



EPA Circular Economy Conference 2023

Driving Ireland's Move to a Circular Economy

27 September 2023
Havelock Suite, The Aviva Stadium,
Dublin, and Online
#EPACircular2023



Riátas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Wednesday 27 September: Driving Ireland's Move to a Circular Economy



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Government of Ireland



09:00
Registration and Tea/Coffee

Session 1: Setting the Scene

Chair: Dr Mícheál Lehane, *Director, Office of Environmental Sustainability, EPA*

09:30
Welcome

Laura Burke, *Director General, EPA*

09:40
Ministerial address

Minister Ossian Smyth, *Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications with special responsibility for Communications and Circular Economy*

09:55
Keynote address

Aurel Ciobanu-Dordea, *Director – Circular Economy (Env.B) DG Environment, European Commission*

10:15
Round Table Discussion

Moderated by chair
– Aurel Ciobanu-Dordea – *DG Environment*
– Philip Nugent, *Assistant Secretary, Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications*
– Mark Christal, *Divisional Manager – Food & Sustainability, Enterprise Ireland*

10:45
Coffee break

Session 2: Reuse, Repair and Circularity

Chair: Dr Karen Creed, *Senior Manager, Circular Economy Programme, EPA*

11:15
Measuring progress in the drive towards a circular economy

Dr Ioannis Bakas, *Circular Economy Monitoring Expert, European Environment Agency*

11:30
Repair of goods – a policy and legislative overview
Eduardo Bodo, *Environment Policy Officer, RREUSE*

11:45
Update on EPA waste characterisation project
Niamh McCormack, *Scientific Officer, Circular Economy Programme, EPA*

12:00
An overview of Ireland's Circular Material Use Rate (CMUR)
Dr Jack McCarthy, *Research Officer, Rediscovery Centre*

12:15
Q&A
Moderated by chair

12:45
Lunch break

Session 3: Consumption and Behaviour Change

Chair: Warren Phelan, *Programme Manager, Circular Economy Programme, EPA*

13:45
Advancing sustainable behaviour change in real-life settings

Mariana Nicolau, *Senior Project Manager, Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production (CSCP), Wuppertal, Germany*

14:00
Sufficiency and social affordability in the circular economy

Dr Joachim H. Spangenberg, *Senior Scientist, Juelich Research Centre, Juelich, Germany*

14:15
Behaviour change and consumption in the Irish context

Professor Pete Lunn, *Head of Behavioural Research Unit, Economic and Social Research Institute*

14:30
Q&A
Moderated by chair

15:00
Comfort Break

Session 4: Local Circular Solutions

Chair: Mary MacSweeney, *Executive Manager, Culture, Recreation & Economic Services, Dublin City Council*

15:15
Contributions from:
– Megan Best, *Chief Executive Officer, Native Events*
– Paul Cotter, *Green Marketing Coordinator & Circular Economy Researcher, Refill.ie*
– Jeffrey Roe, *Director, Tog hackerspace*
– Eleanor Meade, *Business Operations Director, Meade Farm*
– Isaac Jackman, *Managing Director, Isaac Jackman Shoe Repairs*

16:15
Q&A
Moderated by chair

16.45
Closing Remarks

*Agenda is subject to change

Register:
ti.to/epa/circular-economy-conference-2023
[#EPACircular2023](https://twitter.com/EPACircular2023)

Speakers

Dr Micheál Lehane

Micheál Lehane was appointed Director with the Environmental Protection Agency in 2016 and is currently the Director for the EPA's Office of Radiation Protection and Environmental Monitoring. Prior to being appointed Director, Micheál served in a range of senior leadership roles in the EPA and in environmental protection & regulation in the UK. Micheál is also the Chair of the Irish National Accreditation Board and is a Director of the National Biodiversity Data Centre CLG. Micheál is a graduate of University College Cork with a PhD in Geology, holds an MBA from the University of Limerick and is a Chartered Director.



Laura Burke

Laura Burke is the Director General of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), appointed in 2011 and has served as a Director within the EPA since 2004. As Director General, she has the responsibility to lead and strategically manage the EPA. Laura is the Chair of the European Environment Agency (EEA) Management Board. Prior to joining the EPA, she worked in the private sector. Laura is a graduate chemical engineer of University College Dublin (UCD), holds an MSc from Trinity College, Dublin, is a Fellow and is the Vice-President of Engineers Ireland and is a Chartered Director. In 2016 Laura was awarded the UCD Engineering Graduates Association (EGA) Distinguished Graduate Award.



