



Circular  
Economy  
Action

The innovation Agenda of  
Network Northeast Fryslan  
The Netherlands 2019-2023

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# Preface

The region of Noordoost Fryslân is dominantly rural and the economy is focused on agricultural, construction and tourism activities. At present, development in socio-economic perspective is lagging when compared to other regions in the Netherlands. Long-term priorities of the regional development focus on renewing and strengthening of the economy, supportive research, education and innovation power (smart industry, smart agriculture, enhanced tourism and recreation) in a landscape of high quality. Climate change is affecting the area and adaptation is focusing on reducing the carbon footprint by enhancing the circular economy by closing cycles, increasing production of renewable energy, transition towards sustainable agriculture while balancing the use of local resources of the landscape such as water and biomass. This has resulted in a socio-economic master plan (2011) that is working along four main lines:

1. Adapt the governance structures and policies to promote an integral approach between sectors and in conjunction with other regional challenges;
2. Involve public and private investment and financing to facilitate transition toward new business models;
3. Build knowledge and expertise on business models in demonstrators on adapting to climate change and the effectivity of adaptation on the economy;
4. Create sense of urgency and awareness in all sectors of society, government levels, and public and private actors.

The province is working on a strong economy that benefits every inhabitant. The transition to a circular economy (CE) is very important in this regard. Since its inception of the Circular Friesland Association (VCF), the subject is well on the agenda in Fryslân and Fryslân is increasingly seen as an exemplary region in the Netherlands and Europe. So won Fryslân won the title "Best Circular Region in the Netherlands" in 2017. The province of Friesland has the ambition for 2025 to be the top three of European regions at the forefront of circular economy. In 2025, Fryslân will purchase at least 50 percent 'circular'.

In 2011, the Social Economic Master Plan ANNO was written. The task arising from this has been translated into the 'Agenda of Netwerk Noordoost (ANNO)'. This is, together with the Regional Agreements for organizational and financial frameworks in 2012 established by the Northeast Frisian municipal councils and the Provincial Council of Fryslân. In 2015, ANNO was succeeded by ANNO II, in which 3 themes and 16 assignments were formulated. The ambition formulated in ANNO II is an attractive living, working and recreational climate. Regional cooperation is the basis for this. The residents will be central to the tasks for the coming period: it is about the future of their region.

One of the main lines in the master plan was to 'Build knowledge and expertise on business models in demonstrators on adapting to climate change and the effectivity of adaptation on the economy'. This was made specific for North East Fryslân (NOF) in an agenda for accelerating the 'Economic and ecological use of agricultural land based on a circular

