

This is a series of news bulletins issued by EBB containing policy updates related to the bioeconomy.

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EU must turn circularity into industrial policy to drive competitiveness and resource security

As the European Commission prepares its proposed Circular Economy Act, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) is urging Brussels to make it more than another sustainability initiative.

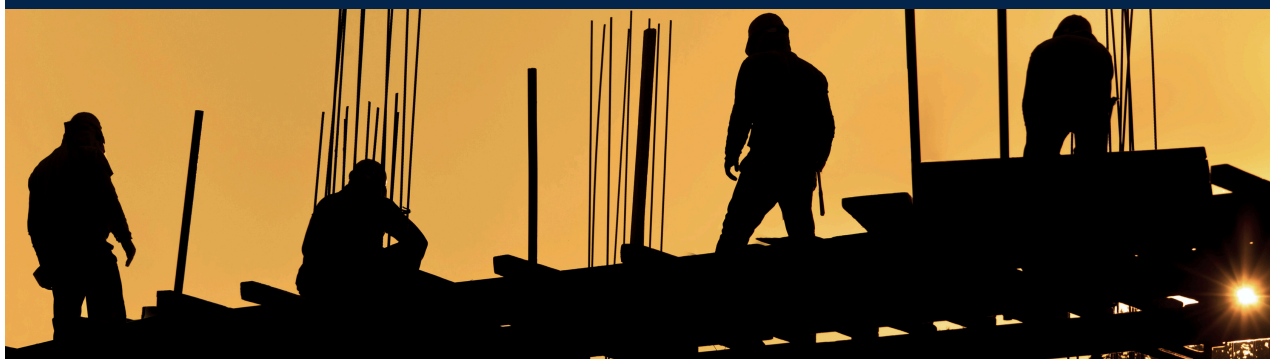
Adopted at the EESC's June plenary session, the Committee's opinion calls for the Act to become a fully-fledged legislative framework that aligns existing laws, strategies and action plans, helping to create a coherent single market for circularity while strengthening Europe's competitiveness, resilience and resource security.

In an [interview with Euractiv](#), Cillian Lohan, President of the EESC's Civil Society Organisations' Group and rapporteur for the opinion, explains why the Circular Economy Act should represent a fundamental transformation in EU industrial policy. He highlights the importance of public procurement in driving demand for circular products and explores how Europe can balance reindustrialisation with reduced resource consumption.

A pathway to Europe's competitiveness: the clean transition

A [new JRC study](#) highlights that the clean transition represents a fundamental pillar for strengthening Europe's competitiveness, resilience, and strategic autonomy. To fully seize these opportunities, it is necessary to systematically address interconnected challenges such as creating climate-neutral energy systems, a circular economy, sustainable mobility, and preserving biodiversity.

The study underscores that investing in the transition is economically advantageous, generating benefits that far outweigh the costs of inaction, and requires significant financial commitment, particularly in the energy sector. Annual investments of around €5.8 billion in protected areas could generate up to €300 billion per year in benefits. To achieve long-term success, the transition must be fair and inclusive, actively involving citizens and ensuring that benefits are shared across all of society.



Europe's Circular Economy must be built for workers, not just resources

Europe's forthcoming Circular Economy Act should extend beyond mere resource efficiency, evolving into a comprehensive strategy that integrates industrial, environmental, and social dimensions.

Although the EU aims to increase its circularity rate to 24% by 2030, the authors of the [article published on Social Europe](#) argue that genuine progress hinges on embedding the transition within the framework of quality employment, workers' rights, social dialogue, and equitable value distribution throughout all circular value chains. They advocate for enhanced social conditions tied to public investment, improved data concerning employment and working conditions, and better alignment between domestic circularity objectives and international trade regulations.

The authors conclude that a circular economy designed with people at its heart - characterized by sustained investment, principles of just transition, and workplace democracy - will prove to be more resilient, equitable, and politically viable than one focused exclusively on technical efficiency metrics.

EU Action Plan for resilience, autonomy, and sustainability in protein system

As announced in the Vision for Agriculture and Food, the Commission has developed the [Protein Action Plan](#) to address various challenges, integrating policy, research and on the ground efforts to create a more autonomous and sustainable EU protein system, while at the same time diversifying the sources of imports. The plan involves increasing autonomy in sustainable protein supply, improving the resilience of the protein system, and strengthening EU protein value chains.

