



**Action Plan**  
*Emilia-Romagna Region (IT)*

<http://www.interregeurope.eu/cesme>

## ***CESME-Circular Economy for SMEs***

*The CESME project has been co-financed by ERDF  
through the INTERREG Europe Operational Programme*

## Date

October 2018

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## FOREWORD

This Action Plan (AP) has been developed as part of the activities of CESME project.

The AP reflects on the knowledge and lessons learned at transnational and local level on how to support SMEs in their transition towards circular economy, and sets out the actions and activities to be carried out in the future.

The Action Plan aims to impact other regional development Policy Instrument.

We want to lay the foundations for creating a new circular economy ecosystem in the Emilia-Romagna Region, with special attention to the metropolitan area of Bologna, starting from the knowledge of local strengths, weaknesses, possible risks and future opportunities, and treasuring the active and constant collaboration with both the different project partners and local stakeholders.

Of course, we will continue to work hard in the future, involving our key local stakeholders and trying to create, *together* with them, the best conditions to spread the culture of circular economy among SMEs in our territory.

## PART I: GENERAL CONTEXT

### 1.1. About the CESME project

The CESME project is an INTERREG Europe project co-financed by ERDF, that addresses SMEs inclusion in the circular economy, by interregional meetings identifying good practices aiming to examine how best regional and local authorities and business development agencies can improve relevant policy instruments and design support packages to assist SMEs to enter the circular economy.

The project involves 6 countries include Italy, Bulgaria, Greece, Denmark, Finland, Wales.

More information can be found at <https://www.interregeurope.eu/cesme/>

### 1.2. About INTERREG Programme

Interreg Europe helps regional and local governments across Europe to develop and deliver better policy. By creating an environment and opportunities for sharing solutions, it aims to ensure that government investment, innovation and implementation efforts all lead to integrated and sustainable impact for people and place.

#### What is an Action Plan?

An Action Plan (AP) is an operative document that addresses identified needs, analyses problems and opportunities and puts forward sustainable, feasible solutions. All project's partner countries have to produce an AP.

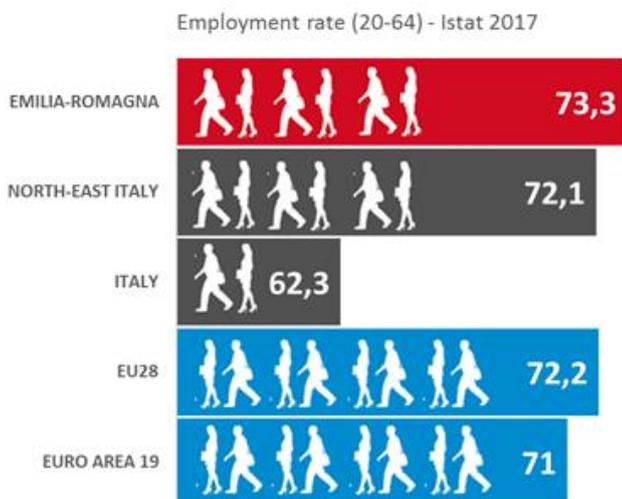
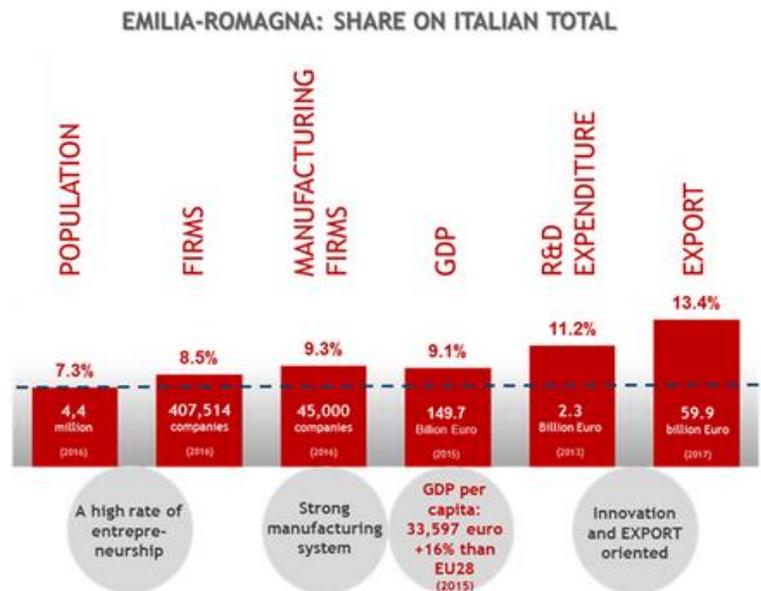
The Action Plan is first and foremost a concrete and useful tool for the region to solve a local problem and/or improve a local situation.

### 1.3. About the local context

#### The Emilia-Romagna Region

The Emilia-Romagna Region is located in the North-East of Italy: it has a surface of more than 22.000 km<sup>2</sup> and it comprises 331 municipalities that are grouped into one Metropolitan City (Bologna) – see the following paragraph - and 8 provinces (Ferrara, Forlì-Cesena, Modena, Parma, Piacenza, Ravenna, Reggio Emilia and Rimini). The regional population has reached 4,461,612 residents (1/1/2018).

The economic system is increasingly focused on international markets and features: high rate of entrepreneurship, strong manufacturing sector, high level of innovation, wealth per capita higher than the Italian and European average.



