

## Case Study // Round Table SDG 12: Towards a circular economy: innovation for sustainable value chains

### Towards a Model of Circular Economy for Italy - Overview and Strategic Framework

#### Italy

*Level: national*

#### Summary

"Towards a Model of Circular Economy for Italy - Overview and Strategic Framework" is a document that defines Italy's strategic positioning on circular economy, describes the national vision and calls for a paradigm shift in Italy's economy, in the way we consume, we produce and we do our business.

The document is composed of 4 main parts which describe respectively: 1) the principles and objectives of circular economy as stated at international, European and national level, with the provision of country-specific challenges and opportunities; 2) the paradigm shift needed to support new production models based upon Eco-Design, Extended Producer Responsibility, Industrial Symbiosis, Bioeconomy, (this latter comprising a dedicated strategy launched on 20 April 2017) and new business models such as sharing economy, leasing economy etc.; 3) the regulatory and economic instruments, including the environmental fiscal reform shifting the fiscal burden from labour to natural resources; 4) the transition phase based upon a new concept of waste, the role of public sector (e.g. GPP), and the monitoring framework, this latter supported by a working group established within the Ministry for the Environment to define the most suited set of indicators to measure progress and allow reliable assessment on public and private initiatives.

#### Strategy

The document aims at supporting the implementation of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development, recently adopted on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December 2017, in particular regarding the vision for an efficient use of resources and sustainable consumption and production patterns. In this context, the greatest challenge for Italy, along with most industrialized countries, in the next decade will be to adequately and effectively respond to the complex environmental and social dynamics while maintaining a competitive productive system.

Considering the complexity and the importance of the document, the Italian government organised a public consultation to collect contributions from different institutions, enterprises, experts and citizens who deal daily with the issue of circular economy to develop a document that is the result of a shared and participatory process. The consultation process was very broad: over 300 representatives of public administrations, small, medium, and large companies, associations, consortia, certifying bodies, and private citizens provided contributions showing ownership and active participation in the efforts to promote circular economy as an opportunity for the transition of Italy towards sustainable development.

### Results and impact

The document represents a first step towards promoting a new circular economy model for Italy. It provided the opportunity to build a shared platform for defining a “National Action Plan on the Circular Economy”, capable of settings goals, describing policy measures, and identifying implementation tools. The consultation process emphasized the pressing demand for action on specific areas, including among others: 1) the regulatory framework with aim of improving coherence and consistency with the overall objectives and promote a simplification process; 2) economic instruments to support the transition towards a circular economy model also through environmental tax reform; 3) communication and awareness raising to promote ownership and active participation of citizens, central and local administrations, to show case the opportunities and benefits linked to circular economy and enhance cooperation and support among different actors (public, private, research, academia); 4) promote research to foster innovation and new technologies, to increase competitiveness in industrial sectors and train managers and technicians in order to meet the new needs of the Circular Economy.