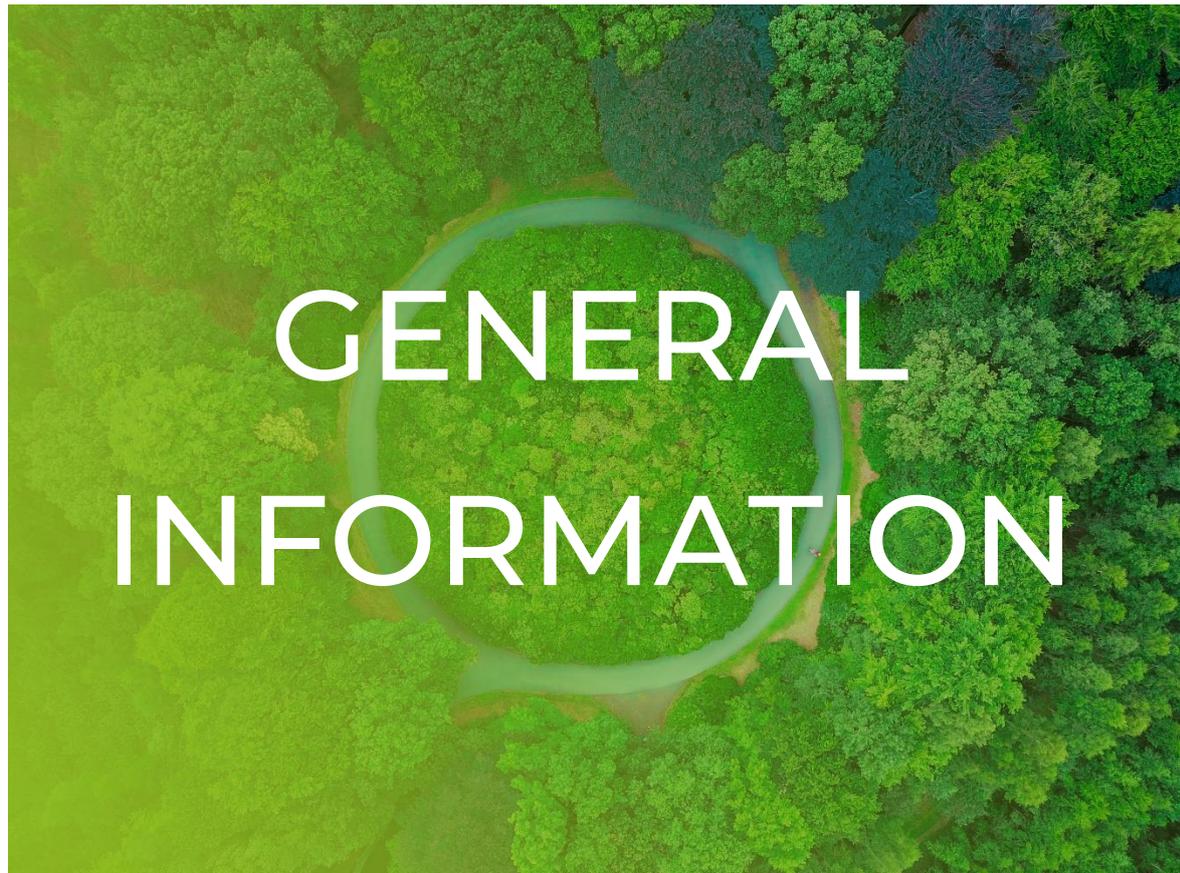
economy'. This is the basis for the "Fjildlab Noordoost Fryslân" project. In 2019 the Fjildlab NOF came into use. Within the Fjildlab: the field laboratory for strengthening the circular economy and a sustainable agricultural sector in Northeast Fryslân, sustainable agriculture-related issues such as globalization, climate change, salinisation and the enhancement of nature, landscape and biodiversity are tackled. The Fjildlab collaboration partners are working on innovative solutions and new business models for the agricultural sector.

Stimulated by the COLOR CIRCLE project, and based on lessons learned in ANNO I and II, good practices of Fjildlab and the network initiative of the Circular Fryslân movement, an action plan for the third cycle of ANNO (ANNO III) was initiated. This document describes the Action plan for ANNO III on the theme 'Green Blue' (Grien-Blau) towards achieving the goal set for 2025. The phase 2 of COLOR CIRCLE appears to be a first milestone (2023) for the monitoring of the "Grien Blau" theme.

It has become clear that the good practices collected by other COLOR CIRCLE partners from other European regions have been inspiring.

The scope of the action plan for ANNO III is extending beyond the COLOR CIRCLE final year 2023. Two actions of the first tranche for ANNO III are implemented in relation to the COLOR CIRCLE project. These actions will be monitored by the provincial government, by its representative for the ANNO III them Grien & Blau and will be supported by Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences. A Regional Stakeholder Group will be involved to reflect on the progress of the actions executed under the action plan.

# Part I



## Project

This action plan aims to support and implement local policy on the circular economy in Noordoost Fryslân. Specifically the focus is on the agricultural sector with the aim to help find revenues to bear the costs for the required transitions.

Within the region there is a close collaboration between stakeholders to strengthen the economy and attractiveness. This is organized since 2012 in ANNO and subsequently in ANNO II. The latter led to the 'Acceleration agenda' and the Fjildlab approach. ANNO III is the next step. This action plan helps the regional stakeholders to focus and accelerate the ambitions stated in ANNO III.