Policy coordination for a sustainable EU protein system should focus on:

- Boosting strategic autonomy by expanding sustainable EU protein supply, with incentives for farmers to adopt diversified, low-fertiliser production systems for healthy, resilient protein crops.
- Enhancing resilience and competitiveness of the entire protein system (including feed) through R&I and scaled-up investment.
- Strengthening value chains by making markets more attractive, stimulating demand, and promoting local solutions and short supply chains.



New report by the European Environment Agency - Protein diversification: strategic risks and opportunities for sustainable food systems

According to a [new report by the European Environment Agency \(EEA\)](#), diversifying Europe's protein sources could significantly strengthen food security, resilience, and competitiveness while reducing environmental pressures. The current system is heavily reliant on animal-based products and imported feed, with livestock accounting for over 65% of EU agricultural emissions and the EU importing nearly two-thirds of its high-protein feed, mainly from a few countries.

The report advocates not for replacing livestock farming but for a gradual rebalancing of protein supply and consumption, alongside more sustainable farming practices. It assesses a portfolio of options, from established plant-based proteins, which offer the most immediate benefits, to emerging alternatives like insects and fermentation-derived proteins. Such a shift could reduce EU agricultural emissions by about 5% by 2035 and open significant economic opportunities, with the global alternative protein market projected to grow substantially. The report outlines three priorities for a future EU protein strategy: safeguarding environmental integrity, strengthening resilience by reducing import dependence, and ensuring a just transition that protects rural livelihoods.

EU Communication on Livestock Strategy

The EU has introduced a [strategy](#) to enhance the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the livestock sector. The plan aims to strengthen the livestock system, ensure animal welfare, and contribute to the circular bioeconomy for long-term success.

To ensure the long-term viability of the EU livestock sector, a strategy is needed to:

- Build resilience to crises and climate stress
- Boost EU and global competitiveness
- Future-proof by strengthening animal welfare and minimising environmental/climate footprint
- Preserve regional diversity, rural economies, traditions, and biodiversity
- Promote a distinct EU livestock model valued for quality and animal welfare



JRC Publication - Contribution of livestock value chains to the bioeconomy sectors in the EU

In this [science for policy brief](#), the JRC estimates that in 2023, the EU livestock value chain generated around EUR 256 billion in value added in 2023, around 30 % of total biomass producing and converting sectors. Key contributions included EUR 91 billion from primary production, EUR 108 billion from food manufacturing, EUR 10 billion from leather, and EUR 47 billion from bio-based chemicals.

From 2013 to 2023, the livestock sector grew significantly, especially in chemicals and pharmaceuticals, while its share of the biomass sector remained stable at around 29%. Contributions vary by country, with Ireland exceeding 40% and several states, like Spain and France, between 25% and 35%. Countries with a share between 25 % and 35 % fall into two patterns: (i) strong agri-food economies where livestock underpins primary production and food processing (Spain, France, Poland and Romania); and (ii) economies with advanced downstream processing combined with traditional livestock streams (Netherlands, Belgium, Slovenia, Germany and Italy).

Study identifies steps to close Europe's recycling gap

As the European Commission plans the Circular Economy Act, a [new study by CIRCPACK](#) finds that Europe must significantly upgrade its waste management systems to strengthen markets for secondary raw materials. The study reveals that performance gaps between national packaging EPR schemes across the 27 Member States remain wide and persistent. These gaps reflect concrete differences in system design, governance quality, data transparency, and infrastructure investment. The findings underscore that without addressing these structural shortcomings, the EU will struggle to create a well-functioning single market for recycled materials and achieve its circularity ambitions.

Meanwhile in the UK, [the Government has suspended the obligation of local authorities to provide collection of flexible plastics until 2030](#) (from 2027) given the cost of organising such collections and the effective difficulty in recycling flexible plastics. The market capacity to recycle plastic films is virtually inexistent and [the closure of the Spanish/UK company PlasticEnergy testifies to this](#).



Challenges and targets in the Single Market

Intra-EU barriers still account for 67% of goods trading costs within the Single Market, affecting global competitiveness. At the same time, slow progress in recycling municipal waste is holding back the creation of a genuine Union market for secondary raw materials. In the past year, the use of recycled materials increased by just 12.2% - far below the EU's 2030 target of 24%.

Nearly half of all EU countries still send over 30% of their municipal waste to landfill. The "One Europe, One Market" roadmap sets out clear strategies and deliverables to strengthen the EU economy and remove these obstacles.

EU BPA ban reaches main transition deadline

The main transition period for the EU ban on bisphenol BPA in food contact materials ended on 20 July 2026. meaning that most single-use and reusable articles manufactured with BPA can no longer be placed on the EU market for the first time. However, transitional provisions allow for a phase-out: single-use articles first placed on the market before that date may be filled and sealed for another 12 months, with packaged food sold until stocks are exhausted, while reusable articles can remain on the market until 20 July 2027.

