

# Joint UNECE/OECD Guidelines for Measuring Circular Economy

Some short expert reflections on BioTrade



# CES Task Force on Measuring Circular Economy



## The Task Force

- Established by CES Bureau in February 2021
- Experts from Finland (Chair), Austria, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, India, Italy, Netherlands Sweden; EEA, Eurostat, IMF, OECD, PACE, UNECE/FAO, UNEP, UNITAR, UNSD, WRI

## Main Objective according to ToR

### **Draft practical guidelines for measuring circular economy, including**

- a) Definition of the measurement scope;
- b) Clarification of key terms and definitions;
- c) Identifying key statistics and indicators needed from the policy point of view;
- d) Identifying data sources for measuring circular economy, with particular attention on SEEA and FDES;
- e) Describing the required institutional collaboration.

# Headline Definition of a Circular Economy



*“Materials” are understood to include natural resources and the materials and products derived therefrom (i.e. materials at all points throughout their life-cycles).”*

*A circular economy is an economy where:*

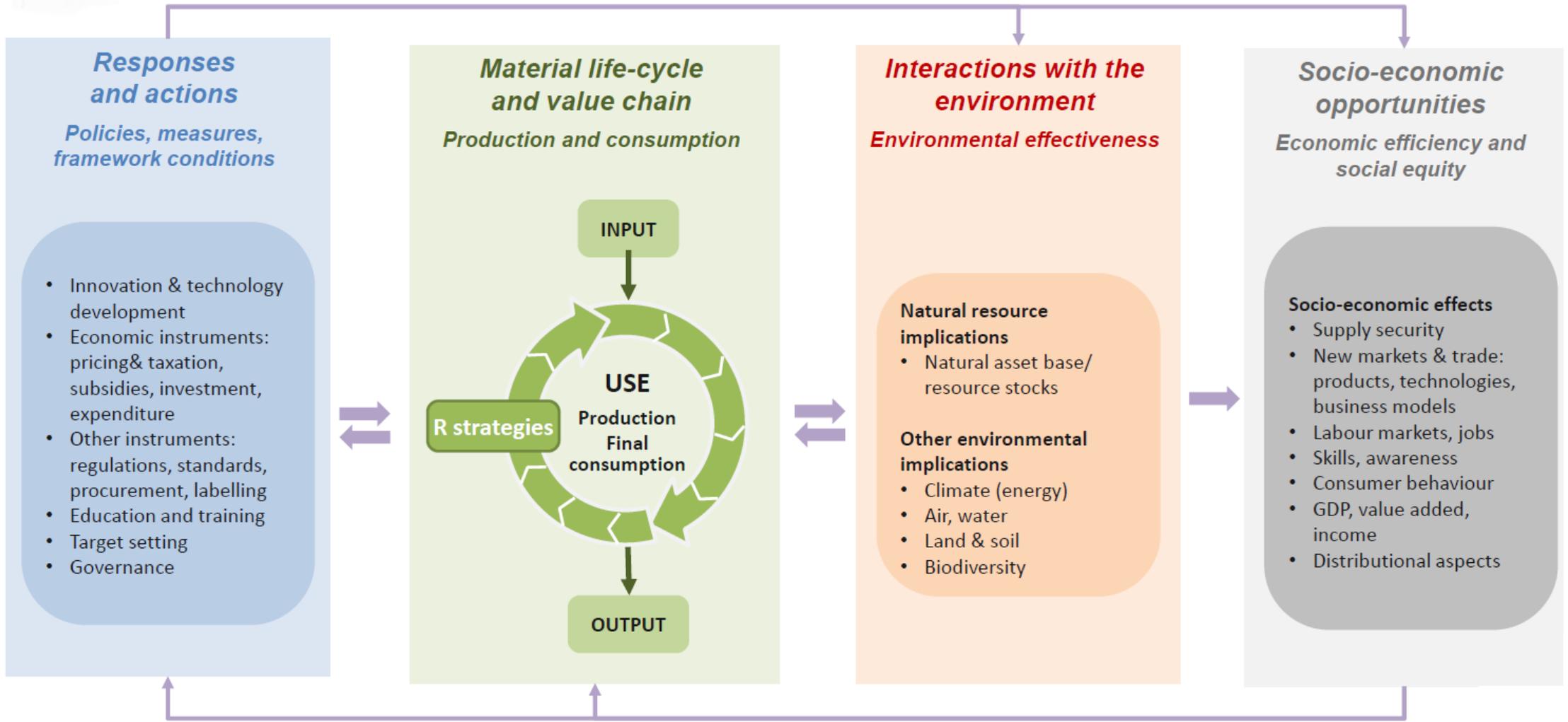
- the value of materials in the economy is maximised and maintained for as long as possible;*
- the input of materials and their consumption is minimised; and*
- the generation of waste is prevented and negative environmental impacts reduced throughout the life-cycle of materials.*