Small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the driving force of the region's economy and have fostered the extraordinary spread of wealth across the entire regional territory. The dynamic nature of the production sector in Emilia-Romagna has resulted in high employment level, which exceeds the averages for EU28, Italy and North-East Italy (2017)

Great attention is paid from regional government to the sustainability of the economic development, through many integrated actions and specific plans that focus on air quality, agriculture, energy, mobility, waste management, protected areas, Natura 2000 Network, forests and education to sustainability.

Regarding circular economy, the Region of Emilia Romagna has approved the first law in Italy on circular economy (Law no.16/2015, issued on October 5th 2015), that focus on 3 main fields of action:

1. A more sustainable waste management
2. Information aimed at creating a new civic consciousness
3. Financial instruments (both for municipalities and innovative companies)

The ERDF Program and the Regional Smart Specialization Strategy are key policy instruments to foster sustainability and circularity among companies: sustainable development has been identified as one of the drivers of the Regional S3, where it is meant as “[...] *innovation in energy efficiency and new energy technologies, in the waste management and a more rational use of resources, the reduction of harmful emissions into the environment, in promoting sustainable mobility, in the most careful management and exploitation of natural resources also from a touristic point of view* [...]”. Besides the Axis 1, focused on Research and Innovation, the ERDF Program has a specific priority Axis on Competitiveness of the industrial sector (Axis 3) that could be able to promote the transition towards Circular Economy among enterprises, if circularity is seen as a key factor to improve competitiveness rather than a factor to reduce the environmental impact of the company. This last one has been chosen as policy instrument for the CESME project.

Other relevant regional policies that can contribute to a more circular economy are the following:

Regional Energy Plan: it takes the European targets for climate and energy as drivers for the development of the Region. It aims at enhancing green economy, energy saving and renewable energy and it promotes actions on transports, research and training. Thanks to the Regional Energy Plan, the circular economy principles will be applied also in the energy sector by:

- the development of plants powered by bioenergy including energy recovery from waste;
- the closure of cycles, also through the reuse of waste and by-products, the efficient use of resources and energy efficiency with renewable sources.

Rural Development Program: it promotes knowledge, innovation and competitiveness of the agro-industry sector, with a special attention on environment and climate and with the aim of supporting the development of the territory and local communities. With regard to circular economy, for example, the program promotes the diversification of farm activities also through energy production from agricultural by-products.

Regional Green Public Procurement Plan: on February 2017, the new three-years Green Public Procurement Plan has been released. The target is to reach 50% of sustainable public procurement. GPP could be one of the most effective incentive to promote transition towards Circular Economy, thanks to the minimization of the use of natural resources, the design of more durable products, the recycling/recovery of single components at the end-of-life, and so on.

### The metropolitan City of Bologna



Located in the heart of northern Italy, between Florence and Venice, Bologna is a crossroad for people and goods between the country's north and south. It is the capital of Emilia-Romagna region with a population of more than 388,000, which rises to almost 1 million in the wider metropolitan area. Bologna, in fact, is also one of the 14 Italian 'Metropolitan Cities' (territorial entities and governance systems that have replaced the homonymous Italian provinces through the national Law n. 56 of April 2014), with an area of 3.700 km<sup>2</sup> including 55 Municipalities.

- **A growing economy**

Bologna is also the economic heart of Emilia-Romagna, the second region in Italy for number of innovative and creative start-ups and companies for inhabitants per entrepreneurs (with 152.6 entrepreneurs per 10,000 inhabitants and 391,213 enterprises employing 1,530,704 workers). The Metropolitan area of Bologna accounts for 21.40% of total regional companies, for 23.35% of total employees and compared to 2013 shows a decrease lower than other territories.

In our territory, companies are 98% SMEs, most of these are micro, under 10 employees and today small businesses struggle to overcome the challenges of the market.

- **Attention to environment**

In June 2017 Bologna hosted the G7 Environment. This important international event was an opportunity for a precise and shared commitment on the environment among all the Metropolitan Cities of Italy, thanks to the signing of the Bologna Charter. The 8 macro objectives of the Charter represent a crucial challenge for our country: waste recycling, soil protection, disaster prevention, energy transition, air quality, water saving, increasing green spaces, sustainable mobility must become priorities for all the actors of our territory and not only for those who administer it. If only because the future of our children is at stake on these issues. However, focusing on protecting the environment is an advantage for everyone, including businesses and individuals.

But how do you stimulate this change? One of the main strategies is the transformation of the economy from linear to circular, from the concept of waste as an object of waste to that of waste as a resource. There are now many researches that affirm the advantages of this transformation are undoubted: beyond the numbers that can change from research to research, the circular economy leads to greater economic growth, closer collaboration between companies and greater competitiveness of these, the improvement of products and the saving on production costs, the reduction of the impact on the environment, the creation of new jobs, savings for families resulting from better use of products.

We know that a true change in a society occurs when most of the actors involved are sensitive to a cause. Today we believe that the sensitivity and attention to the protection of the environment and the territory is sufficiently widespread to give the decisive push to this change.

