



SUSTAINABLE
INCLUSIVE BUSINESS



Circular Economy Africa

TheRockGroup

the 7th

ANNUAL CIRCULAR ECONOMY CONFERENCE

REPORT

Underlining collective global,
regional and national efforts in the
transition to a circular economy.

2022



Funded by
the European Union



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
THE PLENARY SESSION	4
CIRCULAR ECONOMY TRAILBLAZERS	4
Waremba Wasanii	4
Artisan Fashion	5
InsectiPro	5
Mr Green Africa	6
Tambuzi	6
THE VISION OF A CIRCULAR ECONOMY	7
Vision Speakers	7
REGIONAL CIRCULAR ECONOMY FORECAST	11
CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS	12
Workshop 1: Opportunities for Circular Agriculture	13
Workshop 2: Water is a Sensitive Topic	18
Workshop 3: Access to Digital is Key for Africa's Development	21
Workshop 4: Sustainable and Ethical Textiles and Fashion	23
Workshop 5: Plastic Packaging Needs to Get Unpacked	26
Workshop 6: Renewable Energy and Alternative Service Models	28
Public-Private Action for a Circular Economy in Kenya	30
CONFERENCE PARTNERS	35



INTRODUCTION

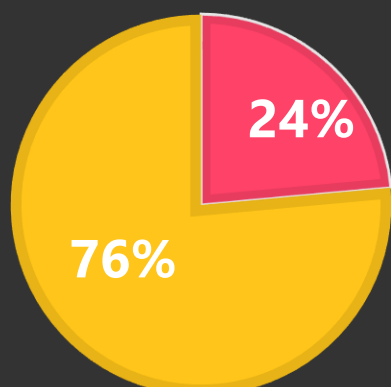
On the 26th of October 2022, Sustainable Inclusive Business (SIB-K), a knowledge centre under the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), partnered with TheRockGroup (TRG) and the European Union to co-host the **7th Annual Circular Economy Conference** in Nairobi.



Participants of the 7th Circular Economy Conference at the Norfolk in Nairobi

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

■ Physical Participants ■ Virtual Participants



The conference, which took place ahead of COP27, brought together governments, private sector players, bilateral partners, civil societies, academia, and individuals from across Africa and internationally, to provide an understanding of key ingredients in a successful roadmap to a circular economy.

It highlighted the challenges, trends, and opportunities in Southern and East Africa in creating a new circular system.

With an audience of over 500 participants, the hybrid conference was **financially supported by the European Union (EU) in Kenya** and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) through its BIODEV2030 project.

THE PLENARY SESSION

The situation on the planet is alarming. We are facing a triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. The three crises are deeply interlinked and cause a great challenge to humanity, even as the world battles with pandemics, war, and economic slowdowns.

2022 is, therefore, underlining collective global, regional and national efforts in the transition to a circular economy.

Hence, the conference's plenary session was articulated around shared stories that set the scene for a sustainable future.



[Watch the Plenary Session](#)

CIRCULAR ECONOMY TRAILBLAZERS

Despite the rising global challenges, Africa is making progress in creating innovative and determined initiatives to create a fully circular economy to deal with the pangs of climate change.

It is for this reason that during the conference, artists were engaged in shaping a new reality for sustainable development, success stories were showcased, and visions from policymakers, civil society and the private sector were shared, in speeding up the transition to a circular economy in East and South Africa.

These are some of the trailblazers who are setting the scene for a circular economy in Kenya and the region.

WAREMBO WASANII



[Watch the Fashion Runway](#)

Waremba Wasanii is a community-based organization of female artists founded by Joan Otieno. It empowers women and girls through Art with recycled materials.

ARTISAN FASHION

"The only way to support communities is to provide the transformation from Within. In an aim to create social impact while at the same time reducing the environmental footprint, Artisan Fashion started a journey towards circularity. We are now increasingly involved in the early stages of collaborations with partners, from design to merchandising, to suggest and offer tailor-made circular solutions,"



Ludovica D'Andria,
Head of Strategy
at Artisan Fashion,
Nairobi.



Watch

[Ludovica's Remarks](#)

Artisan Fashion is the first social enterprise created by the UN's Ethical Fashion Initiative in Sub-Saharan Africa. It specializes in the production of jewellery, homeware, bags and accessories. Its mission is to connect Africa's artisans to esteemed luxury brands all over the world while allowing clients and their customers to improve, trace and report on the lives of those involved in their production.

INSECTIPRO

"We use local organic waste streams as an input for the production process and are starting up similar plants in other regions in Kenya and Uganda. We also facilitate smallholder farmers to set up their small-scale production sites of black soldier flies. We must think big and produce locally."



Talash Huijbers -
Founder and C.E.O
of InsectiPro.



Watch

[Talash's Remarks](#)

Insectipro is a start-up based in Limuru, Kenya that dedicates itself to creating "sustainable, nutritious and profitable systems, that will positively change the current food and value chains". Their solution: insects! Where we see annoying bugs, InsectiPro shows us that insects can be a sustainable solution to the increasing demand for animal proteins, with the help of the Black Soldier Flies (BSF).

MR GREEN AFRICA

"Circular Economy is very possible. The exciting part is that at Mr Green, we're not only closing the loop but are also providing sustainable jobs from what we know as waste"



Sonia Orwa,
General Manager,
Mr Green Africa.



Watch

[Sonia's Remarks](#)

Mr Green Africa is a plastic waste management company in Kenya trading recyclable materials while achieving tangible social and environmental impact. Over the past years, Mr Green has built a tech-enabled platform, that manages and aggregates plastic waste from the streets to a high-quality, food-grade PCR. This has enabled their customers to remove over 4,600 metric tons of plastic waste to date. Mr Green has also included over 2,000 waste pickers in their network, earning fair, transparent and predictable income from the buy-back centres and other collection channels that collect between 50-80 metric tons of plastic waste each week.

TAMBUZI

"The flower industry has a lot of benefits but also contributes greatly to carbon emissions. Instead of pointing fingers, we must collectively take necessary action to go circular".



Maggie Hobbs -
Director, Tambuzi



Watch

[Maggie's Remarks](#)

Tambuzi is a flower farm in Kenya driven by a strong belief to minimize the negative environmental impact and maximize the positive environmental actions to become environmentally and financially sustainable. The strap line 'stop and smell the roses' sends a simple message – be always mindful of what you do and enjoy it.

THE VISION OF A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

A circular economy aims to change the paradigm of the take-make-waste model by reducing the environmental impact, keeping resources in use, and increasing efficiency at all stages of the product economy. To achieve this, public-private-community partnerships are key, as they enable the merging of insights around industry and people's needs and policy developments. Furthermore, the conference took place ahead of the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP 27, which took place from 6th to 18th November 2022 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt – Africa.

Themed 'Together for Implementation', COP27 accentuated the implementation of the National Determined Contributions and the Paris Agreement. It focused on Africa, in line with the fact that African countries are exposed to some of the most severe impacts of climate change despite being the least contributor to greenhouse gas emissions.

Africa, therefore, has an opportunity to transform its economy into a circular, sustainable and ethical business environment and create jobs, boost MSMEs, and improve gender equality.

