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**High-Level Meeting of the Global Alliance on
Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency (GACERE)**
14 September 2021 | 12:00 – 14:00 CEST (UTC+2) | Online

Report

The first High-Level Meeting of the Global Alliance on Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency (GACERE) took place online on 14 September 2021 as a side-event of the World Circular Economy Forum. The High-Level meeting was hosted by Mr. Virginijus Sinkevičius, EU Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), and Mr. LI Yong, Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

High level representatives of GACERE members, observer countries, and of GACERE strategic partners took stock of progress in the Alliance’s work since its launch in February 2021 and exchanged views on GACERE’s future perspectives. More specifically, the high-level meeting provided an opportunity for GACERE members to discuss progress in the development of knowledge products highlighting the interlinkages between circular economy and climate change, green recovery, and biodiversity.

The agenda and biographies of speakers are annexed.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Mr. Stephan Sicars, Managing Director of the Environment and Energy Directorate at UNIDO, warmly welcomed all participants and started the meeting by highlighting how the Alliance has come a long way since its launch in February 2020. GACERE has expanded to 15 member countries, the European Union, and two countries with observer status – they have been working together on technical documents on circular economy and climate change, green recovery, and biodiversity. Mr. Sicars concluded that this expansion is a clear sign that countries are placing great importance on the just transition to a circular and resource efficient economy.



Mr. Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries of the European Union, expressed his enthusiasm about the enlargement of the “GACERE family” and stressed how the circular economy transition represents the only viable way to solve the triple climate, biodiversity and pollution crisis affecting our planet. The Commissioner spoke on the recent achievements of the Alliance, in particular at the G20 Environment Ministers’ Meeting in Naples on 22 July 2021, where he saw the “GACERE spirit” in action. He stressed that, for the near future, it will be important to reinforce cooperation with existing regional platforms, such as the African Circular Economy Alliance, and the Latin America and Caribbean Regional Coalition on Circular Economy. These linkages will help support GACERE in its endeavors – and vice-versa. According to the Commissioner, governments are keen to ‘build back better’, and avoid repeating the mistakes of the past. GACERE should help them into this transition.

Mr. Li Yong, Director General, UNIDO, spoke about the need for a just transition to a circular



economy and on the work that UNIDO undertakes to assist countries in these endeavors. He explained how industrial development is strictly dependent on the availability of clean water, which represents an essential ecosystem service for people, plants, and animals.

The Director General also touched on the topic of producer responsibility, by highlighting how industries must be able to show their consumers a true impact of a good or service on their well-being. Circularity helps create opportunities for new business activities, innovation, investments, and decent jobs, and safeguards the environment and economy. He concluded by stating that GACERE members can trigger change by supporting ambitious targets on biodiversity and climate change, and channeling long-term pandemic recovery funding to greener and more circular investments. The next opportunity for GACERE members to show this leadership will be at the Biodiversity COP15 in Kunming in October and the COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021.

Keynote speech: Circular Economy as a solution to the triple planetary crises and the potential role of GACERE

Mr. Janez Potočnik, Co-Chair of the International Resource Panel and Partner of SystemIQ,



began by introducing the International Resource Panel (IRP), a panel of 40 scientists hosted by UNEP which consolidates knowledge and produces insights on the management of natural resources. He praised the establishment of GACERE as a way to fill the gap for an alliance of governments at the global level, advocating for a just transition to a circular economy. Mr. Potočnik pointed to the triple crises affecting our planet – climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution

– deeply rooted in our unsustainable natural resource use patterns, and the economic systems which drive them. IRP is recording worrying trends which will lead to severe consequences. He noted that it is absolutely necessary to decouple growth in well-being and prosperity from natural resource use and its impacts. Circularity must represent an instrument to reach this decoupling, and not an aim in itself.

Mr. Potočnik spoke on the need for de-materializing the systems we depend on and create value through services emphasizing the importance of systemic solutions. He called for a fundamental change of our economic systems and a rejection of economic models that do not conceptualize humans as embedded in nature. He advised GACERE to advocate for economic system change in multilateral fora and to draw on IRP’s work, which provides ready-to-use resource management solutions for the climate and biodiversity crises. In regard to the latter, he referred to the imminent COP15 in Kunming and stated that, to be truly effective, future actions need to be focused on the root causes of biodiversity loss, such as linear and inefficient food and land management– and not just on conservation.