## PART II – POLICY CONTEXT

The Action Plan aims to impact

- Investment for Growth and Jobs Programme
- European Territorial Cooperation Programme
- Other regional development Policy Instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed: ERDF Regional Operational Programme

## PART III – DETAILS OF THE ACTIONS ENVISAGED

ACTION 1 - GREEN\CIRCULAR MONITORING SYSTEM ON ERDF CALLS \*

ACTION 2 - FOCUS ON ENERGY CALLS \*

ACTION 3 - INFORMATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES TARGETED TO PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS \*\*

ACTION 4 - DATABASE OF GREEN ENTERPRISES & INFORMATION ACTIVITIES TARGETED TO COMPANIES \*\*

ACTION 5 - RAISING-AWARENESS AND INFORMATION ACTIVITIES TARGETED AT LOCAL SMEs \*\*

ACTION 6 - CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS TO CREATE NEW BUSINESSES\*\*

\* Actions signed by the Managing Authority

\*\* Actions inspired by some CESME project best practices and from discussion within Local Stakeholder Group (further information below)

### 3.1 AP Actions List Table

ACTION 1: GREEN\CIRCULAR MONITORING SYSTEM ON ERDF CALLS	
The Background	From the discussion with project partners and local stakeholders, we have learnt that Circular Economy could be interpreted in many different ways (not only waste recovery, but also remanufacturing, up-cycling, products/services sharing,...); policy makers should keep in mind this wide perspective in order to define and implement policies which can be really effective for SMEs and their transition towards circularity; every action targeted to SMEs has a "green" potential, so it is crucial for policy makers to have a clear overview of all initiatives that can be labelled as "green".
Action	ERVET will provide to the Managing Authority a specific monitoring system of structural funds, focused on green projects. <u>Content and development</u> – ERVET is currently working for designing a monitoring system for ERDF calls, aimed at assessing their ability and their potential to foster eco-innovation and sustainability/circularity among enterprises. A questionnaire targeted to beneficiaries has been created: it is about eco-innovation and other environmental topics related to the financed projects; the questionnaire has been tested in a specific call, as it has been included within the reporting documents for beneficiaries. The results of this first test (carried out in

	<p>2017) will be the basis for an activity of improvement and adaptation of the questionnaire, aimed at using it within other calls, trying to set up a permanent monitoring system. This monitoring system aims to assess the environmental quality of the financed projects and the potential of eco-innovation as a key-factor for competitiveness. On the basis of the results of monitoring system, ERVET will produce a memorandum targeted to Managing Authority on how to embed environmental sustainability (green and circular topics) in future ERDF calls.</p> <p><u>Expected impact on the policy instrument addressed:</u> the monitoring system can be a useful tool for the managing authority to improve future ERDF calls on competitiveness and eco-innovation, making them “more sensitive” to sustainability and able to award “greener” projects.</p>
Players involved	<p>ERVET will work closely with the Managing Authority. The Managing Authority will grant access to the documentation of regional ERDF calls, in order to let ERVET process the data of financed projects.</p>
Timeframe	<p>Starting date: 2017 - Ending date: 2019</p> <p>2017 - setting up of a first version of the questionnaire and test on a specific call</p> <p>2018 – analysis of different calls and setting up of adapted versions of the questionnaires (or other tools) aimed at monitoring the green/circular potential of submitted projects</p> <p>2019 – drafting of the memorandum</p>
Costs	<p>Not relevant. The activities will be included within the multi annual agreement between Regional Authority and ERVET (acting as Regional Development Agency), at no extra costs.</p>
Funding sources	<p>Not relevant.</p>
Indicator:	<p>Number of calls that include the questionnaire within the reporting documentation (target: 1 call)</p> <p>Draft of the memorandum for greener calls (target: 1 memorandum)</p>

Date	Signature (Mr Roberto Ricci Mingani responsible for the Department "Qualification of enterprises"; Managing Authority for Priority axis 3 of ERDF Regional Operational Programme "Production system competitiveness and attractiveness")
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<b>ACTION 2: FOCUS ON ENERGY CALLS</b>	
<b>The Background</b>	From SMEs we got confirmation that one of their main concern is the energy consumption (energy costs); topics as energy efficiency or renewable energy from waste or biomass are strictly related to Circular Economy and they make Circular Economy be seen as a key factor for competitiveness; SMEs need more support to do energy investments. This could be a way to improve both economic and environmental sustainability of the businesses.
<b>Action</b>	<p>Analysis of regional calls on energy topics aimed at assessing the relevance of energy efficiency as a key-factor for competitiveness and at communicating it to companies.</p> <p><u>Content and development:</u> ERVET will analyses the results of some specific regional calls targeted to enterprises (energy audits) with the aim of understand if (and how) energy efficiency could act as a key-factor for competitiveness. ERVET will produce a memorandum targeted to companies in order to push them to consider ERDF energy calls as an opportunity to increase both their competitiveness and their circularity.</p> <p><u>Expected impact on the policy instrument addressed:</u> this action aims at informing companies about the potential of ERDF energy calls, in terms of opportunity to combine competitiveness (through cost cutting) and sustainability. The (indirect) expected impact on the policy instrument is to increase enterprises participation in ERDF calls.</p>
<b>Players involved</b>	ERVET will work closely with the Managing Authority. The Managing Authority will grant the access to the documentation of regional ERDF calls, in order to let ERVET process data on financed projects. Companies are the target of the memorandum.
<b>Timeframe</b>	Starting date: 2017 - Ending date: 2019 2017-2018 analysis of the results of specific energy calls 2018 draft of the memorandum; distribution of the memorandum

Costs	Not relevant. The activities will be included within the multi annual agreement between Regional Authority and ERVET (acting as Regional Development Agency), at no extra costs.
Funding sources	Not relevant.
Indicator:	Draft of the memorandum for greener calls (target: 1 memorandum) Number of enterprises reached by the memorandum (target: 50 companies)
Date	Signature (Mr Silvano Bertini responsible for the Department "Research, Innovation, Energy and sustainable economy"; Managing Authority for Priority axis 1 of ERDF Regional Operational Programme ("Research and innovation"))

## ACTION 3: INFORMATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES TARGETED TO PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