Governments, civil society, the private sector, and other institutions play a crucial enabling role in shaping and supporting this transition. Different speakers at the Circular Economy Conference shared their visions of what a circular economy looks like.

VISION SPEAKERS



MS KATRIN HAGEMANN from the European Union Delegation to Kenya

“The transition to a circular economy will be essential in reaching the goals of COP27. Kenya is increasingly exploring opportunities and challenges that COP27 will bring, especially to the private sector. We will together explore the global, regional and national efforts towards a circular economy in Kenya, showcase pioneering ideas, share global visions and see their local applications and impact,” she said while emphasizing the EU's support towards Kenya's ambitious public-private action in promoting a sustainable economy through the EU Green Deal.

”



[Watch Katrin's Remarks](#)



DR AYUB MACHARIA, Director of Environmental Education at the Ministry of Environment and Forestry

“We are contributing to the global triple crisis rapidly due to degrading, wasteful, and polluting linear economy and this threatens our economic and human well-being. We must increasingly strive for resilient growth, and a circular economy can create numerous new opportunities. Circular supply chains, repair, reuse and recycling of products can sustain local jobs at all skill levels, assure social integration and a higher gross domestic product.” He was representing Dr Chris Kiptoo CBS, Principal Secretary of the National Treasury and immediate former PS of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry.



[Watch Dr Ayub's Remarks](#)



KARIN BOOMSMA, Director of Sustainable Inclusive Business Kenya

“Am convinced that Africa is more than capable of changing the story on climate change, and that's why we convened the Circular Economy Conference.

But to do so, there is an urgency to translate conversations and commitments at both the COP27 in Egypt and the Circular Economy Conference in Nairobi, into real transformation.

The private and public sectors must collectively implement solutions that help address climate and biodiversity challenges.”



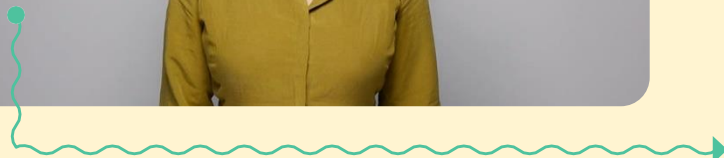
[Watch Karin's Remarks](#)



ELFRIEKE VAN GALEN, TheRockGroup Founder



There is a clear role model: Nature. In nature, no material is 'lost' as it is always part of another cycle. When striving for circularity, we need to adopt a holistic lens, where we look at organisational aspects, social challenges such as inequality, challenges in the value chain and the opportunities for new business models. We need to design a new system: We know how fast our resources deplete: Circular economy is not a choice, it's an essential direction to take for business."



JULIANI, Hip-hop Artist and Sustainable Inclusive Business Kenya Ambassador

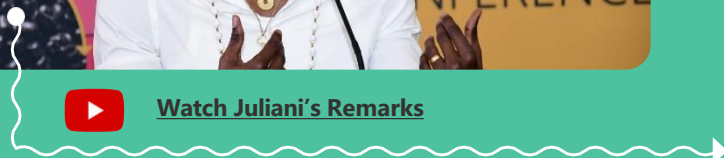


"Through Hip-hop City and Takabank, we hope to create employment for approximately 10,000 people, using the waste-to-value concept.

Over the years I have learnt that our actions have impacts on our value chains, bottom line and lifestyles, and therefore, sustainability must be in harmony with everything."



[Watch Juliani's Remarks](#)



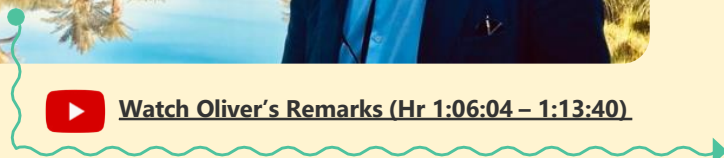
MR. OLIVIER VANDEN EYNDE, Founder & CEO, Close The Gap



All kinds of start-ups in our ecosystem are working on solutions where technology and circular economy go hand in hand, and there's enormous potential in the development of grassroots entrepreneurship. In Kenya for instance, we see opportunities in areas like smallholder farming where we provide Agri-tech solutions to make agriculture more circular and equitable in terms of enabling livelihoods. The circular economy is about co-creation at all levels, and we can use learnings from one another to create better investments and inspire other African communities to join the movement and create a bigger impact."



[Watch Oliver's Remarks \(Hr 1:06:04 – 1:13:40\)](#)





CHARLES KARANGWA, IUCN's Regional Head, Land Systems and Country Representative, Kenya

”

“While much has been discussed on the environmental or social benefits of nature-based solutions (NbS), less attention has been paid to their economic potential and their role in contributing towards more sustainable and just societies. NbS offer an innovative tool in a new circular economy model. NbS take various forms, including green and blue infrastructure initiatives like forest and wetland restoration, regenerative agriculture, agroforestry, and urban forestry. By combining the ‘grey’ (built) solutions with ‘green’ hybrid initiatives, NbS can facilitate a transition to a circular economy that can support the sustainable management of the environment with a reduced carbon footprint.”

”



AKSHAY SHAH - Group Executive Director, SilAfrica & Chair, Kenya Producer Responsibility Organization (KEPRO)

”

“There is a lot of blame that goes around plastic packaging because of the nature at which it has been carelessly disposed of into the environment. We must, therefore, re-think the material, and how we can redesign for circularity. We have an opportunity to reform the value chain, by using more recovered, renewable and recycled material, as well as designing for reuse and reducing the amount of plastic that goes to the environment and eventually what is recycled by encouraging refill, reuse, return and so on. This may seem like a lot of work, but if it falls under both the legal and voluntary frameworks of the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Regulations, then as a country, we will continue leading towards the achievement of a circular economy at scale. One organisation can't do it alone, so we must move together in harmony. In the end, doing good is good for business.”

”



Watch Akshay's Remarks (Min 54:35 - 1:05:45)

PLENARY PANEL DISCUSSION: REGIONAL CIRCULAR ECONOMY FORECAST

Africa, and notably Kenya, is at a crossroads.

On the one hand, most people still have a close connection to the nature-based economy in their farms and home villages; many can see the effects of climate change, and also how long-term strategies can render increased sales and exports.

Proper waste management and access to green energy become top priorities to protect the environment and offer new business strategies.

On the other hand, in a harsh economic environment, is it easy to go for short-term gains, disregarding sustainability aspects.

As previously mentioned, governments, and other institutions – including the private sector – play a crucial enabling role in shaping and supporting the transition to a circular economy, in line with the African Union Agenda 2063, the SDGs, and the commitments to reduce carbon emissions expressed in the Paris agreement.

In partnership with the European Union in Kenya, this session was presented in the form of a panel discussion comprising key policymakers to provide insights into their focus programs. It explored ways we can translate a green, sustainable, inclusive and circular global vision to local impacts and actions. It also shone a light on the impacts of public and private partnerships, merging insights around industry needs and policy developments. The session was moderated by Sustainability & EU policy Expert at TheRockGroup, [Sarah Gane](#), and [Karin Boomsma](#).