He continued his speech by highlighting three principles which policymakers can put into practice for effective implementation of the next set of targets. These principles are: 1) knowing your impact, 2) planning together, 3) growing with nature, and 4) valuing nature. These principles are explained in the IRP’s report *Building Biodiversity – the Natural Resource Management Approach*. According to Mr. Potočnik, within these principles, there are solutions which GACERE can highlight through its advocacy activities and convening power. He

concluded by stating that our efforts start from understanding that for the first time in human history, we face the emergence of a single, tightly coupled human social-ecological system of planetary scope, which requires the global players to share sovereignty and manage their collective future together.

First Discussion: Circular Economy and Biodiversity

Mr. Sicars asked each panelist to elaborate on the circular economy actions that countries can take to address the biodiversity loss challenge.

Ms. Beatrice Cyiza, Director General of Environment and Climate Change, Ministry of Environment of Rwanda, spoke on the challenges that Rwanda has faced in the context of biodiversity loss, mostly brought by the country's high population density. She reported that during the last three decades, excessive deforestation practices combined with unsound management of waste including hazardous waste have caused biodiversity loss, water quality degradation, and created losses in agricultural production. Ms. Cyiza pointed out the numerous responses of the Government of Rwanda to this crisis, which has achieved its target of 30%



forestry coverage and is committed to adopt circular thinking to reverse the decline in biodiversity loss. Ms. Cyiza also spoke on different projects active in Rwanda to protect biodiversity, including Nyandungu Urban Wetland Eco-Tourism Park and green urban development projects in the city of Kigali.

Mr. Virginijus Sinkevičius spoke on the connection between circular economy and biodiversity and on the efforts, for example, of some European countries to explore the potential of circularity in the agro-food and building industries. Circular approaches have included more regenerative and resource-efficient farming practices, agro-ecology, organic and conservation agriculture, which require less fertilizer and pesticide inputs, and closing the cycle of nutrients and other materials. Moreover, he spoke on the launch in the EU of the Renovation Wave Strategy, aimed at improving energy performance and resource efficiency of buildings.

Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP, expressed her deep appreciation to all members of the Alliance and highlighted again Mr. Potočnik's message that biodiversity loss is driven by our overexploitation of nature and our linear economic systems. She shared some worrying data on the scale of the biodiversity crisis, including the 26% global tree cover loss in the past decade and the two thirds of marine life under threat from plastic pollution and overfishing. Ms. Andersen spoke on the true potential for circularity to be a powerful lever to address the biodiversity crisis. She



stressed the need of moving away from the conservation “bubble” and the importance of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework that countries will agree on next year at COP15 Part 2 as a key multilateral framework within which circularity must be embedded.

Mr. Jocelyn Blériot, Executive Lead Institutions, Governments & Cities, Ellen MacArthur



Foundation, shared the previous panelists' critique of unsustainable extractive economic models and stressed the need to challenge business as usual. He highlighted three pillars of the circular economy: eliminate waste and pollution, keep products and materials in use, and regenerate natural systems. In regard to the latter, he mentioned regenerative agriculture and renewed infrastructure as effective tools to close nutrient loops. He concluded his intervention by recommending that

biodiversity targets are included into national green recovery plans following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Second Discussion: Circular Economy and the Green Recovery

Mr. Sicars asked each panelist to provide an intervention explaining the circular economy actions that their country is promoting in the context of the green recovery.

Ms. Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State for Sustainability and Environment of Singapore, spoke



on the opportunity that the post-COVID recovery plans could bring to sustainable development. She presented, as a best practice, the Singapore Green Plan 2030, launched this year, which uses a circular economy approach to navigate an increasingly resource-constrained world. The plan involves taking an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) approach to priority waste streams, including e-waste, food waste,

and packaging and plastics waste. For example, producers in Singapore are now required to finance the collection and treatment of e-waste and large generators of food waste will be required to segregate and treat their waste by 2024.