The Background	<p>Public institutions have some difficulties in the understanding of what is really green; they need more information on how to recognize green product and services and on how to promote them, by means of public procurement.</p> <p>A CESME case study has inspired us for the action targeted to public bodies: Orangebox, the welsh company that produces furniture, that we have visited during the kick off meeting had a positive experience of Green Public Procurement; the company awarded a tender of Public Health Wales (PHW) which requires for environmental, economic and social sustainability to be demonstrated throughout the refit. This experience shows the relevance of public procurement for fostering the production of "circular" products; there is a need to spread information and tools to make public institutions aware and capable of this potential. (Title of the practices: "Public Health Wales Sustainable Workplace")</p> <p>Within our Local Stakeholders Group, participants discuss on barriers to the transition towards Circular Economy: the level of knowledge of public institutions on</p>
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	<p>topics like circular economy, environmental innovation and greener technologies was one of the barriers (see the report from the first meeting of the LSG).</p>
Action	<p>Dissemination of GPP knowledge among public bodies, in order to foster the purchasing of greener and circular products</p> <p><u>Content and development</u> - ERVET is involved in the programming and the implementation of the GPP regional plan; the Plan will include, as the previous one, information and training activities targeted to local institutions and to companies; ERVET will add to the discussed topics the circular economy and how the GPP could push the transition towards a circular model.</p> <p><u>Expected impact on the policy instrument addressed</u>: this action acts on a different policy instrument, which is the GPP Regional Plan.</p>
Players involved	<p>Regional Authority (department responsible for GPP plan) and local institutions (target of the information/training activities)</p>
Timeframe	<p>Starting date: 2018 - Ending date: 2019</p>
Costs	<p>Not relevant. The activities will be included within the multi annual agreement between Regional Authority and ERVET (acting as Regional Development Agency), at no extra costs.</p>
Funding sources	<p>Not relevant.</p>
Indicator:	<p>Number of information/training initiatives on circular/green products (target: 1 event; 1 document uploaded in the regional GPP internet page)</p>
Date	<p>Signature (Mr Enrico Cancila, head of the Economic Development and Environment of ERVET, partner of CESME project )</p>

## ACTION 4: DATABASE OF GREEN ENTERPRISES & INFORMATION ACTIVITIES TARGETED TO COMPANIES

<p>The Background</p>	<p>A general lack of knowledge on Circular Economy has been detected among companies, which do not really sense that Circular Economy could be a business opportunity. They need information but most of all they need to become aware of practical experiences of other companies that succeeded in getting profits and benefits from circular\green investments. Therefore, it is crucial for the Development Agency to have a database of green enterprises: it will allow us to provide best practice when needed, to spread circular economy culture thanks to real case study, to make companies know each other. A CESME case study has partially inspired us for the action targeted to companies: within the Danish government project to spread industrial symbiosis, the creation of a Database has been considered as the “focal point for the successful work” and “an indispensable basis to increase circular economy”. Within the present action plan, the focus is the green\circular economy instead of the industrial symbiosis but the idea of a centralized virtual container of companies and the need of protect their industrial and trade secrets are the same. (Title of the practices: “Industrial Symbioses Database”) Within our Local Stakeholders Group, companies consider the lack of mutual relationship as an obstacle for the access to Circular Economy (see the report from the first meeting of the LSG).</p>
<p>Action</p>	<p>Collecting and disseminating green/circular good practices of regional companies, in order to spread Circular Economy culture.</p> <p><u>Content and development:</u> the purpose is to build a regional database of green enterprises. ERVET will collect as many best practice as possible, in order to disseminate a culture on circular and green economy. Economic data of enterprises will also be added to the database in order to understand financial consequences of sustainable investments (are green enterprises more competitive? More resilient? More successful?). All these information will be used to show enterprises the economic benefits of the transition towards circular business models and to</p>

	<p>persuade them to adopt circularity as a competitiveness factor.</p> <p><u>Expected impact on the policy instrument addressed:</u> the impact on the policy instrument addressed is indirect. Thanks to this action, ERVET will provide a feedback for policy makers on needs and opportunities for a green growth of the regional industrial sector. Regional programmes (ERDF too) in the future could be more oriented to a green growth.</p>
Players involved	Enterprises (best practices included in the Database)
Timeframe	<p>Starting date: 2018 - Ending date: ---</p> <p>2018 – draft of the questionnaire targeted to companies, distribution and elaboration of answers</p> <p>2018 – set up of the Regional Database of the green\circular economy (it will become a permanent tool)</p>
Costs	Not relevant. The activities will be included within the multi annual agreement between Regional Authority and ERVET (acting as Regional Development Agency), at no extra costs.
Funding sources	Not relevant.
Indicator:	<p>Draft of a questionnaire targeted to companies. Target: 1 questionnaire</p> <p>Number of enterprises involved in eco-innovation (self-defined indicator). Target: 400 enterprises</p>
Date	Signature (Mr Enrico Cancila, head of the Economic Development and Environment of ERVET, partner of CESME project )