Minister Ossian Smyth

Minister of State for the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, National Development Plan Delivery, Public Procurement and eGovernment with special responsibility for Communications and Circular Economy. Minister Smyth was appointed to this role in July 2020. He has been a T.D. for the Dún Laoghaire constituency since the 2020 general election. In 2014, he was elected as a Green Party Councillor to Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and served as Cathaoirleach of the Council between 2018 and 2019. Minister Smyth holds a Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science from Trinity College Dublin. He has worked as an IT/business consultant with substantial experience in telecoms, healthcare, utilities, ISP, software and insurance/banking industries. He has worked as a technical Project Manager at Saint Vincent's Hospital.



Aurel Ciobanu-Dordea

Aurel was appointed as the Director of Circular Economy in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Environment in May 2022.

Between January 2014 and April 2022, he worked as the Director in charge of enforcement, cohesion and the European Semester in the same DG. Prior to that, he was the Director for Equality in the Directorate-General for Justice since April 2011, in charge of equality and fight against discrimination, after having been the Director for Fundamental Rights and EU Citizenship within the same DG and in DG Justice, Freedom and Security since June 2009. He joined the European Commission in 2009. He holds an LL.M. from the University of Illinois (US) and a Ph.D. from the University of Bucharest (RO).



Philip Nugent

Philip Nugent is the Assistant Secretary leading the Environment function (Circular Economy and Governance) at the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications. He is responsible for policy across the circular economy, environmental protection (including inland fisheries, noise, waste and radiation policy), mineral exploration and mining, petroleum exploration and extraction, and the Geological Survey of Ireland.



Speakers

Mark Christal

Mark Christal is the Manager of the Food and Sustainability Division in Enterprise Ireland, responsible for the work with Irish based-Food, Drink and Agri-Tech companies to support them in key areas including, Innovation, Sustainability and Competitiveness. He is also responsible for the implementation of the key Enterprise Ireland Sustainability goals across the clients and sectors supported by the organisation.

In his previous roles Mark was responsible for the Regions and Entrepreneurship Division which included leading the engagement with the Local Enterprise Offices.

Prior to this role, Mark managed the Primary Meats and Food Technology department in Enterprise Ireland responsible for working with client companies in the sector and also led the Client Management Development & Client Skills department responsible for driving the leadership and management capabilities within Irish-owned companies, to help them compete for, and win, global sales. Mark also was the Human Resource Manager within Enterprise Ireland for eight years.

Mark is a member of the Enterprise Ireland Senior Leadership Executive team.

Mark is a Masters graduate of University College Dublin and holds an MBS in Human Resource Management from the UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School.



Dr Karen Creed

Karen Creed is a Senior Manager in the EPAs Circular Economy Waste Statistics Unit with responsibility for compiling official statistics on waste generation and management in Ireland. This data is used for statutory European reporting and also plays a vital role in informing Ireland's policymakers, regulatory authorities and other waste industry stakeholders. Prior to her current role, Karen was Head of Water Regulation and Dumping at Sea in the EPAs Environmental Licensing Programme. Karen has over 25 years of experience in the area of regulation across a number of industries. She holds a BSc and a PhD from the University of Galway.



Dr Ioannis Bakas

Ioannis Bakas works as a Circular Economy Monitoring expert at the EEA for around 5 years. Ioannis holds a PhD in life cycle assessment and waste management, as well as degrees in civil and environmental engineering. After concluding his studies, Ioannis worked as a waste management consultant, a life cycle analyst, as well as a university lecturer, spanning a professional career of more than 10 years before joining the EEA. At the EEA, Ioannis is in charge of the agency's work around circular economy monitoring while in parallel leading analysis and reports on waste management, prevention and resource consumption.



Edoardo Bodo

Edoardo Bodo is the Environment Policy Officer at RREUSE, the European association representing social enterprises dedicated to the re-use, repair and recycling of 25 waste streams, including electric and electronic products. In this capacity, Edoardo champions the interests of almost 1000 individual social enterprises in EU policy processes, ensuring their collective voice is heard during the development of circular economy legislation at European level. Edoardo's role also extends to coordinating RREUSE's participation in the "Right to Repair" campaign, contributing to shaping the campaign's strategic goals and overseeing their realisation. Prior to joining RREUSE, Edoardo studied European Governance and worked in the Council of the European Union, following critical legislation on renewable energy and maritime transport.