Mr. Keriako Tobiko, Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Kenya,



stressed how green recovery plans are proving beneficial not only to nature and the environment, but also to Kenya's GDP growth. The Kenyan Green Recovery Strategy and Implementation Plan, started in 2016, is counting significant achievements in the areas of sustainable infrastructure, community resilience and social inclusion. Mr. Tobiko highlighted a number of efforts that the Kenyan government is taking towards a green recovery, including new regulations on EPR, the

finalization of the greenhouse gas emission reduction plan and the implementation of environmental restoration plans.

Mr. Jyrki Katainen, President of Sitra (Finnish Innovation Fund), spoke on the need for systemic changes to market structures and warned that the world is only 8.6% circular, leaving



a massive gap in materials circulation and pinpointing a huge inefficiency of the current system. He stated that it is of utmost importance that the decision makers share best practices and align their efforts to facilitate the transition. Moreover, the private sector needs a long-term horizon and predictability for their operations and investments. For this to be realized, Mr. Katainen suggested that the world needs collaboration platforms and forerunners such

as GACERE and its member countries to take the lead. He concluded his intervention by pointing out that GACERE can benefit from both the World Circular Economy Forum and the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform thanks to their large business and stakeholder participation.

Third Discussion: Circular Economy and Climate Change

For the third and final panel discussion, each panelist was requested to provide an intervention explaining the circular economy action their country or organization is taking to address the climate change challenge.

Ms. Carolina Schmidt, Environment Minister of Chile, spoke on the social and economic



benefits that a transition to a circular economy can bring on top of the environmental ones. For example, it can generate more than 4.8 million jobs in Latin America and the Caribbean and reduce informality in the labor market. The private sector represents a crucial partner for a long-term circular transformation because of its central role in innovation and the value chain of products and services. Chile recently developed a Circular Economy Roadmap with a 40-year horizon and

included circular economy commitments in its updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). New policies and projects were also implemented in the fish farming, construction, and plastic industries. Minister Schmidt concluded her remarks with lessons learned by Chile which could be used by other GACERE members. Importantly, a circular economy calls for a cultural transformation. Furthermore, it should not be seen as a luxury of wealthy nations and together with innovation, the circular economy ought to provide opportunities to vulnerable people. In this regard, Chile is expecting to create 180,000 new jobs and increase the inclusion of informal waste pickers in new waste collection systems.

Mr. Rameshwar Prasad Gupta, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate



Change of India, spoke on the great commitment of the Government of India to the Sustainable Development Goals and to ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns. He brought as examples different policies and measures such as the Zero Defect Zero Effect (ZED) Scheme, the Clean India Mission (Swachh Bharat Abhiyan) and the Perform Achieve and Trade (PAT) Scheme. In his words: “the concept of circular economy has been built into India’s traditional sustainable lifestyle

approaches since times immemorial. India has traditionally been a society which practices using products and resources to full potential, with the least amount going to waste.”

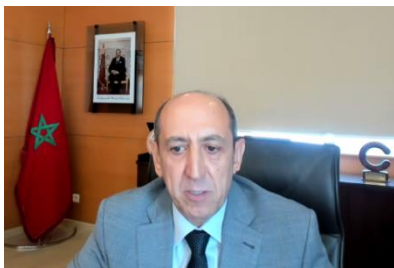
Mr. Shinjiro Koizumi, Minister of Environment of Japan, shared with the audience three



initiatives Japan is promoting to develop a circular economy. The first involves legislation and a new law on plastic resource circulation encouraging recycling efforts across the entire life cycle of plastic products. The second involves Japan’s Partnership for Circular Economy, which compiled 131 examples of advanced circular economy initiatives by Japanese companies (available also in English). The third concerns the decisions of G7 and G20 Climate and Environment Ministers to follow Japan’s proposals for the development of Circular Economy and

Resource Efficiency Principles and establish a portal site on good practices of circular economy initiatives in each country.

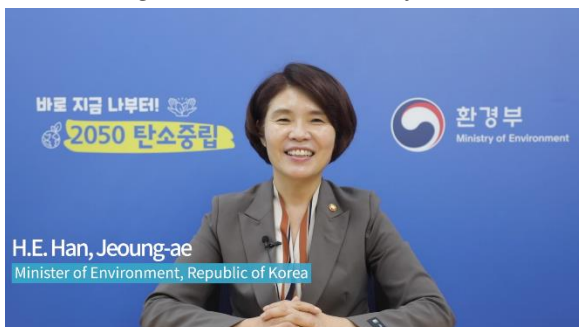
Mr. Mohamed Beyahia, Vice-Minister of Environment of Morocco, identified in climate change



the biggest challenge humanity is facing today and in the circular economy as a strategic area of intervention for Morocco to achieve a transition to a green and inclusive economy. As a best practice, he brought the example of the waste sector improvements in Morocco, which included the implementation of a national household waste program, the adoption of a tax on plastic and the introduction of the waste sector into the national strategy for biomass energy recovery.