## ACTION 5: RAISING-AWARENESS AND INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

The Background	Currently, despite the growing diffusion and relevance of the circular economy theme and eco-sustainable business models, many SMEs and stakeholders are still
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	<p>struggling to understand the importance and need to adopt circular production systems.</p> <p>Also in the metropolitan area of Bologna, as found during the LSG meetings held within the CESME Project, many SMEs and stakeholders still have difficulty understanding the true meaning of "circular economy" and the considerable growth and development opportunities linked to the transition from a linear economic model to the "doughnut economy" (as defined by the writer Kate Raworth – guest at the 1st National Forum on Circular Economy, held in Bologna in June 2017).</p> <p>As found with our LSG, among the barriers to SMEs' transition towards circular economy there is also a lack / inadequacy of information and knowledge of SMEs on the issues of circular economy, zero waste and potential concrete solutions to overcome these challenges.</p> <p>A CESME case study has particularly inspired us in defining this action targeted at local SMEs: Ice Arena Wales. The project identifies both some of the main barriers to achieving zero waste, in a circular logic, and potential solutions to promote green and circular business models, collecting best practices and successful case studies helpful for local businesses to better understand what is a "circular business model" and how it can be concretely adopted.</p>
Action	<p>Promotion of raising-awareness and information activities targeted at stakeholders within the metropolitan area of Bologna, and focused on the themes of circular economy, green growth and zero waste.</p> <p><u>Content and development:</u> Metropolitan City of Bologna will promote raising-awareness and information activities for stakeholders, aimed at increasing and improving their information and knowledge on circular economy, green growth, related development opportunities and possible concrete solutions to promote eco-sustainable business models. Both experts of the sectors and entrepreneurs who have already oriented their businesses / SMEs / start-ups towards green and circular strategies will be involved in the activities.</p> <p><u>Expected impact on the policy instrument addressed:</u> this action, in line with the new Metropolitan Strategic Plan (PSM 2.0) – Priority 4, Manufacturing, new industry and</p>

	<p>training, aims at informing local SMEs about the potential and need of green and circular business models. As reported in the PSM 2.0, in fact, the environmental impacts and the sustainability of the production processes lead to a profound reconsideration of the linear production processes. Eco-planning, the short and integrated supply chain, the rational use of stocks, the transformation of waste into raw and secondary materials for other production processes should be privileged. Raising-awareness and information activities focused on these themes will contribute to pursue both the objectives set by the new MSP 2.0 and, indirectly, those of ERDF ROP Emilia-Romagna 2014-2020.</p>
Players involved	<p>The Metropolitan City of Bologna will continue the collaboration with its Local Stakeholder Group, cooperating with the University of Bologna. Target: local businesses, SMEs and start-ups; associations of businesses and SMEs; local entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs.</p>
Timeframe	<p>Starting date: 2018 - Ending date: 2020 November 2018 - raising-awareness in the framework of Ecomondo Fair</p>
Costs	Internal staff resources
Funding sources	Internal resources
Indicator:	<p>Number of raising-awareness and information activities promoted (target: 1 event and 1 paper/publication) Number of local SMEs reached (target: 70 SMSs)</p>
Date	Signature (Mr. Giovanna Trombetti – Director of Economic Development Area, Metropolitan City of Bologna)

## ACTION 6: CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS TO CREATE NEW BUSINESSES

### The Background

The theme of circular economy could be linked to the so-called “nature-based solutions” in a green and eco-

	<p>sustainable logic of creation of new business in the metropolitan area of Bologna. To this end, it is very important to build a consolidated and interconnected network of companies, business projects, technical and business consultants (and other relevant actors) actively engaged in creating new synergies and a more suitable context for new green businesses and investments. From the methodological point of view, a CESME case study has partially inspired us in elaborating this action: Orange Box, taking advantage of eco-design in a changing marketplace, by offering a very sustainable, cost effective solution for its customers, exploring new business models such as product take back and refurbishment.</p>
Action	<p>Developing a masterplan, and funding application, for roll out of nature based solutions. it will stimulate the innovation potential of nature-based solutions and community potentials by developing communities-of-practices within authorities, communities and businesses. Promotion of raising-awareness and information activities targeted at future entrepreneurs within the metropolitan area of Bologna and focused on the themes of circular economy and nature-based solutions.</p> <p><u>Content and development:</u> Metropolitan City of Bologna will develop a masterplan and promote raising-awareness and information activities for entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs, aimed at increasing and improving their information and knowledge on circular economy and nature-based solutions as interconnected issues behind new, green and sustainable business opportunities.</p> <p><u>Expected impact on the policy instrument addressed:</u> this action, in line with the new Metropolitan Strategic Plan (PSM 2.0) – Priority 4, Manufacturing, new industry and training, aims at promoting new business opportunities and innovative business models closely connected with the circular, green and nature-based logic. The activities developed will contribute to pursue both the objectives set by the new MSP 2.0 and, indirectly, those of ERDF ROP Emilia-Romagna 2014-2020.</p>

Players involved	<p>The Metropolitan City of Bologna will develop the masterplan.</p> <p>The raising awareness and information activities will be targeted to: local businesses, SMEs and start-ups; associations of businesses and SMEs; municipalities in the metropolitan area and other local authorities.</p>
Timeframe	<p>Starting date: 2018 - Ending date: 2020 December 2019 - completion of planning process</p>
Costs	<p>About 15.000 € and dedicated staff</p>
Funding sources	<p>Internal resources</p>
Indicator:	<p>Number of masterplan developed (target: 1 masterplan) Number of raising-awareness and information activities promoted (target: 1 event and/or 1 paper/publication) Number of entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs reached (target: 30 e. / aspiring e.)</p>
Date	<p>Signature (Mr. Giovanna Trombetti – Director of Economic Development Area, Metropolitan City of Bologna)</p>

## Annex 1 – The original signed Action Plan

## REGIONAL ACTION PLAN

### PART I – GENERAL INFORMATION

Project: <b>CESME – Circular Economy for SMEs</b>	
Partner organization: <b>ERVET</b> Country: Italy NUTS2 Region: Emilia-Romagna Region  Contact person: Mr. Enrico Cancila Email address: ecancila@ervet.it Phone number: 0516450449	Partner organization: <b>Metropolitan City of Bologna</b> Country: Italy NUTS2 Region: Emilia-Romagna Region  Contact person: Mr. Marino Cavallo E-mail address: marino.cavallo@cittametropolitana.bo.it Phone number: 051 6598596