### Project

COLOR CIRCLE - Connecting and empowering LOCAL authorities with Research capacities to unlock the full potential of CIRCular economy

### Country & region

 Netherlands, North East Fryslân



### Contact details

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# Part II



# The action plan

## The action plan aims to impact

- Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
- European Territorial Cooperation programme
- Other regional development policy instrument**

Policy instrument: ANNO III

Type of change: 2, change in the management of the policy instrument

## EU Circular Economy Policy

The first circular economy action plan at the European level was adopted in 2015. The measures supported the European Union's transition from linear to circular economy by covering product cycle: from production and consumption to waste management and the market for secondary raw materials. In Spring 2019, its implementation was reviewed by the European Commission, paving the way to defining new challenges for future circular economy policies. In 2020, the European Commission adopted "A new Circular Economy Action Plan For a cleaner and more competitive Europe", which is part of the European Green Deal. The new Circular Economy Action Plan supports EU's transition towards circular economy to achieve by 2050 climate neutrality, as well as support sustainable growth and jobs. The Action plan identified seven value chains as particularly relevant for reaching EU's targets: electronics and ICT, batteries and vehicles, packaging, textiles, construction and buildings, food, water and nutrients. The Action plan encourages the cooperation of civil society, universities, research organisations, industry and SME.

## National context

The demand for raw materials is increasing worldwide. That is why the Dutch government works together with the business community, knowledge institutes, nature and environmental organisations, local governments, trade unions, financial institutions and other social organizations to use raw materials more economically and smarter. The goal: a fully circular economy in the Netherlands by 2050.

The Dutch government has formulated 3 objectives to make the Dutch economy circular as quickly as possible:

1. Existing production processes make more efficient use of raw materials, so that fewer raw materials are needed. Raw materials are used for example for food, electrical appliances and clothing;
2. When new raw materials are needed, sustainably produced, renewable (inexhaustible) and generally available raw materials are used as much as possible. Such as biomass, which is raw material from plants, trees and food waste. This

makes the Netherlands less dependent on fossil sources and it is better for the environment.

3. Developing new production methods and circular design of new products.

The Dutch government has an additional goal for circular agriculture. Dutch agriculture, horticulture and fishing is a global leader. It is the government's ambition to maintain this position. At the same time, the Netherlands faces a number of major social challenges. For example, our soil, the most important resource for farmers, is in danger of becoming exhausted, we are dealing with a loss of biodiversity and the Netherlands has committed itself to the climate agreement. To meet these challenges, the Netherlands wants to move to circular agriculture by 2030. See also: <https://www.platformkringlooplandbouw.nl/>

<https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-agriculture-nature-and-food-quality/vision-anf>

### Regional context and programmes

We want Fryslân to be the most favorable development region of the Netherlands in the field of circular economy by 2025. This means that we connect SMEs with new circular business models. This will enable SMEs to create new employment opportunities. In this way we contribute to the global goal of using our natural resources more efficiently.

The Province of Fryslân wants to be the most favorable development region of the Netherlands in the field of circular economy by 2025. This means that Fryslân connect SMEs with new circular business models. This will enable SMEs to create new employment opportunities. In this way Fryslân contributes to the global goal of using our natural resources more efficiently. The regional building campus, the investments in agriculture and the entrepreneurial learning project can achieve this ambition of contribute to the circular economy.

Agenda Network Northeast (ANNO), a regional cooperation in Northeast Fryslân of four municipalities, the province and Wetterskip (waterboard), together with social and economic partners in the region are working on the socio-economic development of the region, with the aim of making it an attractive region to live, work and recreate. The collaboration of ANNO started in 2012 with ANNO I, which will run until 2016, and was followed up with ANNO II. Part of ANNO II is the policy instrument Versnellingsagenda (Acceleration Agenda) that is funded by the Regional Deal that the municipalities of Achtkarspelen, Dantumadiel, Noardeast-Fryslân, Tytsjerksteradiel and the province of Fryslân have concluded with the national government. With the Acceleration Agenda, these government parties, together with entrepreneurs and educational institutions, want to realize that:

- the Gross Regional Product in 2025 has increased by € 400 million;
- the number of available jobs stabilises;
- the labor force is employed at a higher occupational level;

- average disposable income increases;
- the number of school leavers with a high education is increasing;
- and the average house value in this region is rising.