[Watch the Panel Discussion \(Hr 01:13:41 – 02:03:00\)](#)



CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

The hybrid conference featured a collection of workshops with sector-specific discussions including the opportunities around regenerative agriculture, water and sanitation, the nexus between digital and green, sustainable and ethical textile and fashion, plastic packaging, renewable energy and alternative service models. The sessions deep-dived into the status and trends of what is occurring in the region and what a sustainable inclusive and circular economy could look like in the next five years.

Plastics



Rethinking Plastic choices – how to make the EPR work

1

Fashion



Slowing down Fast fashion and Africa's growing role.

2

Food



The new destination for Organic waste

3

Digital Revolution



How the Digital Revolution can change the story

4

Water



Water – from harvest, efficiency to wastewater treatment; less is more

5

Renewable Energy



New legislations, innovations & investments.

6



By adopting increasingly circular, regenerative, and inclusive farming practices, Kenya has shown great potential to make its second-largest industry more sustainable overall.

For instance, circular agriculture is enabling Kenya to mitigate climate change, elevate its food quality and improve food security. This workshop illustrated the opportunities for circular agriculture in Kenya and farming trends that have been identified as indicative of the transition to circular agriculture in the region.

The session was moderated by SIB-K's Project Director, [Karin Boomsma](#).

The panellists included:

- [Elfrieke van Galen](#), Partner at TheRockGroup;
- [Charles Karangwa](#), IUCN's Regional Head, Land Systems and Country Representative, Kenya;
- [Tei Mukunya Oundo](#), the Co-Founder and Executive Director of NatureLock;
- [Talash Huijbers](#), the Founder and CEO of InsectiPro;
- [Peter Van Leent](#), the Sustainability Manager at Biobest Group;
- [Claire Van Enk](#), Founder of Farm to Feed;
- Jos Reinhoudt, a Sustainability Consultant from the Netherlands.



[Watch the Full Session](#)





Trends in Circular Agriculture

In her opening remarks, the Director of Sustainable Inclusive Business Kenya (SIB-K), the Knowledge Center under the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) Karin Boomsma noted that smart agriculture, regenerative agriculture, climate adaptation, and circular agriculture are key facets that should be embraced to achieve sustainability in agriculture.

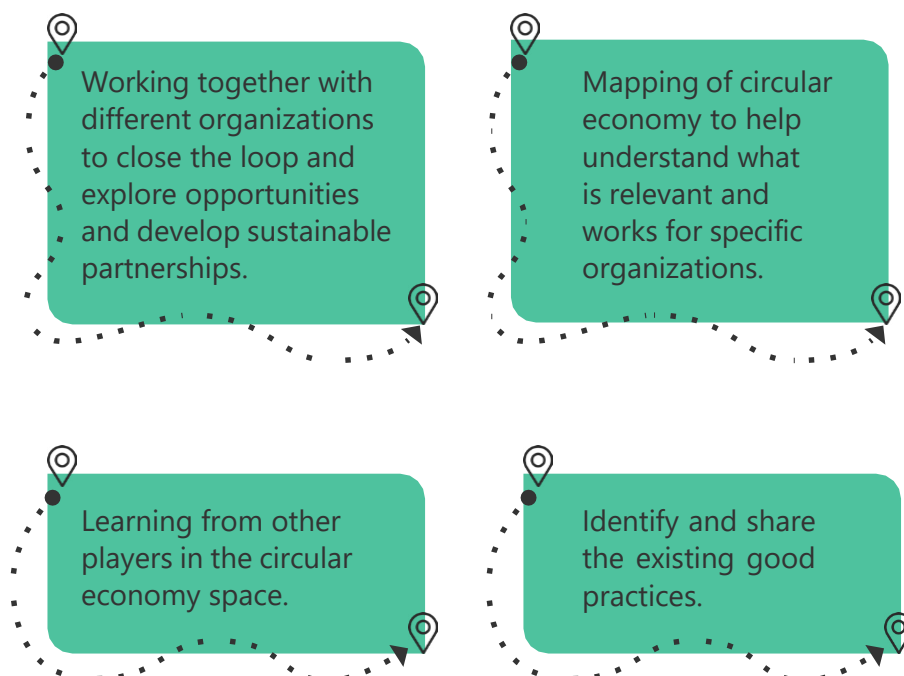
She continued to highlight the trends in the circular economy agriculture report dubbed 'Kenya and Netherlands working together towards circular agriculture in Kenya', a report produced by SIB-K and commissioned by the Netherlands Embassy in Kenya. She stated that it's time to work in harmony with nature, rather than trying to balance the three sustainability Ps.



Adopting Circular Models

In her presentation Ms Elfrieke van Galen- Partner, TheRockGroup noted that agriculture is closely related to nature and without the adoption of circular models, continuous depletion of soil is unsustainable.

Africa is at the forefront of embracing circular agriculture models, and the ways through which this can be achieved are:



While highlighting two examples from Spain and Egypt, she noted that the Regenerative Academy program in Spain focuses on the training of young parables in circular economy agriculture and has created many job opportunities for the youth. SEKEM.COM, a desert greening program, continues to actively promote holistic and sustainable development in Egypt a country with only 5% green cover, she noted.

In his comments, Mr Jos Reinhoudt a consultant from the Netherlands shared highlights of regenerative agriculture good practices in the Circular Agriculture Report. Noting that businesses should take advantage of the growing space and accelerate the adoption of a circular economy in Kenya, Africa, and Globally.





Question

The voluntary carbon market is exploding and is estimated to be 15 billion US dollars in the next 5-19 years. How can we ensure that money paid for carbon emissions by companies from US and EU to offset carbon emissions is going to places where trees are planted and in this case to Kenyan farmers?

Answer



Ms. Elfrieke van Galen

"Any buyer of voluntary carbon credits should ensure that there is a good standard behind it approved by the government and be cautious of the middlemen. High prices of carbon credit do not mean the credits are good but depend on the accreditation. The producers are still demanding that some quality credits should not be put for commercial options. In this regard, it's good to know whom you are selling to, at what percentage, and how much effort has been put to produce the carbon credits. Middlemen are taking a lot of revenue, and it's therefore advisable that producers sell directly to companies to increase revenue for farmers, and do that locally to ensure authenticity."



Reducing Post-Harvest Food Loss

In her remarks, Ms Tei Mukunya, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Nature Lock noted that Rainfall and climate conditions continue to change our ways of production. She emphasized the need to explore commercialization opportunities in semi-arid areas in Kenya. According to Tei, Nature Lock's objective is to offer nutritious, natural affordable food for everyday consumption by all. The company is reducing post-harvest food loss through the adaption of value addition innovation food systems.



Ms. Tei Mukunya

"Let's bring back traditional food and make it affordable. Through Nature Lock technology, we can reach remote areas, save on energy consumption, cut down on waste generation, and mitigate the ravages of drought by providing the right food for drought-stricken areas. We can change the perception of food loss, change the food preservation systems and improve our yield and production.

The time to create solutions for Africa is now!"



Ms. Claire van Enk

During her presentation, Ms Claire van Enk, the Founder of Farm to Feed noted that a third of all food produced globally is lost or wasted, and in Sub-Saharan Africa, nearly 50% of fruits and vegetables never reach the market for consumption.