### PART II – POLICY CONTEXT

The Action Plan aims to impact

- Investment for Growth and Jobs Programme
- European Territorial Cooperation Programme
- Other regional development Policy Instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed: ERDF Regional Operational Programme

### PART III – DETAILS OF THE ACTIONS ENVISAGED

**ACTION 1 - GREEN\CIRCULAR MONITORING SYSTEM ON ERDF CALLS \***

**ACTION 2 - FOCUS ON ENERGY CALLS \***

**ACTION 3 - INFORMATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES TARGETED TO PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS \*\***

**ACTION 4 - DATABASE OF GREEN ENTERPRISES & INFORMATION ACTIVITIES TARGETED TO COMPANIES \*\***

**ACTION 5 RAISING-AWARENESS AND INFORMATION ACTIVITIES TARGETED AT LOCAL SMEs \*\***

**ACTION 6 CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS TO CREATE NEW BUSINESSES\*\***

\* *Actions signed by the Managing Authority*

\*\* *Actions inspired by some CESME project best practices and from discussion within Local Stakeholder Group (further information below)*

## ACTION 1 - GREEN\CIRCULAR MONITORING SYSTEM ON ERDF CALLS

### The Background

*From the discussion with project partners and local stakeholders, we have learnt that Circular Economy could be interpreted in many different ways (not only waste recovery, but also remanufacturing, up-cycling, products/services sharing,...); policy makers should keep in mind this wide perspective in order to define and implement policies which can be really effective for SMEs and their transition towards circularity; every action targeted to SMEs has a "green" potential, so it is crucial for policy makers to have a clear overview of all initiatives that can be labelled as "green".*

### Action

ERVET will provide to the Managing Authority a specific monitoring system of structural funds, focused on green projects.

**Content and development** – ERVET is currently working for designing a monitoring system for ERDF calls, aimed at assessing their ability and their potential to foster eco-innovation and sustainability/circularity among enterprises. A questionnaire targeted to beneficiaries has been created: it is about eco-innovation and other environmental topics related to the financed projects; the questionnaire has been tested in a specific call as it has been included within the reporting documents for beneficiaries. The results of this first test (carried out in 2017) will be the basis for an activity of improvement and adaptation of the questionnaire, aimed at using it within other calls, trying to set up a permanent monitoring system. This monitoring system aims to assess the environmental quality of the financed projects and the potential of eco-innovation as a key-factor for competitiveness. On the basis of the results of monitoring system, ERVET will produce a memorandum targeted to Managing Authority on how to embed environmental sustainability (green and circular topics) in future ERDF calls.

**Expected impact on the policy instrument addressed:** the monitoring system can be a useful tool for the managing authority to improve future ERDF calls on competitiveness and eco-innovation, making them "more sensitive" to sustainability and able to award "greener" projects.

### Players involved

ERVET will work closely with the Managing Authority. The Managing Authority will grant access to the documentation of regional ERDF calls, in order to let ERVET process the data of financed projects.

### Timeframe

Starting date: 2017 - Ending date: 2019

2017 - setting up of a first version of the questionnaire and test on a specific call

2018 – analysis of different calls and setting up of adapted versions of the questionnaires (or other tools) aimed at monitoring the green\circular potential of submitted projects

2019 – drafting of the memorandum

### Costs

Not relevant. The activities will be included within the multi annual agreement between Regional Authority and ERVET (acting as Regional Development Agency), at no extra costs.

### Funding sources

Not relevant.

### Indicator:

Number of calls that include the questionnaire within the reporting documentation (target: 1 call)

Draft of the memorandum for greener calls (target: 1 memorandum)

Date

19/03/2018

Signature (Mr Roberto Ricci Mingani responsible for the Department "Qualification of enterprises"; Managing Authority for Priority axis 3 of ERDF Regional Operational Programme "Production system competitiveness and attractiveness")

Stamp of the organisation (if available)

## ACTION 2 FOCUS ON ENERGY CALLS

### The Background

*From SMEs we got confirmation that one of their main concern is the energy consumption (energy costs); topics as energy efficiency or renewable energy from waste or biomass are strictly related to Circular Economy and they make Circular Economy be seen as a key factor for competitiveness; SMEs need more support to do energy investments. This could be a way to improve both economic and environmental sustainability of the businesses.*

### Action

Analysis of regional calls on energy topics aimed at assessing the relevance of energy efficiency as a key-factor for competitiveness and at communicating it to companies.

**Content and development:** ERVET will analyse the results of some specific regional calls targeted to enterprises (energy audits) with the aim of understand if (and how) energy efficiency could act as a key-factor for competitiveness. ERVET will produce a memorandum targeted to companies in order to push them to consider ERDF energy calls as an opportunity to increase both their competitiveness and their circularity.

**Expected impact on the policy instrument addressed:** this action aims at informing companies about the potential of ERDF energy calls, in terms of opportunity to combine competitiveness (through cost cutting) and sustainability. The (indirect) expected impact on the policy instrument is to increase enterprises participation in ERDF calls.

### Players involved

ERVET will work closely with the Managing Authority. The Managing Authority will grant the access to the documentation of regional ERDF calls, in order to let ERVET process data on financed projects. Companies are the target of the memorandum.