Circular economy and especially circular agriculture are seen as important opportunities for the region to reach these goals. To develop these opportunities for the agricultural sector the Acceleration Agenda funded Fjildlab: a living lab for the strengthening of the circular economy and a sustainable agricultural sector in Northeast Fryslân. The Fjildlab collaboration partners are working on innovative solutions and new business models for the agricultural sector within 7 themes.

The parties of ANNO have agreed to continue the collaboration in ANNO III for the period 2022 to 2025. Therefore, a new collaboration agenda has been drafted, based on a regional analysis. An important milestone will be 2023 to make a first assessment of the new steps taken under “Grien & Blau” tasks.

## Policy instrument

The parties of ANNO have agreed to continue the collaboration in ANNO III for the period 2022 to 2025. Therefore, a new collaboration agenda has been drafted, based on a regional analysis. The action plan presented in this document is part of ANNO III and specifically the task Grien & Blau, with a first step in 2023 under COLOR CIRCLE.

The Grien & Blau (green and blue) task is a broad task because the subjects covered all have different goals that must be realized in rural areas. These are projects that have been set up under ANNO II and will be continued. In addition, there are also new assignments. Grien en blau is about tasks in the field of climate, biodiversity and agriculture, in which the various governments and cooperation partners bring their tasks together, seek coordination and collaborate in programming and implementation.

Grien & Blau will work on concrete measures to achieve goals for climate adaptation, new agriculture and biodiversity in the area. Grien & Blau ambitions are to:

1. Actively participate inter-administratively and link up with current initiatives;
2. Working on greater cohesion in the region, including in terms of objectives and implementation in projects;
3. Working towards an area contract with landowners.



# Part III



# Action plan preparation

## COLOR CIRCLE project goals

The overall objective of the COLOR CIRCLE project is to unlock the full potential of circular economy by reinforcing the role and capacities of local authorities thanks to strengthened cooperation with local research communities. The project focuses on rural and small cities areas. It relies on sharing good practices of cooperation between research and local authorities that boost and tool territorial intelligence. COLOR CIRCLE contributes to improve the role of local governance in regional circular economy policies by recognising circular economy as a cross cutting priority, by strengthening the connection between research and local communities and by empowering local authorities.

## Action plan development

During the term of COLOR CIRCLE the main stakeholders, organized in Fjildlab, discussed and evaluated the regional policy instrument bimonthly. Stakeholders were involved in the IRLE organized in NO Fryslan and met COLOR CIRCLE partners and discussed with them our approach and feedback. Stakeholders were involved in the online IRLE of the other partners or were informed about policy instruments, good practices afterwards by COLOR CIRCLE partner HVHL (PP4). This led to the first thoughts on improving the regional policy instrument and policy ambitions for the next period. Stakeholders discussed this in depth from Spring 2021 onward and came up with ANNO III Grien Blau (see above). Specifically for COLOR CIRCLE phase II a RSG meeting was organized in October 2021 to reflect on the regional needs, the good practices/ approaches of the other CC partners and translate these in a draft action plan. This action plan is then elaborated on by CC partner HVHL the current proposal. Specific actions have been discussed individually with involved stakeholders and with smaller groups. The total action plan is discussed in a RSG to finalize and agree on the actions.

The parties involved in the Regional Stakeholder Group (RSG):

- Agricultural collectives: NFW and Waadrane
- Province of Fryslan
- Entrepreneurs Federation NoordOost Fryslan (ONOF)
- Association Circular Fryslan (VCF)
- Applied University Van Hall Larenstein (HVHL)

The progress of the action plan will be monitored by HVHL and discussed periodically (4 month period) with the RSG.

## Good practices methodology as base for the Action Plan

The Interreg Europe programme supports the exchange of good practices and experience between public authorities, managing authorities, research institutes, as well as non-profit organisations to develop and deliver better public policy. During the first phase of the

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project, partners have to set up a stakeholder group, contribute to the policy learning platform and produce an action plan based on the good practices identified by the other partners in their regions. This action plan is implemented during phase two.