Morocco has also adopted a revised NDC aiming to achieve 45% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and remains firmly committed to the Paris Agreement.

Ms. Jeoung-ae Han, Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea, participated to the meeting



through a pre-recorded message, in which she spoke about the Seoul Declaration, developed in May, which advocates for a transition towards a zero-waste society to achieve climate neutrality. Moreover, since the Korea’s Framework Act on Carbon Neutrality and Green Growth strongly encourages governmental measures, the Korean Government is stepping up its efforts at all

levels towards a circular economy transition. The Government will launch a legislation process dedicated to the transition. It will increase the use of recycled materials at the production stage and push to make label-free containers and packaging free shops become a part of daily life of Koreans. The Minister concluded her intervention by expressing the commitment of the Republic of Korea to become a vital link in the global value chain for a circular economy.

Ms. Stientje Van Veldhoven, Vice President and Regional Director of Europe at the World



Resource Institute and Board Member of the Platform for Accelerating the Circular Economy (PACE), praised the achievements made so far in the circular economy field, with circular economy now embedded in 66 of 120 updated NDCs. She also urged all members to look at the biggest challenge we are facing in regard to climate change: not technology, not money, but time. A decade is what is left to keep a 1.5-degree world within reach, so all

partners should align their efforts, reinforce each other, and define partnerships. In her words: “Avoiding fragmentation, realizing acceleration!”. Ms. Van Veldhoven identified three opportunities for collaboration between PACE and GACERE. Firstly, PACE can share with GACERE its experience in brokering multi-sectoral partnerships in the circular economy to help regions or sectors join forces. Secondly, PACE and GACERE can work together and share resources on knowledge and governance gaps that hinder circular and just transitions. Thirdly, GACERE, PACE and other strategic partners should learn from each other and use their networks to find the right partners to move forward on new topics and ideas. Cross-cutting enablers of a circular transition like metrics, finance and trade policies ought to be found, together.

Keynote speech: Circular Economy and the Future

Mr. Al-Hamdou Dorsouma, Acting Director for Climate Change & Green Growth, African



Development Bank, spoke on the challenges brought by the Covid pandemic, the triple planetary crisis, and the urgent shift they require. He identified in this shift the opportunity to restructure our economies and societies and “build back better” through a circular approach. Mr. Dorsouma offered some practical suggestions to achieve this objective grounded in the experience of African countries. He stressed

how it is imperative to craft a new development paradigm for the African continent, where economic transformation helps to catalyze green growth. The recovery packages shouldn’t be a plan to return to where economies were before the pandemic, but a route to embark on growth that “leaves no one behind” while protecting the environment. Mr. Dorsouma stressed that the African continent has had a long history of embracing circularity, even if today most circular practices remain in the informal sector.

Mr. Dorsouma spoke on the efforts of the African Development Bank to promote the circular economy, from hosting the secretariat of the African Circular Economy Alliance to establishing trust funds like the Africa Circular Economy Facility. The AfDB is also financing innovative

projects like Desert-to-Power, a USD 20 billion program to generate 10GW solar energy to provide clean energy to about 250 million people in 11 countries across the Sahara Desert, and is helping governments develop national Circular Economy roadmaps.

Mr. Dorsouma concluded his speech by touching on two main topics. The first one was what he defined as Africa's most promising resource: its youth. Young people's entrepreneurial spirit and technological knowledge must be harnessed to foster innovation, which lays at the heart of a circular economy transition. The second one was the need to mobilize finance at scale for this transition. In his words, "Private finance is by far the biggest and largely untapped pool of capital, so sufficient international public climate finance resources need to be deployed to mobilize this pool, as well as exploring innovative finance initiatives such as Debt-for-Nature-Swaps (DNS) which could trigger green investments in developing countries".