### Timeframe

Starting date: 2017 - Ending date: 2019

2017-2018 analysis of the results of specific energy calls

2018 draft of the memorandum; distribution of the memorandum

### Costs

Not relevant. The activities will be included within the multi annual agreement between Regional Authority and ERVET (acting as Regional Development Agency), at no extra costs.

### Funding sources

Not relevant.

### Indicator:

Draft of the memorandum for greener calls (target: 1 memorandum)

Number of enterprises reached by the memorandum (target: 50 companies)

Date 05/03/18

Signature (Mr Silvano Bertini responsible for the Department "Research, Innovation, Energy and sustainable economy"; Managing Authority for Priority axis 1 of ERDF Regional Operational Programme ("Research and innovation"))



Stamp of the organisation (if available)

### **ACTION 3 INFORMATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES TARGETED TO PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS**

#### The Background

Public institutions have some difficulties in the understanding of what is really green; they need more information on how to recognize green product and services and on how to promote them, by means of public procurement.

A CESME case study has inspired us for the action targeted to public bodies: Orangebox, the Welsh company that produces furniture, that we have visited during the kick off meeting had a positive experience of Green Public Procurement; the company awarded a tender of Public Health Wales (PHW) which requires for environmental, economic and social sustainability to be demonstrated throughout the refit. This experience shows the relevance of public procurement for fostering the production of "circular" products; there is a need to spread information and tools to make public institutions aware and capable of this potential. **Title of the practices: "Public Health Wales Sustainable Workplace"**

Within our Local Stakeholders Group, participants discuss on barriers to the transition towards Circular Economy: the level of knowledge of public institutions on topics like circular economy, environmental innovation and greener technologies was one of the barriers (see the report from the first meeting of the LSG).

#### Action

Dissemination of GPP knowledge among public bodies, in order to foster the purchasing of greener and circular products

**Content and development** - ERVET is involved in the programming and the implementation of the GPP regional plan; the Plan will include, as the previous one, information and training activities targeted to local institutions and to companies; ERVET will add to the discussed topics the circular economy and how the GPP could push the transition towards a circular model.

**Expected impact on the policy instrument addressed:** this action acts on a different policy instrument, which is the GPP Regional Plan.

#### Players involved

Regional Authority (department responsible for GPP plan) and local institutions (target of the information/training activities)

#### Timeframe

Starting date: 2018 - Ending date: 2019

#### Costs

Not relevant. The activities will be included within the multi annual agreement between Regional Authority and ERVET (acting as Regional Development Agency), at no extra costs.

#### Funding sources

Not relevant.

#### Indicator:

Number of information/training initiatives on circular/green products  
(target: 1 document uploaded in the regional GPP internet page)

Date

Signature (Mr Enrico Cancila, head of the Economic Development and Environment of ERVET, partner of CESME project )

Stamp of the organisation (if available)

05/03/18

#### **ACTION 4 DATABASE OF GREEN ENTERPRISES & INFORMATION ACTIVITIES TARGETED TO COMPANIES**

##### The Background

A general lack of knowledge on Circular Economy has been detected among companies which don't really sense that Circular Economy could be a business opportunity. They need information but most of all they need to become aware of practical experiences of other companies that succeeded in getting profits and benefits from circular\green investments. Therefore, it is crucial for the Development Agency to have a database of green enterprises: it will allow us to provide best practice when needed, to spread circular economy culture thanks to real case study, to make companies know each other.

A CESME case study has partially inspired us for the action targeted to companies: within the Danish government project to spread industrial symbiosis, the creation of a Database has been considered as the "focal point for the successful work" and "an indispensable basis to increase circular economy". Within the present action plan, the focus is the green\circular economy instead of the industrial symbiosis but the idea of a centralized virtual container of companies and the need of protect their industrial and trade secrets are the same. **Title of the practices: "Industrial Symbioses Database"**

Within our Local Stakeholders Group, companies consider the lack of mutual relationship as an obstacle for the access to Circular Economy (see the report from the first meeting of the LSG).

##### Action

Collecting and disseminating green/circular good practices of regional companies, in order to spread Circular Economy culture.

**Content and development:** the purpose is to build a regional database of green enterprises. ERVET will collect as many best practice as possible, in order to disseminate a culture on circular and green economy. Economic data of enterprises will also be added to the database in order to understand financial consequences of sustainable investments (are green enterprises more competitive? More resilient? More successful?). All these informations will be used to show enterprises the economic benefits of the transition towards circular business models and to persuade them to adopt circularity as a competitiveness factor.

**Expected impact on the policy instrument addressed:** the impact on the policy instrument addressed is indirect. Thanks to this action, ERVET will provide a feedback for policy makers on needs and opportunities for a green growth of the regional industrial sector. Regional programmes (ERDF too) in the future could be more oriented to a green growth

##### Players involved

Enterprises (best practices included in the Database)

##### Timeframe

Starting date: 2018 - Ending date: ---

2018 – draft of the questionnaire targeted to companies, distribution and elaboration of answers

2018 – set up of the Regional Database of the green\circular economy (it will become a permanent tool)

##### Costs

Not relevant. The activities will be included within the multi annual agreement between Regional Authority and ERVET (acting as Regional Development Agency), at no extra costs.

##### Funding sources

Not relevant.

##### Indicator:

Draft of a questionnaire targeted to companies. Target: 1 questionnaire

Number of enterprises involved in eco-innovation (self-defined indicator). Target: 400 enterprises

Date

Signature (Mr Enrico Cancila, head of the Economic Development and Environment of ERVET, partner of CESME project )

Stamp of the organisation (if available)

## **ACTION 5 RAISING-AWARENESS AND INFORMATION ACTIVITIES TARGETED AT LOCAL SMEs**

### The Background

Currently, despite the growing diffusion and relevance of the circular economy theme and eco-sustainable business models, many SMEs are still struggling to understand the importance and need to adopt circular production systems.