Niamh McCormack

Niamh is a member of the EPA's Waste Statistics Team, responsible for compiling and publishing official statistics on the generation and management of various wastes in Ireland. Niamh is also the manager of the national municipal waste characterisation project.

Prior to joining the EPA in 2019, Niamh worked for over ten years with environmental consultancies in Ireland, Australia and New Zealand, primarily managing contaminated soil and groundwater assessment, remediation and validation projects.

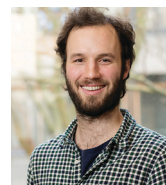
Niamh holds a BSc from the University of Limerick and an MSc from Queen's University Belfast.



Speakers

Dr Jack McCarthy

Jack McCarthy has been involved in sustainability research in one guise or another for the past 10 years. Since March 2022, he has been working as a Research Officer with the Rediscovery Centre, where he leads the EPA-funded project A Critical Analysis of Ireland's Circular Material Use Rate and coordinates the Paint Reuse Network. His broader background is in human geography and he has carried out doctoral and post-doctoral research with UCD School of Geography and Teagasc. Prior to joining the Rediscovery Centre, the majority of his work focused on farmer engagement with sustainability initiatives.



Warren Phelan

Warren Phelan is Programme Manager of the EPA's Circular Economy Programme. Warren is a Chartered Civil Engineer and Chartered Waste Manager and spent over 20 years working in the waste and resources industry before joining the EPA in 2022. The Agency's Circular Economy programme covers a wide range of activities under pillars of advocacy and evidence, innovation and demonstration, regulation and partnerships. Programme activities include waste data, characterisation, green public procurement, circular economy partnerships, food waste prevention, circular construction, national hazardous waste management plan, end of waste and by-product decision making. Warren chairs the National Data Network Group and the National Hazardous Waste Plan Working Group and is the EPA's representative on the Construction Sector Group Sustainability Consultative Committee.



Mariana Nicolau

Mariana Nicolau is a senior project manager in the Sustainable Lifestyles team at the Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production (CSCP). The CSCP is a think-and-do tank working towards a good life for all based in Germany. Mariana's expertise lies in advancing sustainable behaviour change in real-life contexts. Her work includes capacity building of different stakeholder groups on behaviour change strategies for sustainability projects as well as the development and implementation of behaviour change interventions on the ground to pilot and test strategies in various settings. Her work comprises consumer insights and behavioural interventions on topics like change of diets, reduction of meat consumption, fight against food waste on the household level and the circular use of electronic products and settings like shops, canteens, organisations and neighbourhoods.



Dr Joachim H. Spangenberg

Joachim Spangenberg is a senior scientist at the Juelich Research Centre, a non-executive director of the Environment Europe Stichting, Amsterdam, a member of the Scientific Committee of the European Environment Agency EEA, Copenhagen, a member of the German Bioeconomy Council and co-chair of the Steering Committee of ESP, the international Ecosystem Services Partnership.

With a PhD in economics but an academic background in biology and ecology, he is an inter- and transdisciplinary researcher by education and dedication. He has been working, a.o., on sustainable development strategies and monitoring, sustainable consumption motivations and manifestations, and biodiversity conservation by pressure reduction growth.

Joachim is a former member of the OECD Green Growth and Sustainable Development Task Force and of the European Commission High Level Economists' Expert Group on Resource Efficiency. He served on the UN expert groups on sustainable consumption and on sustainable development indicators, underpinning Agenda 21.



Professor Pete Lunn

Professor Pete Lunn is the founder and head of the Behavioural Research Unit (BRU) at the ESRI. The BRU has pioneered the use of behavioural experiments for addressing policy problems in Ireland. His primary area of study is how people make decisions that affect environmental, health and financial outcomes. Pete and his team at the BRU have published multiple research studies on how consumers factor environmental information into their decisions and what drives people to behave in a more pro-environmental way.



