

Make more with less

Enhancing Resource Efficiency in the Mediterranean Agro-food Sector and Cities for a Circular Economy

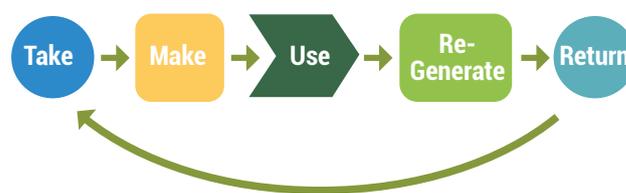
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Project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund

A circular economy is ‘where the value of products, materials and resources is maintained in the economy for as long as possible, and the generation of waste minimised’.

European Commission 2015



The **Circular Economy White Papers** present the contributions of the Interreg MED Green Growth community and their efforts in transitioning towards a circular economy in the Mediterranean, in the areas of:

- Resource Efficiency
- Green and Smart Public Services
- Waste Prevention and Management
- Competitiveness and Innovation

The **Interreg MED's Green Growth** community has created four Thematic Working Groups as a tool for collaboration and communication among its 14 Modular Project to aid in the quality, efficiency, scalability and replicability of the project results.

The first **Thematic Working Group**, including **6 modular projects** from the Green Growth community focused on Sustainable Consumption and Production by enhancing **Resource Efficiency** in the **Mediterranean agrofood sector**, as well as in urban areas through the implementation of the **Smart City Concept**.

Objective

To address the inefficiencies, intensive resource use, and environmental degradation associated with a linear "Take-Make-Waste" economic model.

Results

The projects demonstrated the benefits of resource efficiency for both the environment and the economy through:

- The minimization in demand for water and energy.
- Promotion of the use of local Agro-Food products.
- The creation of new and sustainable competitive advantages for the European Union.
- The Modular Projects partnered with over 430 companies to implement 59 pilot applications specifically aimed at addressing the value chain of the agro-food industry and public city infrastructure. The modular projects were monitored relative to the EU Circular Economy Action Plan's indicator framework.



Modular Projects

CAMARG, ESMARTCITY, MADRE, MED GREENHOUSES, PEFMED, REINWASTE

Relevant CE Indicators

EU self-sufficiency for raw materials, waste generation

Main Targets

Energy efficiency, sustainable production and consumption, market uptake of eco-innovative patterns & zero-m products, greener supply chains, prevention of waste generation, food safety, smart city paradigm.

THEMATIC WORKING GROUP 1

Resource Efficiency



CHALLENGES ADDRESSED

- Difficulties for companies to measure their environmental footprint and resource efficiency
- The use of predominantly low-cost, low-tech, labour intensive and rudimentary equipped greenhouses
- The lack of energy efficiency and renovation of EU buildings

SOLUTIONS PROVIDED BY MODULAR PROJECTS

- Tests of the European Product Environmental Footprint (PEF) in the agrofood sector.
- Innovative greenhouse technologies (e.g. the use of geothermal energy)
- Smart solutions for energy efficiency in city infrastructure with regards to public buildings and public street lighting

CALL TO ACTION

Collectively, the Interreg MED Green Growth community contributes to enhancing the efficiency in the use of a variety of key resources such as land, energy, water, plastics, fuel and other materials.

In order to reach the full potential of the presented solutions throughout the Mediterranean region, the Interreg MED Green Growth community calls for action in the following aspects:

The European Commission and EU Member States

- To promote the dissemination, transfer and uptake of the solutions and innovations for measuring and enhancing resource efficiency.
- To promote investments in eco-innovation to support sustainable and resource efficient production patterns.
- To address users' perceptions and to raise awareness among citizens to promote sustainable consumption patterns.

- To put in place policy and legislation to promote resource efficiency and sustainable consumption and production patterns, for example, on plastic use.

Regional and local authorities in the Mediterranean

- To develop action plans and programmes that incentivise the uptake of eco-innovations.
- To adopt and promote the Smart City paradigm shift.

SMEs

- To respond to growing customer demands for green products and services by investing in eco-innovation and resource efficiency along the value chain.
- To engage in innovation networks and clusters and share knowledge and experiences on best practices and solutions to make value chains more resource efficient.

European Commission (2015). *Closing the loop - An EU action plan for the Circular Economy*
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52015DC0614>

European Commission (2017). *Resource Efficiency*
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/green-growth/resource-efficiency/index_en.htm

European Commission (2018). *Monitoring framework for the circular economy*
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1516265440535&uri=COM:2018:29:FIN>

European Parliament (2018). *Resource efficiency and the circular economy.*
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/76/resource-efficiency-and-the-circular-economy>

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