



SESSION DESCRIPTION

14 Circular Jobs in Cities: Assessing the societal impacts of the circular economy

Workshop

Date: Friday, 28 June, 2019

Time: 11:00-12:30

Rooms: S25-26

Language: English

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Organized by: Circle Economy, ICLEI, UN Environment

OBJECTIVE

The rapid growth of cities within a linear economy threatens to aggravate the key societal and environmental challenges they are facing, from unemployment and inequality to pollution and climate change. City practitioners recognize the opportunity of the circular economy to revitalize local economies, create jobs and increase well-being while addressing resource scarcity and climate change, thereby creating a holistic framework to ensure local resilience.

Notwithstanding its potential societal benefits, circular economy monitoring frameworks are often limited to resource consumption or waste production. Many studies are predicting considerable positive employment and well-being benefits if circular economy strategies are scaled up and mainstreamed, but, as yet, few have focused on the local level or the role of cities. Furthermore, parallel societal developments such as migration and informality, that are closely intertwined with resource management and well-being, are not captured and therefore not accounted for in the circular economy debate.

There is a need for a framework that allows cities to plan for and operationalize circularity in a way that creates inclusive employment opportunities and increase well-being while at the same time achieving ambitious environmental goals.

ICLEI, UN Environment and Circle Economy have formed a consortium to develop pilot projects as well as a research and policy framework that will support cities in achieving these goals.

During this interactive workshop, the consortium introduced their methodology and cities described the employment challenges they face - and how this relates to the circular economy.

OUTCOMES

Participants left the workshop session with:

- A clear understanding of what constitutes employment in the circular economy, and how it can be monitored;
- Insights into cities' employment challenges, and the relation to the circular economy;
- Ideas for cities to steer their transition from linear to circular in an inclusive manner.



METHODOLOGY

- 11:00 - 11:15 Thematic introduction: The concept of circular jobs and its relevance for sustainable urban development will be presented.
- 11:15 – 11:45 Cities experience: The session began with presentation of cities representatives on key employment challenges they are facing and how they relate to a circular economy.
- 11:45 – 12:20 Workshop: Looking at where and how three value chains will change in the transition from linear to circular, we explored which implications this has on the workforce. In this session, we addressed both the challenges and opportunities arise, and identify policy instruments at hand and which stakeholders carry which responsibility in ensuring a positive transition for all.
- 12:20 - 12:30 Summary of discussions.

CONTRIBUTORS

- Facilitator: *Marion Guénard, Officer, Circular Resource Management and Policies, ICLEI World Secretariat, Bonn, Germany*
- Speaker *Annerieke Douma, Director of Cities and Regions, Circle Economy, Amsterdam, the Netherlands*
- Speaker *Joke Dufourmont, Programme Lead, Jobs & Skills Programme, Circle Economy, Amsterdam, the Netherlands*
- Speaker *Martina Otto, Head, Cities Unit, UN Environment, Paris, France*
- Speaker *Guilherme Cavalcanti, Executive Director. ARIES, Recife, Brazil*
- Speaker *Anne Draddy, Sustainability Coordinator, City of Baltimore, Baltimore, United States*

Further recommended reading

European Commission (2018). *Impacts of circular economy policies on the labour market*. Available at: https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/sites/default/files/ec_2018_-_impacts_of_circular_economy_policies_on_the_labour_market.pdf

UN Environment (2018). Circular economy indicators: what do they measure? United Nations Environment Programme. Available at: <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/blogpost/circular-economy-indicators-what-do-they-measure>