Speakers

Mary Mac Sweeney

Mary Mac Sweeney has worked in a variety of roles in Dublin City Council and is currently managing the Culture, Recreation and Economic Services Department as acting Executive Manager. Mary has experience in supporting the start-up and scaling business community in Dublin and has worked on a range of initiatives designed to support the transition to a green and circular economy, including leading objectives in the Dublin Regional Enterprise Plan, supporting Dublin's hosting of the Circular Economy Hotspot, and ensuring access to local and international stories on how change is being delivered through the publication of the Profit with Purpose magazine www.business-spirit.news. She also contributes to building a strong economic and enterprise ecosystem through working with other stakeholders to develop and implement policy, research, events and projects designed to promote Dublin as a great city to live, work, study and invest in. Mary enjoys working on innovative and collaborative projects, including www.dublineconomy.ie and www.dublin.ie



Megan Best

A champion of the circular economy within Ireland's creative sectors, Megan Best has been working towards a vision of a sustainable future for more than a decade. Her pivotal role in authoring Fáilte Ireland's Sustainable Festivals guidelines, and the Festivals chapter of their Climate Action Playbook, showcases her commitment to reimagining events through a circular lens. Active in circular initiatives across Europe, Megan was one of the first signatories to the Green Deal for Circular Festivals and she was on the team behind the EU-wide Future Festivals Tool. With an MSc in Environmental Sustainability and a Postgrad in Climate Entrepreneurship, Megan co-founded Julie's Bicycle Europe in 2021, which went on to develop the upcoming Climate Action Policy for An Comhairle Ealaíon. With her team at Native, Megan works with dedication and flair to bring circular economy principles to Ireland's creative industries through a myriad of impactful programmes and projects.



Paul Cotter

Paul Cotter is the Green Marketing Coordinator and Circular Economy Researcher for Refill Ireland. With a background in sustainable and circular design thinking in the arts and cultural sector, Paul has a good understanding of the complex processes needed to create systemic changes to industry practices and of group behaviour within Irish festivals and events. Refill Ireland was founded in 2017 in response to the staggering amounts of waste generated by single use plastic water bottles generated in Ireland. Paul is now working on promoting the work of Refill Ireland through their Tap Map initiative and zero waste events promoting the circular economy principles on which the social enterprise was founded upon. With over 1,600 free tap locations already accessible around Ireland, Refill is having a tangible impact on improving choices with regard to the use of single use water bottles.



Jeffrey Roe

Jeffrey Roe works as a software/hardware engineer, with Telclí, an Irish-owned software and services SME. For the last number of years, Jeffrey has gained a wealth of experience in building public transport systems from bike-share schemes, to parking and port traffic access management systems. In his spare time, he likes to make crazy projects like bubble machines, bone conduction, IoT projects and anything with LEDs in it. A big fan of getting people making, he co-runs 'Dublin Maker' an annual maker showcase festival and Dublin's Hackerspace Tog. Jeffrey is passionate about community repair events. He has hosted and taken part in Repair Cafes all over Ireland and abroad. An active member of Engineers Ireland and currently serving as chairperson for the Electronic and Computing division.



Speakers

Eleanor Meade

Eleanor became a Member of ACCA in 2005, working in practice and the public sector for 10 years. In 2014, Eleanor joined the family business, Meade Farm Group who are growers, packers, distributor and service providers to the main retailers across Ireland. Eleanor's current role is Business Operations Manager where she manages the supporting departments of the business, including Marketing, I.T, HR, Accounts to name a few. She has played an integral part in the growth of the business, progressing new innovative business ideas such as a new state of the art starch extraction plant in order to reduce potato waste. Eleanor continues to coordinate the development of the current business and new opportunities which will see the company expand further into the future.



Isaac Jackman

Isaac Jackman is the Managing Director of Isaac Jackman Shoe Repairs, with premises in Charlemont Street, Dublin 2 and Donnybrook, Dublin 4. As well as having these 2 shops, Isaac has expanded his business, to work with a few Dry Cleaners in South Dublin. These Dry Cleaners are "depots" or Drop off locations where customers can leave their items to be repaired. Isaac's father, Sean Jackman started the business over 60 years ago, establishing his first shop in Charlemont street and then going on to open a total of 22 shops in his lifetime. Isaac decided to join the business when he left St. Conleth's Secondary School. The business was known as C&D Shoes, however when Isaac took over, he rebranded using his own name, and slimmed everything down to just two premises with the Dry Cleaners coming on board as drop off locations.



Isaac has expanded the services offered as fashion has changed and designer brands have become more dominant in the footwear industry. He works with some of the major department stores and shoe retailers in Ireland, offering a shoe repair service for their customers. He works with all types of footwear from the most expensive to the everyday shoe. Isaac is passionate about his work and believes the demand is there for professional bespoke shoe repair services. Customers are becoming more aware of the need to preserve and repair their items. Isaac has an online shop and Instagram account which proved invaluable throughout the pandemic.

Conference Exhibitors

