

MANIFESTO

The Alliance for the Circular Economy for an innovative and sustainable development

The continuous improvement in terms of innovation, competitiveness and environmental performances it's the challenge that we, as companies, face every day. These are highly complementary objectives that can be pursued simultaneously with a Circular Economy approach, the potential of which has greatly increased thanks to technological development in recent years.

The Circular Economy has taken center stage in the institutional agendas.

The European Union has given a substantial boost in this direction with the enactment of *Circular Economy Package* in December 2015. In its Communication "The missing link: a European action plan for the Circular Economy", the Circular Economy is addressed as a strategic priority to revive European competitiveness:

"The transition to a more circular economy, in which the value of products, materials and resources is kept as long as possible and the production of waste is minimized, it is an indispensable part of the efforts made by the European Union to develop an economy that is sustainable, releases few carbon dioxide emissions, uses resources efficiently and remains competitive. This transition gives Europe the opportunity to transform the economy and to create new sustainable competitive advantages.

The Circular Economy will boost EU competitiveness by protecting businesses from resource scarcity and price volatility and by helping create both new business opportunities and innovative and more efficient modes of production and consumption. Besides generating new jobs at local level and for all qualifications, by offering integration and social cohesion opportunities, it will help saving energy and avoiding irreversible damage in terms of climate, biodiversity and air, soil, water pollution, caused by the consumption of resources at a rate that exceeds the capacity of Earth to renew them.

The action on the front of Circular Economy is therefore closely linked to several EU priorities - growth and jobs, the investment program, the climate and energy, the social agenda and industrial innovation - as well as to worldwide efforts for a sustainable development.

"Worldwide, the Circular Economy can play an important role in facilitating the achievement of the 2015 targets set by the Agreement in Paris on climate change, promoting the transition to a economy that uses less and less non-renewable resources and contributing to the achievement of several Sustainable Development Goals defined in the Agenda 2030 of the United Nations on sustainable development.

At an Italian level, the National Strategy on Circular Economy is a vital first step, both in contextualizing the issue and in indicating the direction to take. The relevance of Circular Economy is in fact much greater in a country historically poor in raw materials such as Italy and limited by the need to preserve its priceless natural heritage. The Circular Economy is also complementary to other important measures and strategic guidelines that, at European and national level, in recent years are trying to give an answer to the triple challenge of economic growth, environmental protection and social sustainability by addressing issues such as the development of bio-based economy, the promotion of energy from renewable sources, the maintenance of soil fertility.

Economic actors, such as businesses and consumers, are crucial to guide this process.

The integration of innovation and sustainability in business represents since long time a strategic choice for competition for our companies, and finds in Circular Economy its best representation.

At the very base of Circular Economy is the overcoming of the historical separations between fields and sectors: the circular potential can be fully developed only by re-thinking processes and products, and by developing all possible synergies. In this scenario it is vital a cooperation between companies of different sectors and it is equally critical that companies collaborate with all their stakeholders.

There are multiple ways to perform this transformation, for example:

- using renewable energy and materials;
- exploiting resources through upcycling, reuse, recycling and through the market of secondary raw materials;
- developing business models such as product as a service or sharing economy;
- extending the useful life of products and assets through design and maintenance ad hoc;
- designing products on the basis of eco-design principles and in compliance with high quality standards.

The implementation of each one of these options requires a strong commitment by the Companies. However, the action of Companies would remain incomplete were it not accompanied by a transformation of the ecosystem in which they operate, with the involvement of its stakeholders at all levels:

- the Institutions to propose solutions that will enable policy and enterprises to transition at the same speed and to ensure that the regulatory framework integrates in a synergistic way the various policies and allows the effective implementation of the circular processing;
- customers who, with their choices can encourage the adoption of this new solution;
- vendors and partners that, each one for its part, can ensure that the potential is developed along the entire value chain;
- research centers, start-ups, associations constantly proposing new solutions, points of view, priorities;
- communities and single citizens, such as end-users of the change.

The Alliance for the Circular Economy: the big Companies as drivers in facilitating this transformation.

Aware of the relevance of this issue and in the light of this important Document of the Government, we decided to strengthen our efforts on this theme by creating an Alliance that involves, as a leader for each sector, an Italian company that is already leader internationally and heavily committed to the theme. In this way we want to strengthen the cooperation already underway between us and include all main sectors in order to reach the main industrial supply chains of the Country.

This Alliance represents the beginning of a collaboration path also in order to encourage the involvement of the supply chains. The possible fields are several:

- the identification and dissemination of best practices in Italy on circularity and their exploitation internationally;
- the implementation within our activities of criteria and approaches more and more marked by circularity;
- the definition of evaluation methods and targets in terms of circularity, primarily for our Companies but gradually also for our suppliers and for the supply chain downstream;
- the identification and diffusion of best practices;
- the development of common projects;
- the strengthening of the circular theme in our relations with start-ups and research centers;
- the definition of common positions and suggestions on the subject.

Accelerate the transition toward a circular model is now fundamental to increase the competitiveness of the Italian industrial sector and to strengthen its position in the international context.

Signatures

