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 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.

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.

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

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


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/ SYNGGI project:

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