*The “value of materials in the economy” is understood to encompass the value for society as a whole taking into account economic efficiency, environmental effectiveness and social equity. Maintaining the value for as long as possible links to circularity mechanisms.*

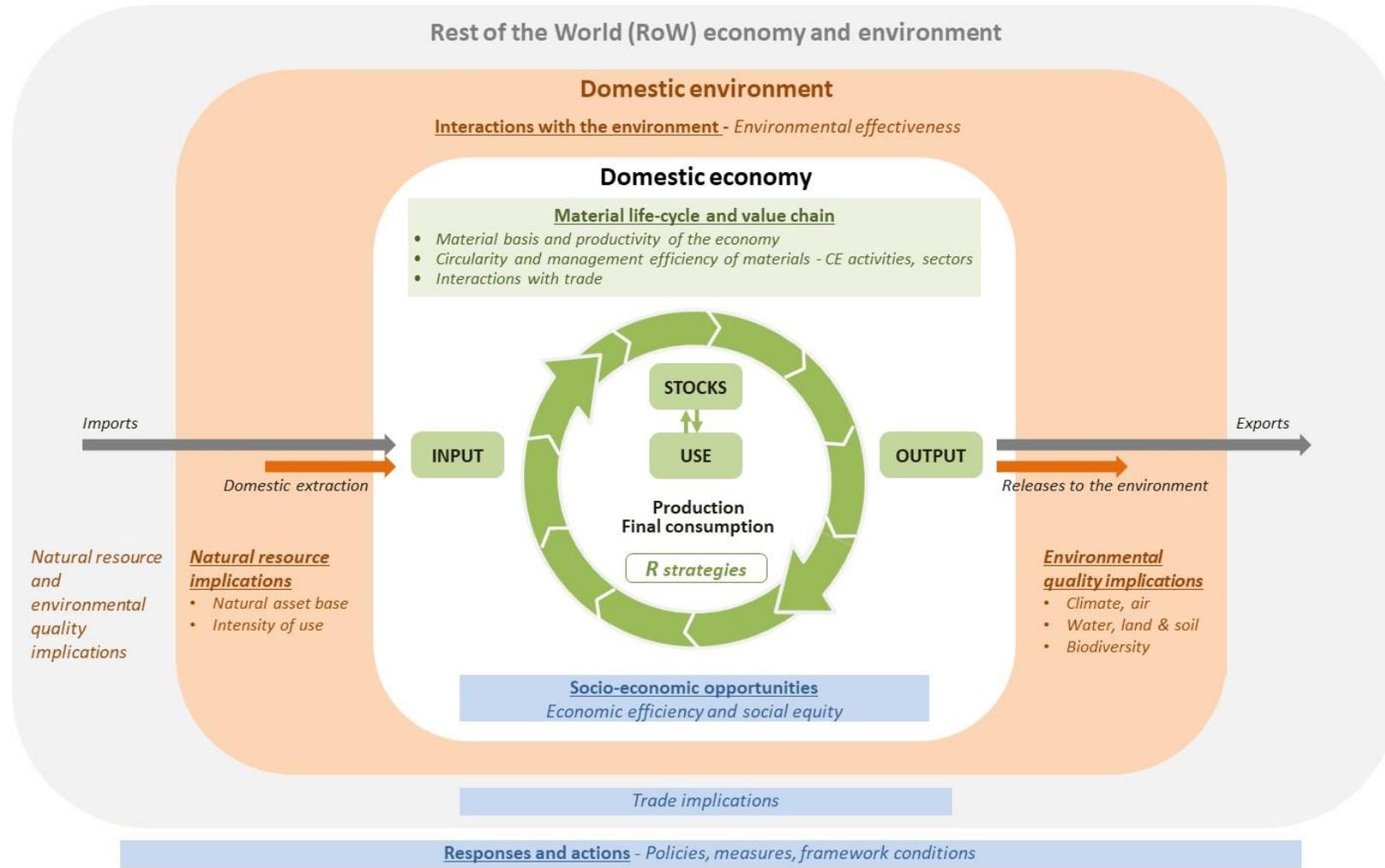
*Minimising the input of materials and their consumption contains a quantitative and a qualitative dimension. Links to the preservation of natural assets, to resource efficiency, to environmental quality*

*The “life-cycle of materials” is understood to include all phases of the material cycle such as extraction, transportation, product design, manufacture, final consumption/use, reuse, end-of-life, recovery and final disposal, as well as the associated waste management activities and R strategies. Reference to the “life-cycle” reflects waste prevention at all stages (importance of higher level Rs) and all associated environmental impacts*

