



Embedding the bioeconomy into national circular economy plans

Side-event to the World Circular Economy Forum 2025

[Registration Link \(mandatory\)](#)

Date: 12 May 2025

Time: 14:00 – 17:00

Venue: Sala da Congregação, [FEA-USP](#), São Paulo, Brazil

Language: English only

Organizers: UNCTAD, Chatham House

Partners: OECD, UNIDO, University of São Paulo, University of Brasília, SMEP

Programme, Instituto 17, Ellen MacArthur Foundation

Background

As of 2025, more than 86 circular economy roadmaps have been adopted across 62 countries. In many of these, organic materials offer immediate potential for value addition due to their close links with both rural and urban economic structures. This is especially true in developing countries, where agriculture plays a central role and organic residues make up a significant portion of municipal solid waste.

However, practical progress in unlocking the value and circularity potential of organic materials has often lagged behind advances in other material sectors such as plastics, minerals, batteries, and e-waste. Organic materials continue to be produced, used, and disposed of largely in a linear fashion, connecting agricultural production to urban consumption and ending in landfills. This linear system overlooks valuable opportunities for value creation and resource efficiency.

As part of the broader bioeconomy, organic materials are inherently renewable and, in principle, can replace fossil fuels, chemicals, and synthetic materials across all sectors. Yet, relying solely on the bioeconomy to provide renewable alternatives, especially when weighed against current consumption levels, can place significant pressure on land use, potentially harming biodiversity and the environment. Integrating circular practices into the management of organic materials through what is increasingly referred to as a circular bioeconomy can help mitigate these pressures by harnessing currently overlooked material streams.

To date, circularity efforts in organic sectors have often been fragmented, targeting specific areas such as biofuels or organic agriculture in isolation. Most regions still lack comprehensive strategies that generate value across the entire value chain of organic materials, including food, fibre, feed, biochemicals, energy, and carbon sequestration. As a result, significant opportunities remain untapped.

This event aims to bridge these gaps by showcasing experiences from the field, particularly from grantees of the [UK-UNCTAD Sustainable Manufacturing and Environmental Pollution \(SMEP\)](#) Programme in West and East Africa. These projects are piloting and scaling up innovative ways to add value to organic residues, turning them into diverse products such as insect protein (black soldier fly larvae), textile fibres, organic alternatives to plastic mulch in agriculture, and biogas. These proven sectors present immediate opportunities for market growth and international trade, and also highlight the potential of South-South cooperation, investment, and technology transfer.

Recognizing that business and trade must be supported by robust policies to thrive, the event will also feature a policy-focused session. This will explore the regulatory instruments countries are using in their national circular economy legislation to shift from landfilling to value-added practices, and to create an enabling environment for circularity in organic material flows.

14:00 Opening

Dr. Maria Dolores Montoya Diaz, Dean, Faculty of Economics, Business and Accounting, University of São Paulo

Dr. Henrique Pacini, Economic Affairs Officer and SMEP Lead, UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

Dr. Patrick Schröder, Senior Research Fellow, Environment and Society Programme, Chatham House

14:15 Session 1: From practice to policy: South-South exchange on deriving value from organic streams

Moderator: **Dr. Henrique Pacini, UNCTAD**

- **Mr. Andrew Wallace**, Co-Founder and CEO, Chanzi (Kenya & Tanzania)
 - Turning organic waste into protein and biochar
- **Mr. Dominic Wanjihia**, CEO, Biogas International (Kenya)
 - Biogas from aquaculture/tilapia waste
- **Mr James Boyd-Moss**, Founder, Mananasi Fibre Ltd (Kenya)
 - Textile fibres from pineapple leaves / agriwaste
- **Dr. Ebenezer Laryea**, Director, FRESHPPACT (Ghana)
 - Plastic mulch film substitution in agriculture by organic alternatives

Reflections by **Dr. Alessandro Sanches Pereira**, Director, Instituto 17 | Member, UN Council of Engineers for the Energy Transition (CEET) and IPCC Author

Q&A

15:30 Coffee break

15:45 Session 2: Enabling policy to leverage value from organic cycle

Moderator: Dr. Alexandre Strapasson, Senior Lecturer and Head of Earth Futures Lab, University of Brasilia and Honorary Lecturer, Centre for Environmental Policy (CEP), Imperial College London

- **Dr. Patrick Schröder, Chatham House**, Chatham House
 - Aligning national bioeconomy and circular economy strategies
- **Ms. Katarina Svatikova**, Policy Analyst, OECD Environment Directorate
 - Circular bioeconomy policies: experience from Europe
- **Dr. Guilherme Feliciano (tbc)**, Counselor, National Council of Justice (CNJ)
 - The role of the judiciary in supporting and enabling municipalities to derive value from organic residues
- **Mr. Pedro Prata**, Policy and Institutions Manager for Latin America, Ellen MacArthur Foundation
 - Beyond waste management: Policies that induce regenerative solutions, designing waste out of the system.

Q&A & Reflections from practitioners

17:00 Event closure followed by light reception