Presentation of the future plans of GACERE, summary and event close

Ms. Inger Andersen congratulated the participants for the great level of energy and commitment expressed at this first high-level meeting of GACERE. In her concluding remarks, she spoke about the responsibility that each of us has towards the younger generations, from which we are borrowing at unprecedented levels. She highlighted that the knowledge and the science are available to make a change happen. A fundamental role that GACERE ought to undertake is the one of guiding countries in their recovery plans, making sure that part of the spending is dedicated to intergenerational justice. She highlighted again the interlinkages between climate change, biodiversity and pollution with circularity and its potential to achieve net-zero targets.




Ms. Andersen also identified a number of "markers" coming up, particularly COP 26 and COP 15, where GACERE ought to be present and vocal, in order to bring circularity at the center stage. She referred to GACERE members as "truly strategic partners", able to push knowledge out, exchange information and enable countries to share their experiences. She concluded her speech by thanking all participants and Canada for hosting the World Circular Economy Forum and inviting them to GACERE's second high-level meeting which will take place next year.




Annex I: Agenda




11:45	Log-on
12:00-12:05	<p>Welcome and housekeeping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator of the event: Mr. Stephan Sicars, Managing Director, Environment and Energy Directorate, UNIDO
12.05-12.15	<p>Opening remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, European Union • Mr. Li Yong, Director General, UNIDO
12.15-12.30	<p>Keynote: Circular economy as a solution to the triple planetary crises and the potential role of GACERE</p> <p><i>To provide high-level remarks about circular economy and resource efficiency and the link to solutions for climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss, and the potential role of GACERE in related multilateral processes.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Janez Potočnik, Co-Chair of the International Resource Panel and Partner of Systemiq
12.30 – 12.50	<p>Discussion 1: Circular Economy and Biodiversity</p> <p><i>To discuss the importance of circular economy to biodiversity, including examples from speakers' countries and organizations.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Beatrice Cyiza, Director General of Environment and Climate Change, Ministry of Environment, Rwanda • Mr. Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, European Union • Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director, UNEP • Mr. Jocelyn Blériot, Executive Lead Institutions, Governments & Cities, Ellen MacArthur Foundation
12.50 – 13.00	<p>Discussion 2: Circular Economy and the Green Recovery</p> <p><i>To discuss the importance of circular economy to the green recovery including examples from speakers' countries and organizations.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Keriako Tobiko, Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Kenya • Ms. Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State for Sustainability and Environment, Singapore • Mr. Jyrki Katainen, President of Sitra (Finnish Innovation Fund)

13.00 – 13.40	<p>Discussion 3: Circular Economy and Climate Change</p> <p><i>To discuss the importance of circular economy to addressing climate change, including examples from speakers' countries and organizations.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Carolina Schmidt, Environment Minister, Chile • Mr. Rameshwar Prasad Gupta, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India • Mr. Shinjiro Koizumi, Minister of Environment, Japan • Mr. Mohamed Beyahia, Vice-Minister of Environment, Morocco • Ms. Jeoung-ae Han, Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea (recorded video-message) • Ms. Stientje van Veldhoven, Vice President and Regional Director, Europe, World Resources Institute, and Board Member, Platform for Accelerating the Circular Economy
13.40 – 13.55	<p>Keynote: Circular Economy and the Future</p> <p><i>To provide an overview of the importance of circular economy to future policy making, innovation, digitalization, finance, etc from an African perspective.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Al-Hamdou Dorsouma, Acting Director for Climate Change & Green Growth, African Development Bank
13.55 – 14.00	<p>Presentation of future plans of GACERE, summary and event close</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director, UNEP

Annex II: Speakers and participants (in order of appearance)

