

The Council adopts conclusions on the circular economy

EU environment ministers unanimously support further ambitious efforts to stimulate a systemic transition to a sustainable society.

The Council today adopted conclusions on **“More circularity – Transition to a sustainable society”**.

Recently adopted EU legislation helps tackle marine litter from plastics, improves chemicals management and increases the recycling of materials. The Council stresses in its conclusions that **further ambitious efforts are needed** to stimulate a systemic transition to a sustainable society. The circular economy is an important driver for cutting greenhouse gas emissions, respecting the planetary boundaries as well as reaching the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The Council invites the Commission to come up with **an ambitious long-term strategic framework**, including a common vision for a circular economy and to adopt **a new circular economy action plan** with targeted actions.

The Council calls for action to **promote circularity systemically across the value chain**, including from the consumer perspective, in key sectors including **textiles, transport, food as well as construction and demolition**. The Council also stresses the need for more measures on **batteries and plastics**.

In its conclusions, the Council highlights that **ecodesign** principles have helped make an increasing number of energy-related products more energy-efficient, and tasks the Commission with assessing whether ecodesign principles could be **applied to new product groups** (for example information and communications technology products) and, if appropriate, to put forward a legislative proposal. The Council asks the Commission to broaden the scope of eco-design measures by including criteria on material efficiency such as **durability, reparability, recyclability and recycled content**.

The conclusions encourage the use of **economic instruments**, such as environmental taxation, green tax reforms and extended producer responsibility schemes, to promote the circular economy, more sustainable production and consumption patterns, and improved waste management. The Council highlights that the procurement of products and services can boost circular markets and investments in clean, safe, non-toxic and sustainable cycles. Businesses and the financial sector should be encouraged to use clear and comparable environmental performance targets to guide their investments.

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