of the project. These will be communicated mainly through the project website and social media. It will be possible to sign up for the newsletter in the website and it will also be proposed to sign up at the innovation camps, living labs and other project events or activities. An Appendix would be added to list current news releases and published items.

We will also provide project information and results to be included in EASME website, the EU Eco-Innovation newsletter, SDG Watch Europe, and other potential multipliers such as the Spanish Consumer organisation OCU, other EU circular economy project websites, NCP Brussels workshops on the topic of circular economy etc. We will include news about our project on their newsletters.

## **5.3 Social Media**

Social media accounts will be opened in order to communicate in a two-way exchange about the project and its results, and also to drive traffic to the project's website. A Twitter account as it is regularly used by decision makers, Media and circular economy professionals. In order to expand its audience, the team will use the #H2020 to the tweets and will also tag @EU\_H2020. The idea is to capitalise on existing trends using new hashtags to boost the visibility of the project with the appropriate audience.

A Facebook account will be ideal to reach the general public/consumers.

A LinkedIn account will be created and maintained for academic and industry stakeholders although this will not require such regular posting as Facebook and Twitter. There are active groups on the issue of the circular economy and we plan to connect to them.

A YouTube channel account to post the project videos. This is also a tool to be used with all target audiences and general public.

We will use Twitter Analytics and Facebook Insights to have key performance indicators measuring the impact of our communications looking at the quantitative and qualitative aspects such as the posts which have more impact (RT, comments, engagement), new followers and type, etc.

## **5.4 Printed materials**

A project flyer will be designed and printed to provide basic information about the project and create visibility about it in English. Translations into other languages such as Spanish can be considered as 2 demonstrators will take place in Spain.

A project Poster describing and promoting the key objectives of the CIRC4Life project will be presented in events organised by the partners and used at or hosted by other relevant organisations at workshops and conferences, and at the end of the project's conference, which will be targeted at all audiences.

The printed material will be produced in English and it will be made available electronically and in hard-copy.

## **5.5 Media**

Press and magazines articles will be published (around 4 per year) to target, mainly, the general public, although articles in specialised trade magazines will also be published to target policy-makers and industry

professionals. Nottingham Trent University Press and other project partners will use their networks and media contact with EU press, UK and other EU countries media to ensure this action.

TV News: Nottingham Trent University Press will talk with BBC news to broadcast a program about the project. The program will talk about the project itself, and also about sustainability topics and how the project can contribute the environmental agenda as well as benefit the planet.

## **5.6 Videos**

A number of video interviews as well recording the demonstrators conducted in WP6 will be prepared during the duration of the project to be featured in the project's website and social media accounts (e.g. You tube). The objective is to inform the public about the project, outcomes and impact in society.

## **5.7 Webinar**

A webinar will be organised in M34 aimed at communicating the outcomes of the project to the general public. The webinar will also aim at increasing the project's visibility to experts and stakeholders who cannot physically attend the Final Conference. This online event will be organised by CEPS and will feature presentations by the project's team members followed by comments and questions by the participants. Low-cost webcast technology will be used to organise the webinar.

## **5.8 Final Conference**

At the end of the project (M35), a conference will be organised in Brussels to present all the results, this half-day conference will spread the project's acquired knowledge and policy implications to the public, and it will provide an opportunity to discuss the results with the all types of audiences, top-level keynote speakers and industry experts and influencers. The event will feature panel of experts from the industry, research and policy. Moreover, representatives from the key associations from the farming/agri-food and EEE sectors will also be invited to provide their views on the results of the project. Some of the communion tools produced in the context of the project (e.g. videos) will be presented during the Conference.

The conference will be held in the CEPS conference room in Brussels, which can host about 120 people. It will be organised in 2-3 sessions of approximately two hours each, to make it attractive for multiple audiences and the media and to ensure more participation. Discussions about key topics will be introduced by short inputs. To ensure a large number of attendees, the team will utilise the extensive network of all project partners.

## 6. References

For consumer attitudes towards sustainable products in page 11 Section General Public:

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Consumer attitudes towards sustainability aspects of food production: Insights from three continents, Journal  
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## **ANNEX 1**

### **TRADE ASSOCIATIONS AND INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS**

European Livestock and Meat Trades Union  
The Liaison center for the meat processing industry in the EU CLITRAVI  
Food Drink Europe  
The European Feed Manufactures' Federation  
CSR Europe  
Eurocommerce  
Business Europe  
FEAD European Waste and Resource Management  
CEFIC  
Orgalime  
EURIC European Recycling Industries Confederation  
EERA European Electronics Recyclers Association  
COPA COGECA and its Spanish and British members (COAG and NFU)  
Euromontana, France/Europe  
Organic Growers Alliance, UK  
IFOAM EU European umbrella organisation for organic food and farming and its Spanish member SEAE (Spanish Society for organic production) and UK member Soil Association and Soil Association, UK  
Agroecology Europe, Belgium  
Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board, UK  
UK Society of Light and lighting  
The Lighting industry association (LIA)  
Lighting Europe  
IALD (The International Association of Lighting Designers)  
ILP (The Institution of Lighting Professionals):  
LET Lighting Education Trust

### **DECISION MAKERS**

Prominent MEPs working to promote the circular economy such as Sirpa Pietikäinen, Mark Demesmaeker, Simona Bonafe, Karl-Heinz Florenz, Gerben Jan Gerbrandy, Pilar Ayuso, Julie Girling, Molly Scott Cato etc  
Political group advisers from the environment committee dealing with the circular economy  
ENVI committee secretariat  
DG Environment  
DG Climate Action  
DG Research and innovation  
DG Agriculture and rural development  
Dg Internal market, industry, entrepreneurship and SMEs  
DG Justice and consumers  
Stakeholders Platform on the circular economy  
EESC  
Committee of Regions members working on circular economy  
EASME  
EU offices of Regions where demonstrations are taking place (Murcia, Comunidad Valenciana, Basque Country, Cornwall and Berkshire)  
Circular economy clusters and Networks such as the new cluster on circular economy in the Brussels Region (Circlemade Brussels and in other regions)  
CEMR (Council of European Municipalities and Regions)



Assembly of European Regions  
Covenant of Mayors initiative for Climate and Energy  
NCP Brussels for Horizon 2020