

Policy options to enhance Circularity

January 19th, 2024

Location: DIW Berlin, Mohrenstraße 58, 10117 Berlin

Elinor Ostrom Room

The European Union's Circular Economy Action Plan (2020) introduced initiatives to establish a coherent product policy framework focusing on the entire life cycle of products. This Action Plan targets regulations on product design to promote circular economy processes and reduce of waste creation. Together with the subsequent Sustainable Product Regulation and further revisions of regulations on prioritized products (e.g. packaging, plastics, construction materials and end-of-life vehicles), they provide a unique opportunity to meet the needs of industries along the value chain in achieving a transition towards a decarbonized, resource-efficient and circular economy.

This workshop brings together researchers, policymakers, and industry stakeholders to explore the challenges and policy needs for high-quality raw material recycling and develop a joint research agenda. During this workshop, bottlenecks for high-quality recycling will be explored and potential challenges under the current and upcoming policy framework will be identified with the objective of contributing to the development of comprehensive policy recommendations for the strengthening of the circular economy.

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Agenda

9:30 – 10:00 **Coffee & Welcome**

10:00 – 10:30 **Introduction**

Brief introduction of the current policy landscape and the potential of a circular economy to reduce environmental pollution, contribute to resource efficiency, and reach climate targets.

10:30 – 12:15 **Session 1: Market-based instruments: Carbon pricing, resource taxes & deposit-return schemes**

Guiding questions:

- How can carbon prices or resource taxes level the playing field sufficiently for all materials?
- Can carbon pricing help circular business models be more competitive?
- Where is untapped potential for the implementation of deposit-return schemes?

Inputs:

Tim Breker (Vytal) – the untapped potential for DRS and the difference between DRS and a library-type reuse system.

Dagmar Glatz (DM) – what is missing to unfold the dynamics in the field of recycling plastic materials in products and packaging?

12:15 – 13:00 **Lunch Break**

13:00 – 14:45 **Session 2: Non-price regulation: Product standards & minimum recycled content**

Guiding questions:

- Do the current policies provide sufficient incentives for product eco-design, including reuse, remanufacturing, and product recyclability?
- Can minimum recycled content quotas ensure a strong enough demand pull?

Inputs:

Manuel Bickel (Wuppertal Institute) – BMBF projects on circular product design and remanufacturing.

Carl Dalhammer (IIIEE) – Supply chain and product policies.

14:45 – 15:00 **Coffee Break**

15:00 – 16:30 **Session 3: Harmonization of governance**

Guiding questions:

- On what level, international, European, or domestic, is more and better aligned legislation needed?
- Where are goals of circularity and climate protection conflicting and lead to issues such as resource shuffling?
- How can more international sectoral cooperation as well as partnerships be fostered?