She continued to say that loss of food has economic, climate, and food security impacts, with 10% of Green House Gas Emissions coming from food waste, which is more than the emissions from the global aviation industry. Farm to Feed is collecting all rejected vegetables and fruits to repurpose them. The market they find depends on the reason for rejection and that's all mapped by their smart systems.

With a third of Kenyans experiencing food insecurity, transforming the current food production practices will enhance and maximize the available resources. It will increase production yields while cutting down on the high cost of resource use, food waste, and carbon emission and improving food security for Africa.

50%

of fruits and vegetables never reach the market for consumption.

10%

of Green House Gas Emissions come from food waste.



Creating a Resilient Agricultural Sector

According to Mr Charles Karangwa - IUCN's Regional Head, Land Systems and Country Representative, Kenya, agriculture is an opportunity in reality that is degrading and depleting natural resources through deforestation, land conversion, and loss of biodiversity.

250
mln

Each year, about 250 million hectares of land are converted for urbanization & agriculture, leading to the loss & damage of natural ecosystems.



Mr. Charles Karangwa

"The way to transform our food system is by adopting circular economy models.

The opportunities for scaling regenerative agriculture have great potential in mitigating climate change through saving soil, enhancing water security and biodiversity restoration; hence creating a resilient sector." He added that being one of the biggest polluting sectors, adopting regenerative agriculture can contribute to climate adaptation and mitigation.



Reducing Post-Harvest Food Loss

Mr. Peter van Leent, the Sustainability Manager at Biobest Group deep dived into the importance of designing for circularity as part of business processes. He noted that Businesses that adopted the use of bio-best solutions, improved crop quality, and pest control and created a positive impact on people and the planet. For instance, moving away from Styrofoam packaging material to recyclable cardboard coolers has had a positive impact on Biobest Group.



"Use of sustainable materials, increased separation of waste at source and adoption of reuse and recycle models has positively impacted our carbon footprint," he said.



Alternative Protein Feed

In her presentation, Ms Talash Huijbers, Founder and CEO of Insectipro, shared how the use of alternative sustainable protein feed is key for creating a future-proof feed value chain. The use of insects such as the Black Soldier Fly is an innovative circular model that eliminates waste and generates fertilizer for horticulture, feed for animals and food for human consumption thus improving the food production value chain.



Ms Talash Huijbers

"As much, there still exists a myriad of challenges within the insect industry with competitive pricing being one of the major challenges; for Insectipro, creative innovation, technology, and science has worked together to create a circular economy."



Session Partners





Water scarcity and 'day zero' have been common phrases used over the past few years, for example, in South Africa and many other parts of Africa. In Kenya and Ethiopia, droughts are a yearly phenomenon, and yet we are not conscious and smart enough with water usage when available, with a lot of people lacking access to potable water in East and Southern Africa. This session shone a light on what sustainable water consumption means, and available technologies to optimize sustainable systems by applying the Circular Economy principles.

It was moderated by

Ebenezer Amadi, Program Manager, Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA);

With a line-up of panellists including:

- Willis Ombai, Ag. Chief Executive Office Water Sector Trust Fund;
- Eng. Fanuel Nyaboro, WASH Consultant;
- Alex Mucheru, the Technical Sales Manager, Dupont Water Solutions – East & West Africa.



Watch the Full Session





An enabling environment for the private sector

Mr. Willis Ombai said that creating an enabling environment for private sector players will be achieved through policies and legislative frameworks, as well as sustainability, innovation, and financing. He emphasized that in a circular economy or otherwise, service delivery can't happen without good governance.



"We need a critical analysis on waste water used undersupply and is not taken care of under sanitation. We also need to develop the best market approaches that are available, and work closely with financial institutions to enhance funding within the water and sanitation sector."



Rethinking the normal

During his presentation, **Eng. Fanuel Nyaboro** stated that it's time to rethink the normal, be innovative and address emerging challenges.



"To achieve the Sustainable Development SDGs, we need to address water and sanitation differently and adopt circular models that encourage the reuse and recycling of water. This will create space for the private sector, to fast-track the rapidly increasing pressure on our water resources. We need to translate the small innovative ideas and scale them as business models to create a bigger impact."



Recycled water is clean water



Alex Mucheru further reiterated the vast opportunities within the water sector and the need to be environmentally conscious by adopting sustainable technology and the use of environmentally friendly materials.



"The challenge is we need to break the perception that recycled water is not clean water."