<p>Virginijus Sinkevičius, EU Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries</p> 	<p>Virginijus Sinkevičius is the present Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, at the European Commission. Mr. Sinkevičius was Minister of Economy from 2017 to 2019 and previously led the Committee of Economy at the Parliament of Lithuania. Mr. Sinkevičius was elected to the Parliament in October 2016. Prior, he was a Team Lead for Regulatory Affairs at Invest Lithuania. Mr. Sinkevičius holds a BA in International Relations and Affairs from Aberystwyth University and a master’s degree in European International Affairs from Maastricht University.</p>
<p>LI Yong, Director General, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)</p> 	<p>LI Yong, Director General, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), has had an extensive career as a senior economic and financial policymaker. As Vice-Minister of Finance of the People’s Republic of China and member of the Monetary Policy Committee of the Central Bank for a decade, Mr. LI was involved in setting and harmonizing fiscal, monetary, and industrial policies, and in supporting sound economic growth in China. He pushed forward financial sector reform, and prompted major financial institutions to establish corporate governance, deal with toxic assets and strengthen risk management. Mr. LI gave great importance to fiscal and financial measures in favour of agricultural development and SMEs, the cornerstones for creating economic opportunities, reducing poverty, and promoting gender equality. He played a key role in China’s cooperation with multilateral development organizations, such as the World Bank Group and the Asian Development Bank.</p>
<p>Janez Potočnik, Co-Chair of the International Resource Panel and Partner of SystemIQ</p> 	<p>Janez is co-chair of UNEP International Resource Panel that aims at steering society away from over-consumption, waste and ecological harm to a more prosperous future, and a Partner at SYSTEMIQ, a systems change company that partners with business, finance, policy-makers, and civil society to make economic systems truly sustainable. Janez holds a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia and has held numerous research and leadership positions for the Republic of Slovenia - followed by his appointment as the European Commissioner responsible for Science and Research (2004-2010) and Environment (2010-2014). During his tenure, Janez provided policymakers with the best available science and information to help decouple economic growth from the unsustainable use of natural resources and continues to serve as a special advisor to the current Commissioner for Environment.</p>

<p>Beatrice Cyiza, Director General of Environment and Climate Change, Ministry of Environment, Rwanda</p> 	<p>Beatrice Cyiza is the Director General, Environment and Climate Change at the Ministry of Environment in Rwanda, overseeing the development and dissemination of legal instruments, strategies and programme related to environment protection, climate change and pollution control. Through various positions and trainings, she accumulated vast experience in environment management.</p> <p>Before joining the Ministry of Environment, she worked at Rwanda Institute for Conservation Agriculture as the Administrative Coordinator for Academic Affairs, Extension and Applied Research. Prior to that, she served as an Environmental Audit and Monitoring officer at Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA), as well serving as the Nagoya Protocol Focal point for more than 7 years.</p> <p>As the National focal point for the Nagoya Protocol, she managed different projects aiming at regulating the Access to the genetic resources by drafting different strategies and plans.</p>
<p>Inger Andersen, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)</p> 	<p>Inger Andersen is Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya. Between 2015 and 2019, Ms. Andersen was the Director-General of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Ms. Andersen has more than 30 years of experience in international development economics, environmental sustainability, strategy, and operations. She has led work on a range of issues including agriculture, environmental management, biodiversity conservation, climate change, infrastructure, energy, transport, and water resources management and hydro-diplomacy. Between 1999 and 2014, Ms. Andersen held several leadership positions at the World Bank, including Vice President for the Middle East and North Africa; Vice President for Sustainable Development and Head of the CGIAR Fund Council. Prior to her 15 years at the World Bank, Ms. Andersen worked 12 years at the United Nations, first on drought and desertification, beginning with the UN Sudano-Sahelian Office. In 1992, she was appointed UNDP's Water and Environment Coordinator for the Arab Region. Ms. Andersen holds a Bachelor's from the London Metropolitan University North and a Master's in Development Economics from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.</p>
<p>Joss Blériot, Executive Lead, International Institutions & Governments, Ellen MacArthur Foundation</p> 	<p>Jocelyn Blériot joined Ellen MacArthur in 2007, after 12 years spent in the media and publishing industry.</p> <p>Initially in charge of editorial matters at the Foundation (overseeing content development and messaging), he now fully focuses on leading the organisation's institutional engagement.</p> <p>He notably represents the Foundation at the European Commission and manages the relationship with governments and supra-national bodies such as the United Nations, the G7 Resource Alliance, the OECD, and the World Economic Forum.</p>