Also in the metropolitan area of Bologna, as found during the LSG meetings held within the CESME Project, many SMEs still have difficulty understanding the true meaning of "circular economy" and the considerable growth and development opportunities linked to the transition from a linear economic model to the "doughnut economy" (as defined by the writer Kate Raworth – guest at the 1<sup>st</sup> National Forum on Circular Economy, held in Bologna in June 2017).

As found with our LSG, among the barriers to SMEs' transition towards circular economy there is also a lack / inadequacy of information and knowledge of SMEs on the issues of circular economy, zero waste and potential concrete solutions to overcome these challenges.

A CESME case study has particularly inspired us in defining this action targeted at local SMEs: **Ice Arena Wales**. The project identifies both some of the main barriers to achieving zero waste, in a circular logic, and potential solutions to promote green and circular business models, collecting best practices and successful case studies helpful for local businesses to better understand what is a "circular business model" and how it can be concretely adopted.

### Action

Promotion of raising-awareness and information activities targeted at SMEs within the metropolitan area of Bologna, and focused on the themes of circular economy, green growth and zero waste.

**Content and development:** Metropolitan City of Bologna will promote raising-awareness and information activities for local SMEs, aimed at increasing and improving their information and knowledge on circular economy, green growth, related development opportunities and possible concrete solutions to promote eco-sustainable business models. Both experts of the sectors and entrepreneurs who have already oriented their businesses / SMSs / start-ups towards green and circular strategies will be involved in the activities.

**Expected impact on the policy instrument addressed:** this action, in line with the new *Metropolitan Strategic Plan (MSP 2.0)* – Priority 4, *Manufacturing, new industry and training*, aims at informing local SMEs about the potential and need of green and circular business models. As reported in the PSM 2.0, in fact, the environmental impacts and the sustainability of the production processes lead to a profound reconsideration of the linear production processes. Eco-planning, the short and integrated supply chain, the rational use of stocks, the transformation of waste into raw and secondary materials for other production processes should be privileged. Raising-awareness and information activities focused on these themes will contribute to pursue both the objectives set by the new MSP 2.0 and, indirectly, those of ERDF ROP Emilia-Romagna 2014-2020.

### Players involved

The Metropolitan City of Bologna will continue the collaboration with its Local Stakeholder Group, cooperating with the University of Bologna.

Target: local businesses, SMEs and start-ups; associations of businesses and SMEs; local entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs-

Timeframe

Starting date: 2018 - Ending date: 2020

November 2018 - raising-awareness in the framework of Ecomondo Fair

Costs

Internal staff resources

Funding sources

Internal resources

Indicator:

Number of raising-awareness and information activities promoted (target: 1 event and 1 paper/publication)

Number of local SMEs reached (target: 70 SMSs)

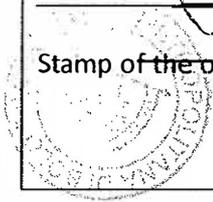
30/3/2018

Date

Signature (Mr. Giovanna Trombetti – Director of Economic Development Area, Metropolitan City of Bologna)



Stamp of the organisation (if available)



## **ACTION 6 CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS TO CREATE NEW BUSINESSES**

### The Background

*The theme of circular economy could be linked to the so-called “nature-based solutions” in a green and eco-sustainable logic of creation of new business in the metropolitan area of Bologna. To this end, it is very important to build a consolidated and interconnected network of companies, business projects, technical and business consultants (and other relevant actors) actively engaged in creating new synergies and a more suitable context for new green businesses and investments.*

### Action

Developing a masterplan, and funding application, for roll out of nature based solutions. it will stimulate the innovation potential of nature-based solutions and community potentials by developing communities-of-practices within authorities, communities and businesses.

Promotion of raising-awareness and information activities targeted at future entrepreneurs within the metropolitan area of Bologna, and focused on the themes of circular economy and nature-based solutions.

**Content and development:** Metropolitan City of Bologna will develop a masterplan and promote raising-awareness and information activities for entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs, aimed at increasing and improving their information and knowledge on circular economy and nature-based solutions as interconnected issues behind new, green and sustainable business opportunities.

**Expected impact on the policy instrument addressed:** this action, in line with the new *Metropolitan Strategic Plan (MSP 2.0)* – Priority 4, *Manufacturing, new industry and training*, aims at promoting new business opportunities and innovative business models closely connected with the circular, green and nature-based logic. The activities developed will contribute to pursue both the objectives set by the new MSP 2.0 and, indirectly, those of ERDF ROP Emilia-Romagna 2014-2020.

### Players involved

The Metropolitan City of Bologna will develop the masterplan.

The raising awareness and information activities will be targeted to: local businesses, SMEs and start-ups; associations of businesses and SMEs; municipalities in the metropolitan area and other local authorities.

### Timeframe

Starting date: 2018 - Ending date: 2020

December 2019 - completion of planning process

Costs

About 15.000 € and dedicated staff

Funding sources

Internal resources and European projects' resources

Indicator:

Number of masterplan developed (target: 1 masterplan)

Number of raising-awareness and information activities promoted (target: 1 event and/or 1 paper/publication)

Number of entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs reached (target: 30 e. / aspiring e.)

30/3/2018

Date

Signature (Mr. Giovanna Trombetti – Director of Economic Development Area, Metropolitan City of Bologna)



Stamp of the organisation (if available)