During five interregional learning events, the partners presented their situation according to a case study methodology that enabled different stakeholders - regional and local authorities, research centres, circular economy solution providers, civil society - to cross views on good practices. Following this presentation, parallel sessions were held by peer groups (Local Government group; Regional policy makers' group; University / Research group; other stakeholders) to analyse the case study against several criteria: policy challenges; improvements; conditions on transferring the good practices in other regions. The groups reported in plenary. A dedicated time was given to partners from the same region to share their views on the case study, identify first lessons for their territory, and input for regional stakeholder group (RSG) meetings.

### **Criteria for COLOR CIRCLE good practices**

For the region it is important that COLOR CIRCLE good practice fit with the chosen path. That means that they:

- be appropriate to the current scale level of the policy instrument: closing cycles locally
- be suitable for the sectors concerned: agriculture
- be a further development of the chosen path: quadruple helix, ABCD roadmap
- be appropriate to local culture, landscape and resources.

With regard to the above criteria, it has become clear that the good practices collected by other COLOR CIRCLE partners from other European regions have been very inspiring. We have drawn up an action plan for 2022-2023 that fits the path the region has taken and is perceived by the stakeholders as the main next step to advance the circular economy in the region. GP of partners that have comparable aspects helped in shaping our Action Plan.

# Part IV



The regional stakeholder group (RSG) has defined the following actions for the action plan.

- 1) *A Contract for Ecoservices delivered in agricultural landscape.* Partners NFW (& ministry and province).
- 2) *Project vouchers to stimulate circular farming.* 10-20 'small' projects with farmers in Fjildlab related stimulating circular agriculture and applying lessons learning from COLOR CIRCLE good practices.

## Action 1: A Contract for Ecoservices

### The background

At the moment, agriculture is inundated with European, national and regional plans, measures and requirements. These are often developed from a single assignment, for example reducing nitrogen load to air and soil, promoting climate mitigation and adaptation or implementing the Water Framework Directive.

The plans are not consistent with each other, can be counterproductive and, moreover, are not tailored to the actual natural system, agricultural practices and socio-economic characteristics of any area. This implies that, although the target is the same everywhere, the way in which the targets can be achieved is very different and should be tailored to the region's specifics.

The agricultural sector believes that agriculture can make an important contribution to the realization of regional goals. Reason enough for three important groups of stakeholders, the agricultural collectives, Noardlike Fryske Wâlden, Groningen-West and Central Groningen, to come up with a nature inclusive and circular approach so that after 40 years the quality of the soil, the goals for clean water and clean air can finally be realized. The collectives will also include the climate goals such as carbon sequestration. The collectives propose an ecosystem service oriented approach with farmers as service-suppliers.

In Color Circle project, the good practices are fragmented amongst various domains and scales of implementation and impact.

The aim of this action is to build a coherent and comprehensive area specific service contract with the objective of fulfilling set environmental or climate goals in close collaboration with the authorities and provide guidance towards implementation in the policy instrument ANNO III.

### Expected impact in the regional context

This action extends beyond the 2023 limit of Color Circle. The regional impact is significant as the collectives represent a large part of the agricultural sector. Within the 2022-2023 period SMART goals will be set for services produced in 2025, 2030 and 2035 as part of an adaptation plan. In this period a legal framework will be developed and individual landowners will

be involved through the collectives to realize the proposed services.

The action will become part of the Green-Blau task of the policy instrument ANNO III by supporting the governments in their coordinating and collaborating role towards programming and implementation.

### **Link with the policy instrument, ANNO III**

Our action plan will lead to a change of type 2, change in the management of the policy instrument.

### **Action (please list and describe the actions to be implemented)**

Color Circle will be supportive in the exploratory phase with the aim to map out the possibilities and risks for a number of components that are crucial for the area services contract, and to indicate how to deal with the risks resulting in a policy change by regional governments.