Extended deadlines apply to technically more complex cases, including certain fruit, vegetable, and fish preservation articles, metal items with exterior-only BPA coatings, and professional food processing equipment, with placement deadlines up to 20 January 2028 and additional sell-through periods of up to one year.

Interactive map predicts climate-driven farm decline by end of century

A team at the Institute for Economic Analysis (IAE), a centre under Spain's National Research Council (CSIC), in Barcelona has developed CADI (Climate-Induced Agricultural Decline Index), a platform that, on a 10 kilometre grid, estimates how much farmland will lose productivity to climate change by 2100.



Report on how R&I can better support startups, scaleups and innovation-driven business across agriculture, forestry, rural areas and food systems in the EU

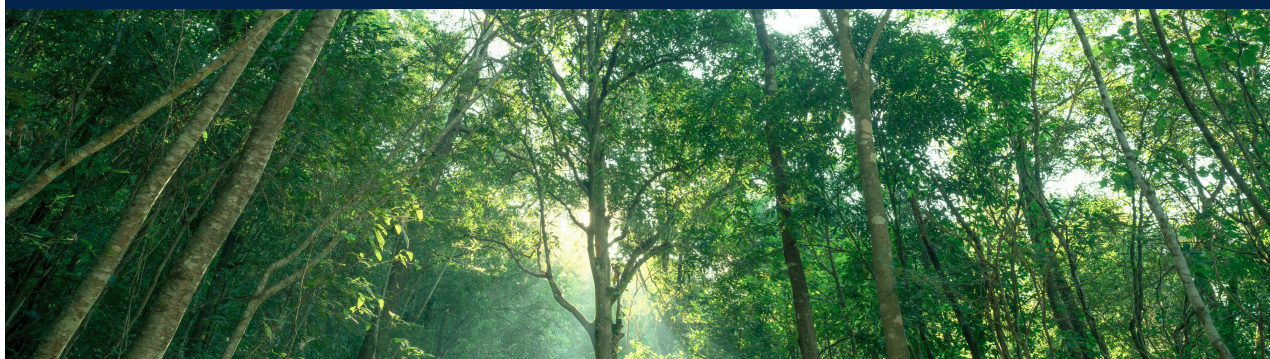
The SCAR Startup and Scaleup Task Force, established at the request of the European Commission, has released its [final report on strengthening the role of Research and Innovation \(R&I\)](#) in supporting startups, scaleups, and innovation-driven businesses in agriculture, forestry, rural areas, and food systems. Based on 49 case studies across EU Member States, the report finds that while Europe possesses a strong R&I base and considerable entrepreneurial talent, persistent barriers hinder the effective translation of research into scalable market solutions.

To overcome these challenges, the Task Force proposes six strategic recommendations: (1) enhance early-stage valorisation pathways within R&I programmes; (2) bridge the "missing middle" between innovation and market deployment; (3) create dedicated scaleup financing tailored to sector-specific needs; (4) strengthen collaboration among research, industry, and markets; (5) build skills in entrepreneurship, commercialisation, and regulatory preparedness; and (6) improve the coordination of EU R&I instruments across the entire innovation journey. The overarching goal is to unlock Europe's full innovation potential and ensure that cutting-edge research translates into tangible economic and environmental benefits for rural and agri-food systems.

Fact Sheet: Compost & Soil Health Improvement

This [Fact Sheet by the European Compost Network](#) compiles evidence from long-term field trials to show how repeated quality-assured compost applications from abundant green- and bio-waste materials support sustained soil health and farm productivity. Decades of trials show that repeated compost application:

- Increases soil organic carbon
- Improves water retention and drought resilience
- Supports biodiversity and microbial activity
- Strengthens long-term crop productivity.



Commission adopts certification methodologies for carbon farming under the CRCF Regulation

The European Commission has adopted three certification methodologies for carbon farming under the Carbon Removals and Carbon Farming (CRCF) Regulation. They cover three types of activities: agriculture and agroforestry on mineral soils, rewetting and restoration of peatlands and other organic soils, and afforestation. The methodologies were developed through a public consultation and discussions with the Expert Group on Carbon Removals.

Once the Delegated Regulation enters into force, certification schemes will be able to apply for recognition of compliance with these methodologies and the minimum requirements set out in the Implementing Regulation. This adoption represents a key step in implementing the CRCF Regulation and strengthening the role of carbon farming in EU climate action.