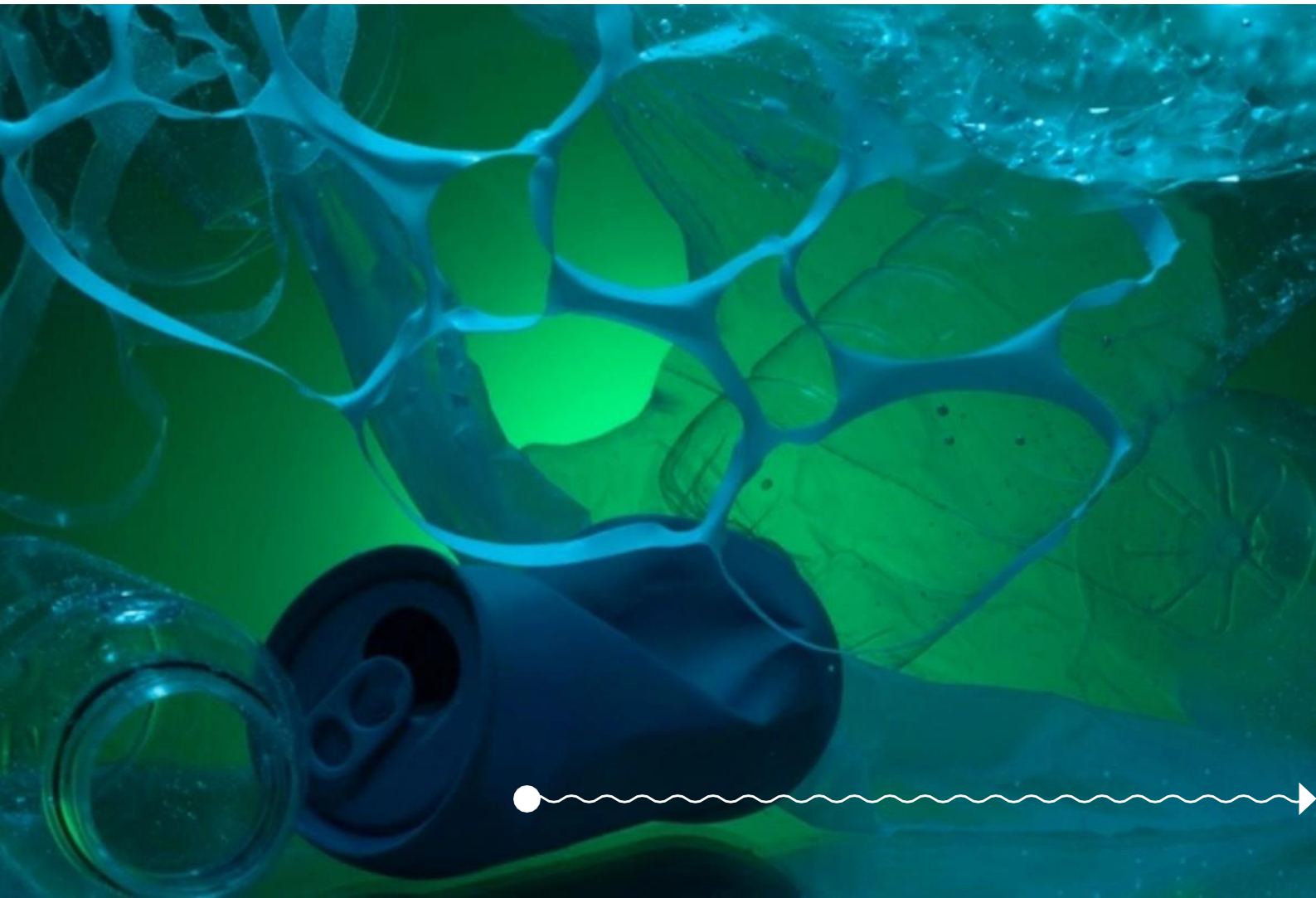


Key takeaways from the session

- Africa is off-track in terms of access to water & there is an urgent need to increase access to water twelvefold; sanitation twentyfold & hygiene forty-twofold.
- There's a need to adopt technologies that enhance circularity and water use efficiency.
- We must enhance collaboration in creating a conducive policy environment and market activation.
- The focus should be diverted to demand management, storage and circularity.
- Circularity increases the scope for a private sector engagement.



Session Partners



With a young population, great entrepreneurial spirit and adaptability, the digital revolution is one of the biggest opportunities to make Africa thrive.

However, in the current take-make-waste culture, producers are building their business models around the number of products as opposed to the quality.

New designs and marketing are part of the cause of consumers' addiction to 'new' products. In addition, the repair is often expensive or complex due to poorly designed products. How can this be best managed? And what happens at the end-of-life span?

This session showed the nexus between digital and green, looking at the innovations and initiatives that have been introduced to reduce e-waste from entering landfills and promote a circular economy within the industry's value chain, (with a focus on refurbishing, reuse, and re-manufacturing).

During the panel discussion, Ebenezer Amadi engaged the panellists on the gaps, available technological opportunities, and accelerator opportunities for an enabling environment in the adoption of and access to digital technology.

It was moderated by Ebenezer Amadi, Program Manager, Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA);

With a line-up of panellists including:

- Dr Ehud Gachugu, the Project Director of Ajira Digital Program under KEPSA;
- Valentine Cheruiyot, the Sustainability Practitioner at Safaricom PLC;
- Simone Andersson, the Chief Commercial Officer at WEEE Centre.



[Watch the Full Session](#)





Embedding digitization in the Circular Economy

According to **Dr Ehud Gachugu**, small and medium enterprises have a high need to digitize and create digital solutions to flourish and take advantage of the current emerging trade protocols being signed locally and regionally. He was keen to note the urgency in creating robust digital skills for people and tapping into available opportunities to apply digital knowledge within the circular and green economies.

“Building a robust infrastructure that supports the conversation on circularity is key for technological development. Young people have great opportunities to entrench their capacity around the value chains and move towards circularity. We are creating innovative and start-up ecosystem platforms for circular economy and green tech economies that provide solutions.” Furthermore, he added that a high level of awareness of the potential of digital and circular development among stakeholders is spurring adaptation, as the value chains change.

Ms Valentine Cheruiyot noted that achieving a circular economy lies in the policies that are embedded in the company's operations.

“Digitization of waste management is achieved through sustainable monitoring of how much is generated, collected, and recycled, and by working with all stakeholders across the value chain. At Safaricom, we have made it a good practice to collect our waste, and reuse and recycle it. We have further empowered our waste handler with technology to key in data at the collection point, which is then analysed and used in influencing decision-making. For instance, when a certain waste stream is on the rise, the data helps us to account for how much we are putting out vs how much we are collecting, reusing and recycling.”

Safaricom is further empowering the informal waste sector by working with partners like Mr Green Africa and Taka ni Mali, to help collectors convert waste such as plastics into Bonga Points which can be redeemed for shopping.



Transforming consumer behavior

The future needs a more sustainable and circular production line and value chain. Adopting green procurement processes, choosing to buy more sustainable products, maximizing product value and keeping materials in the loop will go a long way in enhancing circularity.

“To increase the emphasis on circularity, WEEE Centre started the Circular Innovation Hub where we are supporting start-ups with circular innovations to develop sustainable business models and scale them. We're also enhancing digital literacy through learning institutions under the Computer for Schools Kenya. These efforts are geared towards awareness creation that leads to mindset change and eventually transforms consumer behaviour towards a circular economy for electronics,”

- **Simone Andersson**



Session Partners





The textile and fashion industry is a long and vast value chain that starts with farming or extraction and ends at the second-hand clothing market or beyond.

Due to the current fast and global fashion industry, the negative impact is seen and felt on all the components of the value chain, from massive pressure on the production of cotton leading to soil degradation to the overwhelming waste generation since materials are designed to last short and used for a brief period and disposed of thereafter.

Shifting market demands and opportunities and the current 'Africa is in Fashion' trends may provide Africa the ultimate momentum to 'change the Textile & Fashion story – for Good'. This session explored how the use of organic material, alternative fibres, ethical production, creative traditional and contemporary skills and design, and sustainable consumption can reduce the environmental and social impact of the textile industry.