The steps to be implemented are:

- A) Definition of services, means and metrics that will be part of the regional contract and description of the SMART goals for 2025, 2030 and 2035.
- B) Safeguarding the performance/services towards clients (governments) by adequate governance arrangements.
- C) Solving legal aspects of switching systems from limitation of impacts to production of services.

D) Exploring with landowners of the methods to arrive at a quotation and subsequent financing of services that will be provided.

E) The exploratory phase is concluded with an action plan for taking up the actual governance and financing of the area contract based on quotations of landowners in the policy instrument to achieve a policy change.

### **Players involved**

In our view, this exploratory phase will have to take place in close collaboration with the authorities (particularly central government, provinces and water boards). They are already included in the Regional Stakeholders Group.

The project leader will be supported by a working group with experts and a steering group of stakeholders.

### **Timeframe**

The actions described for the exploratory phase will be executed within the period August 2022 – July 2023.

Milestone 1: finished 1<sup>st</sup> concept of a regional contract (Step A). December 2022

Milestone 2: Action plan for actual governance and financing of the area finished (Steps B to E). June 2023

It is planned that the official integration of the action in Green and Blau task of the policy instrument ANNO III will be effective after Step E, in June 2023, when the exploration phase will be completed.

### **Cost and source of finance**

The current budget to implement this policy change is €70.000,- .

	Cost division
Specialistic services of staff (5 steps)	€45.000
Support	€19.000
Materials	€3.000
Travel	€1.000
Meeting arrangements	€2.000
<b>Total budget</b>	<b>€ 70.000</b>

Color Circle funds the costs for monitoring progress in the first year. Two VHL researchers will be involved.

### Transferability to other territories

The delivery of ecosystem services contract approach is applicable for all agricultural landowners and collectives if this is supported by national and regional authorities.

From the previous interregional activities it has become clear that the approach of the Fjildlab GP has value to other regions, especially the rural Centru Region in Romania. We expect that the concept of building a policy instrument for using and monitoring production of ecosystem services as means to achieve EU and national environmental, circularity and climate goals is very valid for other regions. In relevant steps of the project we will exchange the insights with the regions that are interested in the progress of this action.

### Relevant Good Practice from COLOR CIRCLE partners linked to this action

The French Partner Burgundy Franche Comté region has a relevant good practice : The circular economy project booster.

Since 2018 the Regional Council of Burgundy-Franche-Comté has been cooperating with the regional antenna of the State Agency for the ecological transition (ADEME) to organize an annual call for proposals to support local authorities, public and private organizations in the development of their projects related to circular economy. It is part of the regional policy for circular economy.

The funds can be used for project leadership, studies, or investment. In 2021, applicant projects must fall within one of 10 strategic axes, from industrial and territorial ecology to the reuse of construction waste. The selection criteria are related to the innovative character of the project, does it really help reduce the use of resources, what are its impacts locally, is it replicable.

The actual involvement of the regional councils to monitor, learn and influence has inspired and shaped the cooperation with the ANNO III partner's aspect of our action 1.

## 2: Project vouchers to stimulate circular farming.

### The background

Inspiration for this action “Project Vouchers to stimulate circular farming” comes from the good practices “The circular economy project booster: a regional call for proposals to support local CE projects”. Within this GP from CC partner Bourgogne-France-Comte the annual calls for proposals are organized to support businesses and organizations in the development of projects related to circular economy. It is part of the regional policy to stimulate circular economy. Within this GP relative small projects on 10 different topics and themes are granted. These projects can serve as an inspiration or demonstration for other organizations and for suitable larger projects. Within NE-Fryslan (Fjildlab) it has been observed that frontrunner farmers are getting involved but that large groups of farmers from the involved agricultural collectives are still lagging behind. The GP “The Circular economy project booster” inspired the region to develop so called project vouchers. Different vouchers with a defined (research) purpose and budget to stimulate organisations and farmers to take a first step in implement circular economy on farms. This action focuses specifically on involving a new cohort of farmers to introduce new methodologies stimulated by small funds (the vouchers) and support from experts/ scientist and peer groups.

