

FINAL AGENDA

**“Supporting Green Transition in the
Western Balkans” project**



Regional Peer Dialogue

17 April 2024
Brussels, Belgium



#OECDseeurope

“Supporting Green Transition in the Western Balkans”

Regional Peer Dialogue

- Spotlight theme: Industrial symbiosis -

■ OBJECTIVES

Throughout 2024, the OECD South East Europe will scale up its green transition support in the Western Balkans with a new project funded by Italy. This project will aim to support the implementation of the region’s green strategies and foster regional dialogue, through capacity building and best practice sharing. The OECD will leverage its ongoing greening work to address most pressing issues for the green transition in the region.

The objective of the meeting will be to convene a Regional Peer Dialogue, to support initiatives on green economy, including on circular economy and private sector engagement. The focus will be on fostering knowledge exchange regarding the latest trends on the topic of industrial symbiosis, its impact on the green and circular transition, as well as engaging in discussions around policy solutions. The OECD will offer tailor-made recommendations, first hand exchange of best practices from EU and OECD peer countries, and enhance regional public and private stakeholder dialogue.

During the first part of the meeting, the OECD will delve into the fundamental requirements for fostering industrial symbiosis. This includes examining regulatory standards, integrating symbiosis within economic zones, and establishing platforms or hubs to facilitate the exchange of residual materials between producers and users.

The second part of the meeting will offer attendees firsthand insights into best practices and tailored recommendations from both EU and OECD peer countries in the field of industrial symbiosis. The session will feature presentations from experts representing various initiatives, including a symbiosis platform in Sicily facilitated by the Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development and a symbiosis initiative in Kalundborg, Denmark. Additionally, the panel will feature a representative from the CircLean, which serves as a one-stop-shop for industrial symbiosis stakeholders in the European Union. These examples will showcase successful strategies and approaches for fostering industrial symbiosis in different sectors, highlighting key achievements, challenges, and lessons learned.

■ BACKGROUND

Industrial symbiosis marks a shift from traditional linear industrial models to a circular economy framework, aiming to minimise waste and maximise resource efficiency. At its core, this concept encourages businesses and industries within a geographic area to engage in a mutually beneficial exchange of materials, energy, water, and by-products, transforming what would typically be discarded as waste into valuable inputs for another process. This innovative approach not only contributes to environmental sustainability by reducing the ecological footprint of industrial activities but also offers economic benefits through cost savings and the creation of new revenue streams. The European Union has been a strong proponent of industrial symbiosis, incorporating it into key initiatives such as the Circular Economy Action Plan and supporting it through funding mechanisms like Horizon 2020 to enhance resource efficiency and promote a more sustainable industrial sector.

In the Western Balkans, the adoption of industrial symbiosis presents an opportunity to address some of the region's most pressing environmental challenges, including high levels of plastic pollution and inefficient waste management practices. Given the region's reliance on landfilling practices, coupled with poor waste treatment infrastructure—evidenced by only 6.4% of municipal waste being recycled in the Western Balkans, compared to the EU's 49%—industrial symbiosis offers a path towards reducing environmental degradation and fostering a more sustainable economic development model. By integrating the principles of industrial symbiosis and creating new legal frameworks, the Western Balkans can transform waste into a resource, thereby improving the recycling process, reducing the reliance on landfills and uncontrolled dumpsites, and mitigating the adverse effects on wildlife and ecosystems. This approach not only aligns with the European Union's environmental directives and circular economy goals but also holds the potential to revitalise local economies through enhanced competitiveness and sustainability in sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing and construction, which are crucial for the region's prosperity.

■ FORMAT & PARTICIPANTS

The Regional Peer Dialogue aims to bring together policy makers and non-government representatives from the Western Balkans, alongside experts from the OECD and EU member countries. The total number of participants is estimated at around 30.

Contacts

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WEDNESDAY, 17 APRIL 2024**09:30 – 12:30***Hotel Radisson Red, Brussels***09:00 – 09:30 WELCOME COFFEE****09:30 – 09:45 INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

- **Ms. Marzena Kisielewska**, Head of OECD South East Europe Division
- **Ms. Cristina Caputo**, Deputy Head of Unit for Adriatic and Balkans, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Italy (virtual)

09:45 – 10:15 INDUSTRIAL SYMBIOSIS: SETTING THE SCENE

The OECD will explore the essential prerequisites for industrial symbiosis, such as regulatory standards, its integration in economic zones, and the creation of platforms or hubs to facilitate the exchange between producers and users of residual materials.

- **Ms. Jovana Pavlovic Djukic**, Team Lead – Green Economy and Sustainability, OECD South East Europe Division
- **Ms. Clémence Girin**, Policy Analyst, OECD South East Europe Division
- **Ms. Katarína Svatíková**, Policy Analyst, OECD Environment Directorate

10:15 – 12:00 POLICY DISCUSSION ON INDUSTRIAL SYMBIOSIS AND GOOD PRACTICE EXCHANGE

Panellists will offer first hand exchange of best practices from EU and OECD peer countries and tailor-made recommendations for different sectors.

Moderator: **Ms. Jovana Pavlovic Djukic**, Team Lead – Green Economy and Sustainability, OECD South East Europe Division

- **Ms. Silvia Grandi**, Director General for Circular Economy, Ministry of Environment and Energy Security, Italy
- **Mr. Per Møller**, Senior Symbiosis Developer, Kalundborg Symbiosis, Denmark
- **Mr. Luigi Lo Piparo**, Partner at Technopolis Group, former Project Manager of the EU project CircLean and WP Leader for the H4C ECoP project
- **Dr. Alenka Mauko Pranjić**, Head of Department for Materials, Slovenian National Building and Civil Engineering Institute – ZAG

Reflections from Western Balkans representatives and tour-de-table

12:00 – 12:30 MEETING WRAP-UP

- **Ms. Marzena Kisielewska**, Head of OECD South East Europe Division

12:30 – 14:00 LUNCH