Recommendations for a Digital One-Stop Shop for Extended Producer Responsibility

An informal Coalition of organisations with an interest in addressing fragmentation in the Extended Producer Responsibility is advocating for the creation of a digital, EU-wide One-Stop Shop for Extended Producer Responsibility to simplify the process in Europe.

A One-Stop Shop (OSS) for EPR is a single digital platform allowing (1) the input of EPR-relevant data by producers (and/ or other actors acting on their behalf) making available products subject to EPR schemes in up to 27 Member States, and (2) the pulling of that data, after its validation and harmonisation through translation, by PROs and Member States' registers and authorities.



Upcoming Events

**SEP
8**

Building the bioeconomy: Setting targets to stay on target
Brussels, Belgium, 8 September 2026

On 8 September, Cefic is hosting a high-level panel discussion that will examine how Europe can move from bioeconomy ambition to industrial reality with a particular focus on market-pull measures and the forthcoming Biotech Act II. The debate will centre on three key questions: how demand-side measures and biomass-derived content targets can foster lead markets; what enabling conditions, such as sustainable biomass access and a coherent Single Market framework, are necessary for scaling up; and how Biotech Act II can serve as a tool for industrialising the bioeconomy, enabling large-scale deployment and delivering on the Bioeconomy Strategy.

[**FIND OUT MORE**](#)

**SEP
14**

Conference on the Circular Economy Act in Europe and Italy
Rome, Italy, 14 September 2026

Kyoto Club is organizing a conference to discuss the future European framework legislation on the circular economy and its implications for the Italian economic system. The event will gather representatives from institutions, industry, businesses, and research to explore the opportunities and challenges that the Circular Economy Act will bring.

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Upcoming Events

**SEP
21-23**

Global Symposium on Soil Compaction
Aarhus, Denmark, Hybrid Event, 21-23 September 2026

The Global Symposium on Soil Compaction will offer a multidisciplinary setting to deepen knowledge of soil compaction and its impact on land degradation. The symposium will bring together a diverse range of stakeholders - from scientists to policymakers - to exchange insights on evaluation methods, prevention, and mitigation. The resulting recommendations will feed directly into FAO's normative agenda and into global initiatives dedicated to halting and reversing land and soil degradation.

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**SEP
24-25**

The EU AgRI 2040 Conference
Brussels, Belgium, 24-25 September 2026

The EU Commission is organising a two-day conference on the upcoming "New Strategic Approach to Research and Innovation for competitive, resilient and sustainable agriculture, forestry, rural areas and food systems: Future-proofing EU agri-food through AgRI 2040 and Food 2040".

The event brings together a wide range of stakeholders to exchange ideas and collectively shape the research and innovation priorities for the next generation of EU funding and the future European Competitiveness Fund.

[**FIND OUT MORE**](#)



Upcoming Events

**OCT
1-2**

International Forum on Industrial Biotechnology and Bioeconomy
Rome, Italy, 1 - 2 October 2026

IFIB is an annual international forum dedicated to industrial biotechnology and the bioeconomy, bringing together key global stakeholders to discuss and showcase the latest advances in the emerging economy based on renewable biological resources. The forum also offers valuable networking opportunities through B2B matchmaking sessions involving startups, companies, universities, and public and private research centres.

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**OCT
20-21**

Global Bioeconomy Summit 2026
Dublin, Ireland, 20-21 October 2026

The Global Bioeconomy Summit 2026 will bring together policymakers, researchers, industry, and other stakeholders to discuss how the bioeconomy can contribute to sustainable economic development, climate action, food security, and resilience. The European Commission will actively participate in the event through policy discussions, thematic workshops, and an exhibition stand showcasing EU initiatives supporting the bioeconomy.

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Upcoming Events

**OCT
29**

European Conference on Circular Economy
Madrid, Spain, 29 October 2026

FEAD and ASEGRE are organising the European Conference on Circular Economy, an event that will bring together representatives of European and Spanish institutions, industry representatives, waste management operators and experts to analyse the strategic role of resource management in the transition towards a more competitive and sustainable circular economy.

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**NOV
17-18**

European Mission Soil Week 2026
Dublin, Ireland, 17-18 November 2026

The fourth European Mission Soil Week, hosted by Teagasc and the Irish EU Council Presidency and organised by the European Commission, will convene policymakers, researchers, farmers, businesses, and other stakeholders around a shared goal: advancing soil health. Core discussions will focus on sustaining Living Labs, scaling up practical results, strengthening the research-to-practice-and-policy pipeline, and developing a solid financial and innovation infrastructure for long-term impact.

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