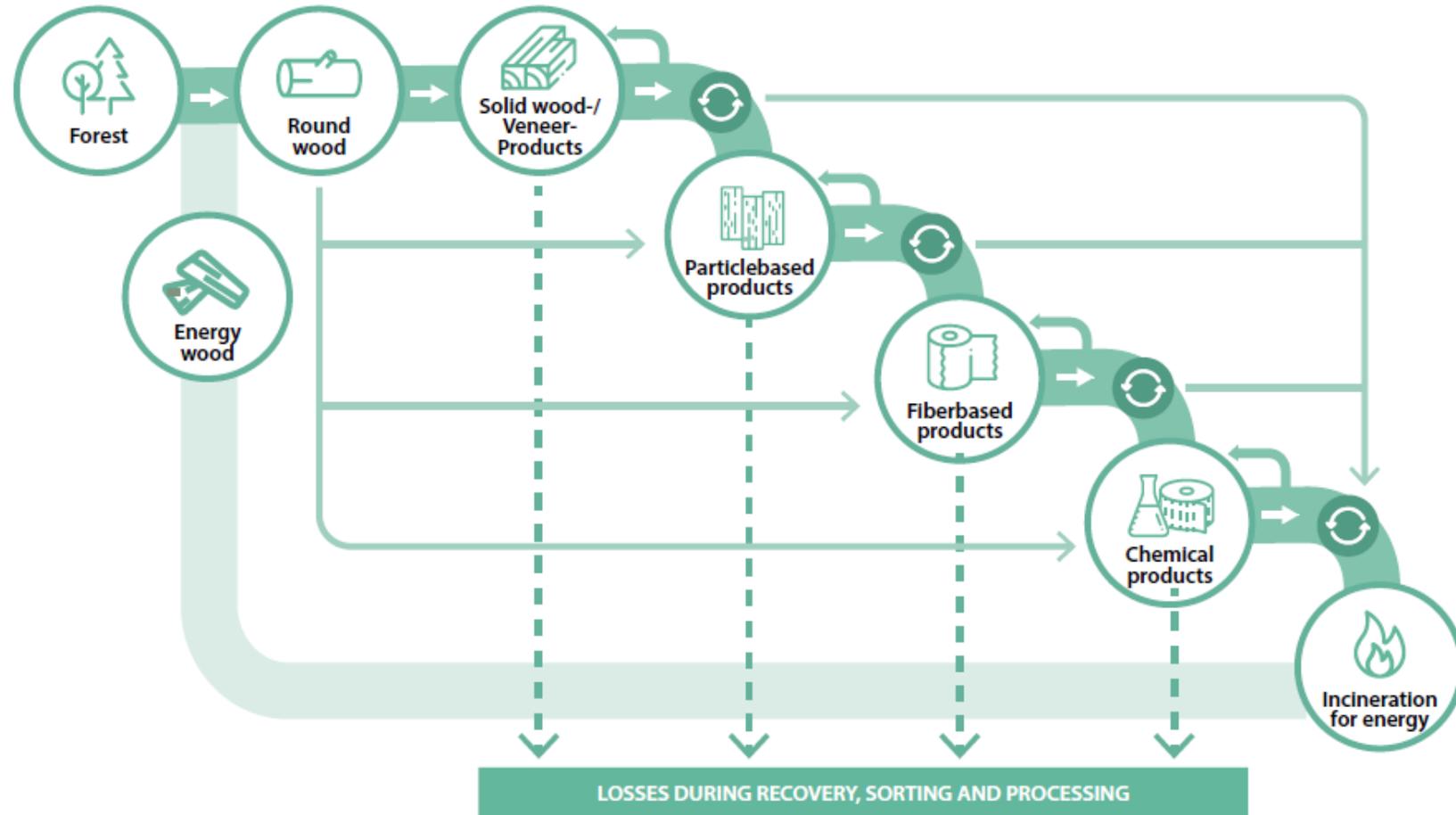
# Conceptual monitoring framework: Building blocks



# Measurement considerations: Grounded on SEEA-CF



# Cascading use of biomaterials



Source: UNECE/FAO, adapted from Höglmeier et al., 2015.

# Some questions/issues



- ❑ *Can we conceptually link BioTrade with Circular Economy?*
- ❑ *What makes BioTrade different from Circular Economy, or what makes it so special? How can we link it conceptually? Is the „ecosystem approach“ addressed by the objective of a CE to „reduce negative environmental impacts“?*
- ❑ *What is the conceptual scope, and what is the measurement scope? What about biowastes? What is “waste” for the holder of the material can have value for another user.*
- ❑ *Lots of questions related to nomenclature and semantics: What are biomaterials versus biological materials, biodiversity-based goods and biological resources? How does this all relate to organic waste, food waste, sewage sludge etc?*
- ❑ *We need to connect the dots and align activities: Related work streams at UNCTAD, UNECE, OECD, WTO, WCO, UNEP, FAO etc.*