



PRESS RELEASE

Subject: Results and Prospects of Circular Economy in Greece from the LIFE-IP CEI-Greece Project – Event at the VERDE TEC Exhibition

The Ministry of Environment and Energy (MEEN), coordinator of the LIFE-IP CEI-Greece project – LIFE18 IPE/GR/000013 "**Implementation of Circular Economy in Greece**", along with three (3) partners—the Green Fund, the Hellenic Recycling Agency (HRA), and the Ecological Recycling Society (ERS)—organized an event on February 21, 2025, as part of the VERDE TEC Exhibition. The event presented the project's initial results and fostered discussions on the significance and future of Circular Economy in Greece.

The LIFE-IP CEI-Greece project is coordinated by MEEN and implemented in collaboration with 19 strategic partners. Its ultimate goal is to contribute to the implementation of the **National Waste Management Plan, the National Waste Prevention Program, and the National Strategy for Circular Economy.**

During the event at VERDE TEC on February 21, 2025, the initial results and key takeaways from the project's activities were presented, with over 60 participants in attendance, including representatives from local government (municipalities, regions), collective bodies, Regional Associations of Solid Waste Management Bodies, chambers of commerce, NGOs, and more. The presentations included:

- **Ms. Plati**, LIFE-IP project manager, provided an overview of the LIFE-IP project's actions and deliverables, highlighting the scope and impact of its interventions in the Circular Economy.
- **Mr. Komninos**, CEO of DAFNI Network, presented an integrated model of Circular Economy actions applied in **island regions**, based on pilot implementations in **Alonissos, Antiparos, Thira, Tinos, and Paros.**
- **Professor Lazaridi** from **Harokopio University of Athens** presented an assessment of the food waste generation along the food supply chain, highlighted the importance of food waste prevention given the food waste prevention targets set in National Legislation and in the coming revision of the Waste Directive
- **Dr. Michalopoulos** from the Ecological Recycling Society showcased three different models for the creation of **Integrated Green Points (IGPs)** for municipalities:
 - (a) Municipalities with adequate space for IGPs (e.g., Athens).
 - (b) Municipalities with medium to limited space (e.g., Vari-Voula-Vouliagmeni).
 - (c) Municipalities with very limited space (e.g., Thessaloniki).

- **Mr. Spanos** Managing Director of Terra Nova Ltd. presented data on **Hazardous Household Waste** and discussed the design and implementation of a separate collection system in the pilot areas (**Municipality of Athens and the Region of Western Macedonia**).
- **Dr. Kyrkitsos**, President of the Ecological Recycling Society, presented a **comprehensive waste management system** for Greek municipalities, emphasizing the **Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) model** with minimal economic and administrative costs.
- **Ms. Gaitanarou** from the Green Fund introduced **standards and indicators** that can be immediately applied to funding projects to support national strategy goals and accelerate the transition to a Circular Economy.

Panel Discussion Highlights

A lively discussion followed, moderated by **Dr. Kyrkitsos**, President of the Ecological Recycling Society, focusing on the significance of the implementation of Circular Economy projects. Key points included:

- **Mr. Manolis Grafakos (MEEN)**, Secretary General for Waste Management (MEEN), emphasized Greece's **significant progress** in waste management in recent years. He stated that findings from the **LIFE-IP CEI-Greece project** will contribute to necessary legislative adjustments to support both this initiative and broader Circular Economy efforts. Additionally, a Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO) **for organic waste from HORECA** was announced as a policy initiative, aiming to accelerate circularity in waste management.
- **Mr. Ioannis Androulakis**, President of the Board of Directors of the **Green Fund**, described the LIFE-IP CEI-Greece project as a **flagship LIFE project in Greece**. He reiterated the Green Fund's commitment to integrating circularity across its **funding programs** and its continued financial support for LIFE projects.
- **Dr. Alexandra Togia**, CEO of the **Hellenic Recycling Agency (HRA)**, focused on the **financial resources** HRA can mobilize through **revenue from environmental fees** to support separate collection and recycling initiatives in underperforming areas, thereby accelerating Greece's transition to circularity.
- **Ms. Aikaterini Giannakoula**, environmental scientist from **DIADYMA**, pledged to effectively promote the knowledge gained from the project's experience in **Hazardous Household Waste Management**.

The event highlighted the critical role of collaboration between national authorities, local governments, and private stakeholders in **driving Greece's Circular Economy transition**, while reinforcing the importance of **legislation, funding mechanisms, and pilot initiatives** to support sustainable waste management.

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