### Expected impact in the regional context

The Action aims to setup a well-organized structure and process in the existing governance structure and organization to eventually realize a long lasting scheme for smaller projects on innovative nature-inclusive or circular methodology among individual farmers/land owners. A pilot will be carried out in 2022-23 and is expected to lead to a change that will extend in the years after 2023.

### Link with the policy instrument, ANNO III

Our action plan will lead to a change of type 2, governance change.

### Actions

- A) Start of the pilot: Inventory of nature inclusive and circular innovations that are of relevance to the region and the farmers/landowners. Finished August 2022.
- B) Drafting vouchers to co-fund small projects. Finished September 2022.
- C) Providing vouchers to farmers and start of projects. Whole phase 2 period.
- D) Monitoring progress and results of vouchers and projects. Whole phase 2 period.
- E) Conclusion of the Pilot: Give an overview of lessons learned, policy hurdles experienced, costs and opposing legislation. This will be

shared with the ANNO III workgroup Grien Blau. Based on the assessment the vouchers will be extended. Finished June 2023.

### Players involved

The Fjildlab partners are supporting the development and implementation of the action. VHL will deliver the experts, help writing vouchers and monitor the impacts, two farmers collectives will approach and involve farmers.

### Timeframe

In 2022 we will implement actions a-c.

In 2023 we will implement actions d-e:

Milestone 1: vouchers developed and granted, august 2022

Milestone 2: overview of lessons learned, may 2023

### Cost and source of finance

The cost will be about €5.000-€10.000 euro per voucher. This will be partly covered from Fjildlab budget. Farmers/landowners will provide 35% co-financing. Assuming 20 vouchers will be granted this equals €130.000,- subsidy which is covered by the Regiodeal Versnellingsagenda.

Development of vouchers will be done by VHL researchers in cooperation with staff from NFW and ANNO. Costs for voucher development is covered by 'Fjildlab infrastructure' budget. This is estimated at approximately 200 hours. Our approximately €20.000,-

Color Circle funds the costs for monitoring progress in the first year. Two VHL researchers will be involved.

### Transferability to other territories

The nature inclusive and circular methodologies that will be demonstrated will refer to cropping and dairy farming practices on clayey and sandy soils in low lying regions. Transferability is a matter of costs and benefits and available resources will be assessed in action e).

### Relevant Good Practice from COLOR CIRCLE partners linked to this action

The France CC-partner has a [GP](#) to boost the number of circular projects in the region. Our Action has a comparable goal but a different approach. The aspect on involving the regional council to monitor and be informed has inspired and shaped aspect of our action.

### Contacts

- Emiel Elferink (VHL)
- Mindert de Vries (VHL)
- Jelle Pilat (NFW)
- Ingrid van Huizen (province of Fryslan)

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# Signature

# Color Circle Action Plan Noordoost Fryslân

## Signature

On behalf of the region of Noordoost Fryslân we agree to support and promote the implementation of the action plan detailed above.

The region of Noordoost Fryslân recognises the significance of the COLOR CIRCLE project in the promotion of cooperation between the research community and local authorities and the role both can play on identifying circular economy solutions.

### Gemeente Dantumadiel



Damwâld, 16 juni 2022

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Kees Wielstra, wethouder

### Gemeente Noardeast Fryslân



Holwerd, 15 juni 2022

.....

Pieter Braaksma, wethouder

### Noardelike Fryske Wâlden



Damwald, 16 juni 2022

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Albert van der Ploeg, voorzitter

### Agrarisch Collectief Waadrâne



Holwerd, 15 juni 2022

.....

Hans Kroodsma, voorzitter

### Van Hall Larenstein



Holwerd, 15 juni 2022

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Niek de Boer, directeur

### Provincie Fryslân



Damwâld, 16 juni 2022

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Gedeputeerde Klaas Fokkinga



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## Sources

European Union, European Commission, *A New Circular Economy Action Plan for a Cleaner and More Competitive Europe*, 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2020, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/environment/pdf/circular-economy/new\\_circular\\_economy\\_action\\_plan.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/pdf/circular-economy/new_circular_economy_action_plan.pdf).