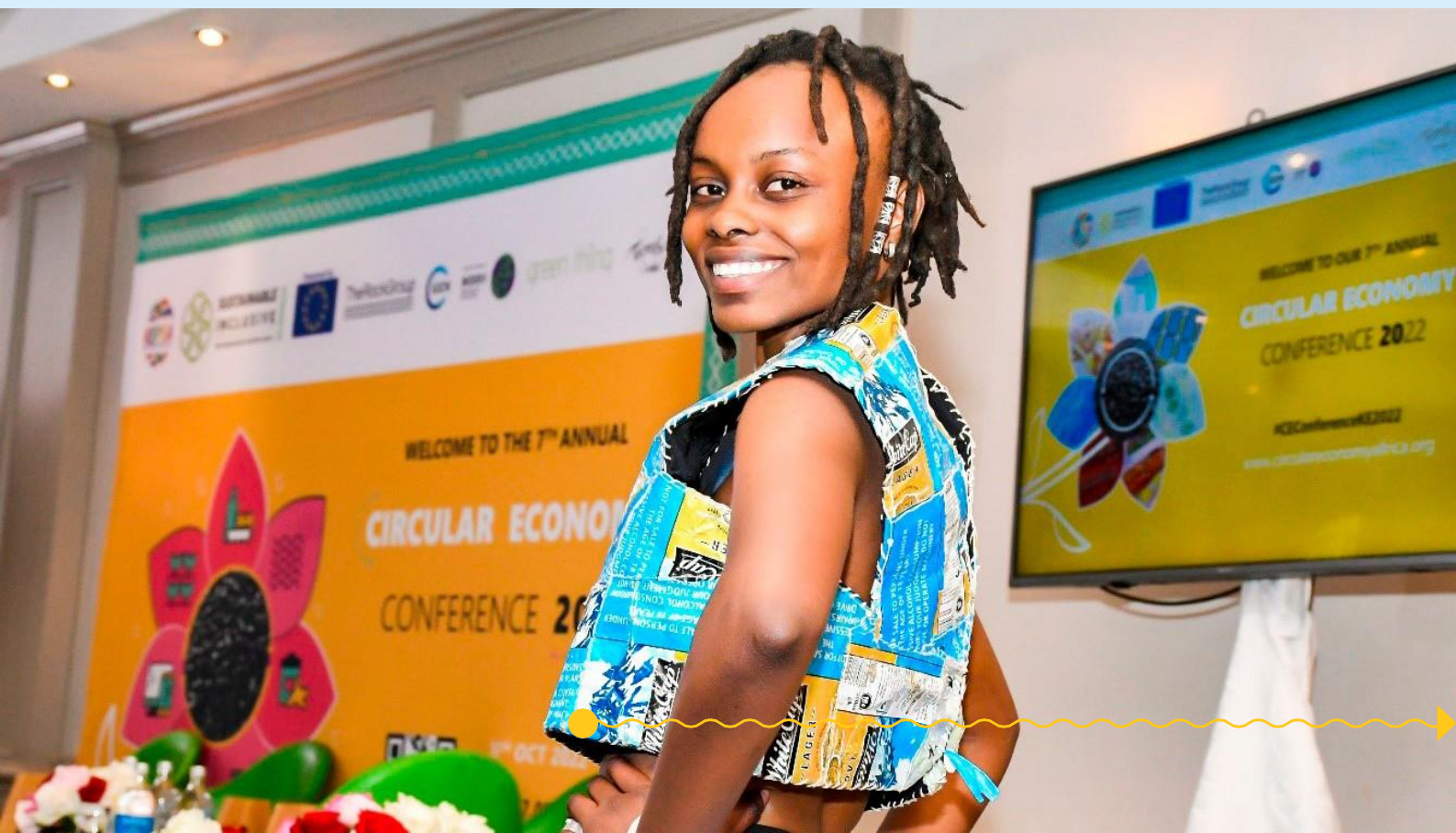
The session was moderated by SIB-K's Project Director, Karin Boomsma.

The panellists included:

- Sustainable Fashion Activist and ESG Specialist Elise Sormani;
- Threading Change Africa Regional Coordinator Janet Chemitei;
- ECDPM Policy Officer Nadia Ashraf; Programme Officer, UNEP, Consumption and Production Unit Bettina Heller;
- Founder & Proprietor at Nairobi Fashion Week Brian Kihindas;
- Ludovica d'Andria di Montelungo from Artisan Fashion, Nairobi;
- Founder and Designer of Hamaji Louise Sommerlatte;
- Designer at Afrivazi Valerie Nyamwaya.



[Watch the Full Session](#)





What is a Circular Economy in fashion and textiles?

According to **Bettina Heller**, a circular economy in fashion and textiles means keeping materials at the highest value while in the loop and feeding them back through recycling and repurposing.

“Product design is key to ensure that we use our products longer, through repair, repurposing, and recycling to increase their utility, especially with fashion.”


She highlighted key priorities identified through a roadmap towards a circular economy and sustainability at a global level, including:



Changing consumption patterns: through the adoption of sustainable business models.



Improving practices: energy use, chemicals, product care, etc.



Developing the infrastructure: for new circular models, systems where people can rent, repair, and take-back schemes for end-of-life products.



Rethinking clothing production

In her remarks, **Elise Sormani** disclosed that fashion has a huge negative impact on the natural ecosystem, being the second most contaminating industry in the world.

“The fashion value chain from Agriculture, to retail, to post-consumer waste absorbs a lot of natural resources, uses a lot of chemicals, and produces unrecyclable waste. It’s time to rethink the production of clothing, adapt circularity and move away from the take-make-waste models.”

“It’s about embracing business models that value people and the planet. It’s time to incorporate all three sustainability pillars in all our business models.”

Her sentiments were echoed by **Janet Chemitei**, who observed that sustainability is critical in creating a better future for fashion.

Sustainable fashion concerns the uptake of organic materials especially alternative fibres in production as noted by **Brian Kihindas**. Players are becoming cautious and are taking a proactive approach to embracing research, growth and scale.

“It’s time for businesses to take responsibility for their actions and the government to provide the right incentives to allow research on alternative methods to create valuable products from waste. The National conversation should be on enhancing policy framework and building a robust environment between manufacturers and consumers.”



Insights from the European Union

In her remarks, **Nadia Ashraf** highlighted insights from the EU sustainable and circular textile strategy, noting that it introduces some policy measures that focus on an eco-design plan to make the textile ecosystem greener and more circular.

The strategy states that companies should provide the environmental aspects of the product and its processes and ensure that the country importing can recycle the textile and ensure that it does not cause pollution in the importing countries by creating a more favourable recycling sector, improving the recycling infrastructure and streamlining coordination between the sector players.

“The current developing policies around the world are creating a market for circular textile and is presenting opportunities for textile sectors in countries such as Kenya to speed the sector and improve its competitiveness.”



Collaborating for a resilient fashion industry

Circularity begins during the design process, and this calls for a mindset shift, as recapped by **Ludovica d’Andria di Montelungo**.

Her thoughts resonated with **Louise Sommerlatte** who said that creating opportunities for local production and sourcing of organic textiles will build a resilient textile and fashion sector.

Similarly, **Valerie Nyamwaya** called on players in the sector to “be innovative and create systems that can work and allow for collaboration to create a resilient fashion sector.”

In closing, **Karin Boomsma** stressed the need for East Africa and Southern Africa to change the sustainability narrative by having standards that work for the entire continent.



Key highlights from the session

There’s a need for streamlined coordination between the different actors in the industry; (brands, manufacturers, designers, consumers, waste collectors, and recyclers).

The Industry must improve the accessibility of information on a product’s environmental sustainability characteristics, e.g. through digital product passport.

Impose eco-design requirements so that only products that meet sustainability criteria are allowed for export/import.

Enhancing policy framework to build a robust environment between manufacturers and consumers to change and create an ecosystem around sustainable fashion.



Session Partners





In Southern and Eastern Africa, various commitments to transition to a circular economy for plastics are on the rise from both the public and private fronts.

These include the implementation of private sector voluntary initiatives such as the South African and the Kenya Plastics Pacts, and the introduction of new and amended policies including the mandatory Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Scheme. Compliance and enforcement, however, remain major issues, due to the lack of clear targets in policies.

This workshop discussed recent commitments to the EPR and the potential impact of the “End Plastic Pollution: Towards an internationally legally binding instrument” in Africa. It also set the scene for the Kenya Plastics Pact Summit, which took place the following day on the 27th of October, 2022.