<p>Keriako Tobiko, Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Kenya</p> 	<p>Mr. Keriako Tobiko is the Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. He was appointed by H.E the President to replace Prof. Judi Wakhungu in the last cabinet reshuffle that was done in January 2018. Before his appointment, Tobiko was the Director of Public Prosecutions, the first holder of the office under the Constitution of Kenya 2010 having been first appointed in 2005.</p> <p>He was re-designated as the Chief Public Prosecutor in August 2010 and appointed to head the independent constitutional office in June 2011. He is an advocate of the High Court of Kenya and formerly a lecturer at the University of Nairobi.</p> <p>Mr. Tobiko is an alumnus of the University of Nairobi and Cambridge University. He is the winner of Gadhi Smarak Award for Best “A” Level student 1984 (Kenya), Barclays Cambridge Commonwealth Scholarship, 1990 for Kenya and Pegasus Cambridge Scholarship, 1990 as well as Fellow of Cambridge Commonwealth Society (FCCS).</p>
<p>Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State for Sustainability and Environment, Singapore</p> 	<p>Dr Amy Khor is currently Singapore’s Senior Minister of State for Sustainability and the Environment. She is also concurrently the Senior Minister of State for Transport.</p> <p>Prior to her current appointments, Dr Khor was Senior Minister of State for Health from September 2013 to July 2020. She was also the Senior Minister of State for Manpower from September 2013 to September 2015. Her previous appointments in the Singapore Government include Senior Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources from May 2006 to Oct 2010 and subsequently, the Minister of State for Environment and Water Resources from Nov 2010 to May 2011. Dr. Khor was also the Mayor of Southwest District in Singapore from Aug 2004 to May 2014. Dr. Khor was first elected as a Member of Parliament in the 2001 General Elections and was re-elected for a fourth term as a Member of Parliament in the 2015 General Elections. She holds a PhD in Land Management from the University of Reading, UK.</p>
<p>Jyrki Katainen, President of Sitra (Finnish Innovation Fund)</p> 	<p>Jyrki Katainen is President of Sitra. His main objective is to lead the future-oriented work at Sitra in such a way that Sitra will be able to generate new ideas to aid decision-makers in society and private companies, and to try and test new operating models. Jyrki wants Sitra’s ideas to reach a wider international audience since many of the phenomena that Sitra studies are not national but global. He has a special interest in transforming the market economy so that it complies with the principles of circular economy and sustainability. Katainen also wants Sitra to stimulate debate concerning the forces that will shape our future.</p> <p>Katainen’s career has been focused on analysing change in society, searching for solutions and making decisions. Before his appointment as President of Sitra, Katainen was European Commission Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness. Prior to that, he has held the positions of Prime Minister of Finland and Finance Minister. During his 15 years as a Member of the Finnish Parliament he was Chair of the Committee for the Future, among other appointments.</p>

<p>Carolina Schmidt, Environment Minister, Chile</p> 	<p>Ms. Schmidt holds a business administration degree from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile.</p> <p>She served as SERNAM (National Women's Service) Minister and Education Minister during the first government of Sebastián Piñera. As Sernam Minister, she introduced 6-month post-natal maternity leave, the femicide law and the shared parenting law. As Education Minister, Ms Schmidt accelerated the constitutional reform that created universal and free access to preschool education for children from age 2, and established kindergarten as mandatory.</p> <p>She has served as a director and CEO of various companies. Prior to her appointment as minister, she was the General Media Manager for the Copesa group, and director of the Santiago Municipal Theater, advisor at the Center for Public Policy of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile and advisor to Comunidad Mujer, a nonprofit that addresses leadership, training and mentoring for women.</p>
<p>Rameshwar Prasad Gupta, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India</p> 	<p>Mr. R. P. Gupta is an IAS Officer of the 1987 Batch of Gujarat cadre. He holds a Bachelor of Technology from IIT, Kanpur in Aeronautical Engineering. He has taken over charge as Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change on 1st June 2020. Prior to this, between 2017 and May 2020, he worked at NITI Aayog as Special Secretary and Additional Secretary, dealing with the subjects of Energy, Transport, Health, Education and Rural & Urban Development. Earlier, he held the position of Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Coal.</p> <p>Throughout his career in the energy, education and land record sectors, his policy-making approach was always focused in streamlining and introducing modern technology into public services, in order to make them more responsive to public needs. In the field of education, he introduced a completely transparent computerized system of teachers' recruitment enabling the State to recruit tens of thousands of teachers purely on merit in a short period of one month.</p>
<p>Shinjiro Koizumi, Minister of Environment, Japan</p> 	<p>Mr. Koizumi Shinjiro has been the member of the House of Representatives in Japan since 2009, having represented Yokosuka and Miura City in Kanagawa Prefecture. Being born and raised in Yokosuka, surrounded by the seas of beautiful Tokyo Bay and Sagami Bay, he has increased concerns about marine pollution. Since September 2019, he has served as the Minister of the Environment. He belongs to the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and holds various senior positions at LDP such as the Director of the Youth Division, the Director of the Agriculture and Forestry Division, Chief Deputy Secretary-General and the Director of the Health, Labor and Welfare Division. He also served as Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Cabinet Office and Parliamentary Vice- Minister for Reconstruction. He earned a bachelor's degree in Economics at Kanto Gakuin University, in Japan in 2004, and a master's degree in Political Science at Columbia University, in the United States in 2006.</p>