It was moderated by
Karin Boomsma

With a line-up of panellists including:

- De Kock Lorren, the Project Manager for the Circular Plastics Economy Programme at WWF South Africa;
- Alex Kubasu, the Circular Economy Initiative Lead at WWF-Kenya;
- Thais Vojvodic, the Plastics Pact Network Manager at the Ellen MacArthur Foundation;
- Lieselotte Heederik, the Co-founder and Director of Nazava Water Filters



Watch the Full Session





Rethinking plastic production

The session presenters shared perspectives from global, regional and local contexts highlighting challenges and the underlying opportunities within the plastic management space.

Speaking from a global perspective, **Thais Vojvodic** stated that the circular economy concept is no longer new, its being adopted in countries' policies and regulations, business strategies, and other commitments. There is a growing number of initiatives and growing stakeholder collaboration at a global level, working to accelerate the conversation.

Concerning the Kenya Plastics Pact, she noted that it's a great example that is acting locally with targets aligned with the global vision.



"There is a global push for use of recycled content growing in many areas. Nonetheless, there are key targets that by 2025 will be missed at a global level and this calls for businesses to accelerate their action, particularly around these three areas; reuse, flexible packaging, and decoupling business growth from packaging use. Voluntary action is not enough, it's time to accelerate new policies, and it's necessary to enhance the transition to a circular economy."



The role of County Governments

Fast-tracking the implementation of the sustainable waste management Act 2022 is key if we need to deal with the plastic challenge that is right before us. This is according to **Alex** who underscored the County Governments' role in pushing for a model Act that can quickly be adopted at the local levels.



"Only through robust policy adoption, increased funding, adoption of reuse models, and rethinking upstream interventions, will we be able to address the plastic menace."



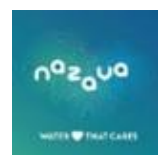
"If we don't reduce the consumption of single-use plastics and adopt sustainable solutions through reuse, we will soon end up with an ocean of plastics."



Going through her presentation **Lieselotte Heederik** highlighted the challenges Kenya faces from the lack of proper plastics waste management.



Session Partners





Non-renewable energy sources, particularly fossil fuels such as coal, are the dominant energy sources for electricity generation in South Africa.

As the world transforms into low carbon and inclusive society, how can the use of renewable energy sources, such as biomass and biofuels, assist Africa in its transition to a low-carbon economy?

South Africa has been criticized as the most intensive G20 economy with the highest coal reliance and it is estimated that 85% of the nation's electricity is generated using coal.

On the other hand, "Kenya has a liberalized energy sector and has made significant progress in the recent past in the formulation of renewable energy policies. Kenya's electricity power mix is among the most sustainable in the world, with 80% of electricity coming from renewable sources."

This session sought solutions; renewable energy, regenerative models and a just transition in Africa. We will share and compare national and private best practices, and address challenges that hinder the achievement of more sustainable alternatives.

It was moderated by Ebenezer Amadi, Program Manager, Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA);

With a line-up of panellists including:

- The CEO of the Kenya Renewable Energy Association Andrew Amadi;
- OFGEN Africa CEO Mohamed Jibril Omar;
- The Founder and CEO of Giraffe Bioenergy Dr Linda Davis;
- The Vice-Chairperson of the Electricity Sector Association of Kenya- ESAC Juliana Kainga;
- and Tombolo CEO Andrew Page Wood.



[Watch the Full Session](#)





Promoting the uptake of renewable energy

In Africa, renewable energy promotion is for adaptation and not mitigation, thus a need to come up with solutions that will work for the local context and replicate the same throughout the region through collaboration with the private sector.

According to **Andrew Amadi**, promoting the uptake of renewable energy and tech solutions can solve the lack of clean energy in Kenya.

“KEREAs objective is to also support the creation of an enabling environment through policy & institutional regulatory framework, creating access to markets & technology & collaboration.”

In her presentation, **Dr Linda Davis** stated the negative impacts the lack of clean and efficient cooking fuels has on education and healthcare.

“It’s about time we developed energy solutions that are safe, affordable, and accessible to all.”

While forecasting the energy sector beyond 2030, **Jibril mar Mohamed** defined decentralization, digitization & decarbonization as the key pillars for growth.

“Greening and powering commercial industries by moving away from fossil fuels to renewable energy is the solution.”

On his end, **Andrew Page Wood** was alarmed by the fact that out of the 1.2 billion Africans, 50% have no access to energy. To meet this demand, especially for heat provision, many people cut down trees for charcoal or ban paraffin.

“KEREAs objective is to also support the creation of an enabling environment through policy and institutional regulatory framework, creating access to markets and technology and collaboration.”

According to **Juliana Kainga**, the Electricity Sector Association of Kenya (ESAK) aims to ensure that any investment, policies, and regulatory frameworks around the production of electricity are done sustainably.

“We’re working together with all stakeholders to transform the energy sector & make it part of Kenya’s economic growth through promoting excellence, transparency, & sustainability. This is because we understand climate adaptation is a more systemic way of doing business to remain resilient.”



Session Partners



PUBLIC-PRIVATE ACTION FOR A CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN KENYA

Kenya intends to expand the scope of the circular economy beyond waste management to cover the entire economic drivers. Enhanced public-private action on the circular economy will enable existing materials to be used severally to deliver high-value goods and services.

According to the World Bank, low- and middle-income countries recorded a 49% increase in private investment commitments from 2020, to reach a total of \$76.2 billion in 2021.

This creates a significant opportunity to encourage quality investments in sustainable projects.

In Kenya, efforts in promoting a circular economy have placed major emphasis on the following areas, as listed by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry:

1. Encouraging circular business models and production processes, reverse logistics, and feedback loops integrating reuse, refurbish and re-manufacture of products.
2. Promotion of alternatives to primary raw materials and use of recycled materials.
3. Promotion of design for products that last longer and are easier to repair and recycle.
4. Support for a local circular economy such as industrial symbiosis where waste from one company becomes the raw material for another.
5. Supporting the use of non-hazardous substances and removal of contaminants from products.
6. Promotion of economic instruments and tools that support sustainable consumption.
7. Promotion of training and education for green skills.
8. Promotion of green public procurement.

As the Kenyan government seeks to address the impacts of climate change, the need for private-sector participation cannot be underplayed. Setting the optimum level of public-private action should result in the implementation of more circular economy projects at the national level, even as global platforms like COP27 continue to drive international agendas.



COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA COVERAGE

Communication played a critical role in the successful implementation of the Conference, both internally and externally.

From the two press releases published, one pre-conference and one post-conference, we received approximately 16 publications across online platforms, print and radio.

Furthermore, in embracing the new hybrid order of business, we live-streamed the conference to enable more participants and speakers to join virtually, both in Kenya and across the globe. The live-streaming services were provided by Yona Classic Media, an innovative company providing creative media solutions for businesses of all sizes.





Publications

MEDIA OUTLET	TITLE	GO TO URL	CATEGORY
Business Daily	Europe will not leave Kenya behind as it transitions to a circular economy	N/A	Print
Radio Kaya	COP27: Public-Private Action for a Circular Economy in Kenya	N/A	Radio
Business Ghana	COP27: Public-Private Action for a Circular Economy in Kenya	» » » »	Online
Modern Ghana	COP27: Public-Private Action for a Circular Economy in Kenya	» » » »	Online
SIB-K	COP27: Public-Private Action for a Circular Economy in Kenya	» » » »	Online
Xinhua	Girls wearing costumes made of recycled waste perform at the 7th annual Circular Economy Conference in Nairobi	N/A	Online
Xinhua	Nairobi hosts 7th Annual Circular Economy Conference	N/A	Online
Circular Economy Africa	Sustainable Inclusive Business Under KEPSA, to Partner with TheRock-Group, the European Union, and IUCN to Spark Dialogue on Sustainability at the Upcoming 7th Circular Economy Conference	» » » »	Online
Business Ghana	Sustainable Inclusive Business Under KEPSA, to Partner with TheRock-Group, the European Union, and IUCN to Spark Dialogue on Sustainability at the Upcoming 7th Circular Economy Conference	» » » »	Online
Kenya News Agency	Stakeholders to Host The 7th Annual Circular Economy Conference	» » » »	Online
Standard Digital	Kenya eyes renewable energy milestone with a blueprint	» » » »	Online
Standard Newspaper	Kenya eyes renewable energy milestone with a blueprint	N/A	Print
ESI Africa	ESAK unveils 6-pillar blueprint to achieve 100% clean energy by 2030	» » » »	Online
TheRockGroup	Sustainable Inclusive Business Under KEPSA, to Partner with TheRock-Group, the European Union, and IUCN to Spark Dialogue on Sustainability at the Upcoming 7th Circular Economy Conference	» » » »	Online
IUCN	IUCN partners with Kenya Private Sector Alliance, the Rock Group, and the European Union to host the annual Circular Economy Conference ahead of COP 27	» » » »	Online
SIB-K	Sustainable Inclusive Business Under KEPSA, to Partner with TheRock-Group, the European Union, and IUCN to Spark Dialogue on Sustainability at the Upcoming 7th Circular Economy Conference	» » » »	Online

Business Daily

Europe will not leave Kenya behind as it transitions to a green economy



Standard Newspaper

Kenya eyes renewable energy milestone with a blueprint



Xinhua

Girls wearing costumes made of recycled waste perform at the 7th annual Circular Economy Conference in Nairobi



Standard Newspaper

Nairobi hosts 7th Annual Circular Economy Conference





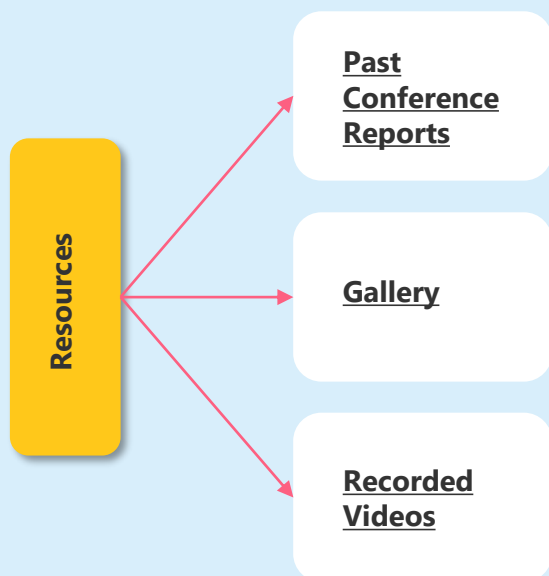
Social Media

Social media assets were used to drive conversations and engagements on different platforms, before and during the conference. Most discussions around the Circular Economy Conference were on Twitter, with top influencers being [@SustainaBizKe](#), [@EUinKenya](#), [@WWF Kenya](#) and [@theroyalvoice](#). The hashtag #CEConferenceKE2022 registered over 70 mentions and +200,000 impressions across Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook.





Conference Resources



You can find information about upcoming events via these websites:

www.circulareconomyafrica.org

www.sustainableinclusivebusiness.org

CONFERENCE PARTNERS

Sustainable Inclusive Business



Sustainable Inclusive Business – Kenya (SIB-K) is a neutral initiative established through a fruitful partnership between the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) Foundation and the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Kenya. Its main objective is to increase awareness and the adoption of sustainable business models with a positive impact on People, the Planet and Profit, working with the private sector, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), civil society and governments.

The initiative champions for mind shift from contemporary CSR practices to creating innovative business solutions which contribute to sustainability and inclusion. The focus on sustainability informs the focus areas SIB-K engages in including circular economy, blue economy, climate change, people power, and redefining business values. It is also the lead organization in the implementation of the Kenya Plastics Pact.

Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA)



KEPSA is the apex organization of the private sector in Kenya. It brings together local and foreign business associations, chambers of commerce, professional bodies, corporates from multinational companies, medium, SMEs, and start-ups from all sectors of the economy to enable them to speak with one voice when engaging government, development partners and other stakeholders on cross-cutting policy issues and programs for Social – Economic Development of the Country.

It also supports businesses with opportunities for training, networking, financial linkages, mentorship and coaching, access to markets, value chains, and access to investment opportunities inbound and outbound globally. Through its widespread membership categories that represent over 1,000,000 businesses, KEPSA brings these businesses under one umbrella.

TheRockGroup (TRG)

TheRockGroup

TheRockGroup (TRG) is an ambitious agency driving the transition towards a sustainable economy and society. We believe that fair and sustainable business can and should accelerate this transition. Therefore, we work on entrepreneurial solutions with innovators, companies, civil society, knowledge institutes and policymakers.

TRG has decades of experience in supporting businesses with their Sustainability Strategy, ESG, Compliance, Impact measurement and Improvement plans, Materiality Matrices, Development of new sustainable businesses and sustainability education (academia, masters).

Tambuzi

Tambuzi

Climate change poses an existential threat to businesses around the globe. Every organization large and small must take up the challenge to measure, reduce and contribute towards their impact. Tambuzi was the first flower farm in the world to sign up for the UN Climate Neutral Now program in 2019 and has since been joined by 20 other companies in Kenya.

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)



ambition for biodiversity
BIODEV
2030



IUCN is a membership Union of government and civil society organizations. Together, we work to advance sustainable development and create a just world that values and conserves nature.

Green Thing

green thing

Green Thing is a Kenyan brand that provides eco-friendly and toxin-free products as conversation starters on climate change and how we can collectively live more sustainably. It was started by a Kenyan journalist and sustainability Youtuber who wanted to use everyday home essentials to make sustainability more relatable.



MAIN CONFERENCE FUNDING PARTNER

The European Union

The European Union and Kenya have a long-standing partnership – covering Political, Development, Economic and Security Cooperation. The European Union and its Member States, acting jointly as Team Europe, support the Government of Kenya through a Joint Cooperation Strategy, which jointly implements priorities and objectives identified by the Government of Kenya in its development blueprint Vision 2030, through the EU's third Medium-Term Plan (MTP III) 2018-2022.

The EU and Kenya are working together actively in promoting a transition to a climate-neutral, nature-positive, resource-efficient and more circular global economy in line with the ambition of the external dimension of the European Green Deal. We also work together in promoting peace and stability in the region, trade, infrastructure development, agriculture and resilience, and in taking action as like-minded actors on the world stage.



Contact Us Via

Josephine@sustainableinclusivebusiness.org