<p>Mohamed Beyahia, Vice-Minister of Environment, Morocco</p> 	<p>Mr. Beyahia is the holder of a Doctorate in Ecotoxicology, from the Ecological Research Center of the University of Metz, France, in 1991; and a DEA in Environmental Toxicology, from the European Institute of Ecology (Metz, France).</p> <p>Former teacher-researcher at the University of Metz, France (1986-1992), he began his administrative career at the Under-Secretariat of State for the Minister of the Interior in charge of the Environment in 1993, and successively held the positions of Head of the Planning and Project Monitoring Division at the Ministry of the Environment (1996-1999); then Head of the Partnership Division at the Ministry of Regional Planning, Environment, Town Planning and Housing (2000-2004). After a stint in the cabinet of the Minister of Territorial Planning, Water and Environment (2005-2006) as Research Officer; and Sustainable Development Advisor to the Mohammed VI Foundation for the Protection of the Environment; he was appointed Director of Partnership, Communication and Cooperation at the Ministry in charge of the Environment (July 2008-September 2017).</p> <p>In 2015, he was appointed Chief Negotiator of the Moroccan Delegation to the COP 21 on climate held in Paris; then in 2016, member of the Steering Committee of COP 22 in Marrakech, in charge of the Side-Events Pole. Since September 2017, he has been Secretary General of the Department of the Environment.</p>
<p>Jeoung-ae Han, Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea</p> 	<p>Ms. Han holds a Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering from the University of Nottingham in the UK and a Master's Degree in Environmental Engineering from Pusan National University. Having started her career as Chair and Vice-Chair of different Trade Unions in Korea (2005-2011), she became a member of the National Assembly in 2012. Since then, she held different positions in the National Assembly, such as Co-Chair of the National Assembly Forum on Climate Change, Assistant Administrator for the Committee of Environment and Labor, and Chair for the Policy Committee of the Democratic Party in 2020.</p> <p>Since 2021, she is the Minister of Environment of Korea.</p>
<p>Stientje van Veldhoven, Vice President and Regional Director, Europe, World Resources Institute, and Board Member, Platform for Accelerating the Circular Economy</p> 	<p>Stientje van Veldhoven is the Vice President and Regional Director for Europe and is based in the Europe Regional Office in The Hague. Stientje has been a prominent politician in the Netherlands, most recently serving as a Member of Cabinet responsible for Public Transport and Environment and as Minister for the Environment and Housing.</p> <p>She has also been a Member of Parliament, an international diplomat, representing the Dutch government in the European Union in Brussels and has been working with the European Commission DG research and development. Stientje has had longstanding involvement in environmental issues, especially related to climate change, energy and the circular economy. Stientje is based in the Europe Regional Office in The Hague.</p>

Al-Hamdou Dorsouma, Acting Director for Climate Change & Green Growth, African Development Bank



Mr. Al-Hamdou Dorsouma works as Manager for Climate and Green Growth Division within the African Development Bank. He is responsible for managing a team of Climate Change and Growth Officers and leading Bank's efforts on climate change in Africa, including building climate resilience and low carbon opportunities into Bank's investments, and supporting Bank's engagement on climate resilience and green growth.

His academic background is in Geography and Environmental Management.

Recently, Mr. Dorsouma worked as the Officer-In Charge of the Bank's Climate Finance Division, leading Bank's climate finance initiatives, including the Green Climate Fund, the Global Environment Facility and the Climate Investment Funds, among others.