

# https://treasource.eu/Territorial and regional demonstrations of systemic solutions of key value chains and their replication to deploy circular economy

**ABOUT THE PROJECT**

* **TREASoURcE** is a four-year project (2022-2026) that receives funding from the European Union under the Horizon Europe research and innovation programme.
* The project's goal is to initiate systemic change by developing systemic circular economy solutions in cities and regions for currently underutilised or unused plastic waste, end-of-life electric vehicle batteries, and bio-based waste and side streams.
* The implementation of these solutions with companies, societies (including citizens, consumers, communities, and regional actors), and experts is expected to significantly increase product and material circulation in the Nordic and Baltic Sea Regions.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. Demonstrated environmental, social, economic, and political impacts of the systemic circular economy solutions (Circular plastics, batteries, and biobased side and waste streams) in the Nordics.
2. Replicated locally tailored systemic CE solutions in the Baltics, Poland, and beyond.
3. Inclusive and just transition to CE for all supported by high-level cooperation with all relevant stakeholders.

**IMPACT**

* TREASoURcE is expected to have significant environmental, social, economic, and political impacts, supporting an inclusive and just transition to a circular economy for all.
* The territories involved in TREASoURcE share the Baltic Sea, an important natural ecosystem. Proper management of biobased side and waste streams is crucial to protect the Baltic Sea from eutrophication, a major environmental issue.
* By 2035, TREASoURcE aims to contribute to 9.5 MTONNES of GHG emission savings.
* The project focuses on greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction throughout its duration, especially in urban-rural regions.
* Local and regional economies play a significant role in TREASoURcE, with demonstrations formulating new value chains and business opportunities. The project will demonstrate at least 8 new circular business models.

**METHODOLOGY**

* **CIRCULAR CITIES AND REGIONS INITIATIVE**: TREASoURcE is part of the European Union’s Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI) that seeks to support the implementation of local and regional circular economy solutions. The CCRI is part of the new European Circular Economy Action Plan adopted in March 2020. It also provides a local contribution to the implementation of the European Green Deal and the European bioeconomy strategy. TREASoURcE collaborates closely with the CCRI and other circular economy projects and initiatives.

## Boosting circularity and initiating systemic change

TREASoURcE aims to initiate systemic change by developing systemic circular economy solutions in cities and regions for currently underutilised or unused plastic waste, end-of-life electric vehicle batteries and bio-based waste and side streams. Implementing these solutions together with companies, societies (including citizens, consumers, communities and regional actors) and experts in the field is expected to significantly increase product and material circulation in the Nordic and Baltic Sea Regions.

### Circular Economy

Climate change, environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity are major global threats that require urgent collaborative actions across industry, sectors, cities and regions, communities and citizens. Half of total greenhouse gas emissions and more than 90 % of biodiversity loss come from resource extraction and processing. Global consumption of materials, especially biomass, fossil fuels, metals and minerals are expected to double by 2060 and annual waste generation is estimated to increase by 70 % by 2050.

The combination of the cities and regions will enable large reach and bigger impact and boost the replicability and scalability potential of the circular economy solutions. The systemic circular economy solutions support the regions in introducing circular economy practices to their citizens and businesses to help decouple from fossil virgin resources and excess raw material consumption, increase resilience (self-sufficiency, value chain security, environment, and nature), decrease greenhouse gas emissions, and contribute to climate neutral economies.

**Engaging stakeholders in a sustainable and just transition to circular economy**

The Nordic region has a population of over 27 million, and forms the 12th largest economy in the world. Together with the Baltics, Poland and Northern Germany, the population is over 62 million. The Nordics have a long history of collaborating and are frontrunners in circular economy with ambitious climate and environmental targets, motivated decision makers, and driven and interested citizens and communities. However, low and decentralised volumes of the targeted waste streams remain a common issue. This generates further challenges in operational feasibility and security due to challenges in securing sufficient feedstock qualities and quantities.

TREASoURcE brings together a wide range of stakeholders, including businesses, decision makers, consumers and local communities, to innovate collaboratively and cross-sectorally in order to overcome the challenges related to geography or formation of value chains.

Five different types of stakeholder engagement demonstrations will be designed, implemented, tested and replicated to improve sorting and quality of raw materials and to enhance the uptake of circular products on the market. These demos will include concrete cooperative actions, such as workshops for consumers and industry actors, hackathons, fixing workshops, seminars, procurement recipes, and larger cultural or sports events.

**Circular plastics**

Supporting the circulation of non-recycled plastics by optimising recycling technologies, collection and logistics

TREASoURcE activities aim to create added value products from currently non-circulated plastic waste to support the market development of recycled plastics and to capture the value lost today by utilising mechanical and thermochemical recycling. The target plastic waste streams include rejects from mechanical recycling of municipal plastic waste, agricultural plastics and battery-based plastic waste. During TREASoURcE, the recyclability of these streams will be demonstrated with a target recycling rate of 90 %.

True circular economy is achieved when technologies are integrated to create an impact that no single technology can achieve. The intelligent combination of mechanical and chemical recycling approach, depending on the feedstock, will ensure that optimal circular solutions are achieved for best possible products with increased fraction of plastic waste utilized. TREASoURcE will identify best practices to match the different target plastic streams with optimum recycling processes and best possible output. Logistics will be evaluated to optimise collection chains and to seek to eliminate unnecessary transportation.

TREASoURcE will work closely with citizens and consumers to minimize possible negative impacts of plastic waste by boosting zero-waste practices, the collection of all plastic waste generated at homes and businesses, and the uptake of plastic products based on recycled plastics, which will further boost the demand for recycled plastics market.

**Circular batteries**

Demonstrating and validating the usage of 2nd life electric vehicle batteries for energy storage

Currently, replacing damaged electric vehicle (EV) batteries with used, fully functioning battery packs is prohibited by most car manufacturers and workshops due to warranty issues. TREASoURcE studies the possibilities for the use of such 2nd life battery packs for energy storage in other applications in order to avoid recycling of the batteries back to the original elements with significant material losses in the process.

EV batteries are considered to be at the end of life when energy storage capacity reaches approximately 80% of original​. Stationary storage has less strict performance requirements compared to EVs.

TREASoURcE will evaluate the potential for use of 2nd life electric vehicle batteries as energy storage systems and demonstrate their functionality and sustainability in three demo cases of energy storage for solar power. The demonstrations aim to increase knowledge of the batteries’ second life and their functionality and how stationary batteries can be used to balance electricity demand. The intended result is to accelerate the market uptake of this technology.

One of the tasks is to compare 1st life and 2nd life battery system sustainability. While 2nd life batteries are much more economically viable, they are often not considered due to limited certified providers. TREASoURcE will increase safety by having companies involved in the reuse business as producers, which leads to proper maintenance and better monitoring of battery condition.

**Bio-based side and waste streams**

Creating circular economy markets, business models and biobased value chains while boosting the urban-rural symbiosis

Future circular bioeconomy needs to be based on efficient use of raw materials that supports also the use of local resources. In close cooperation with farmers, other industries, municipalities and regions, TREASoURcE will create CBE markets and business models, support forming of biobased value chains and explore the possibilities of using urban and rural waste and side streams together, increasing the understanding over symbiosis between urban and rural areas.

TREASoURcE will demonstrate efficient formation of local value chains that utilize local resources for biogasification and recovered fertilizers instead of being unutilized or transported elsewhere. This will entail currently missing large-scale raw material mapping, logistics optimization and mapping existing and potential locations for new refineries. The optimized side-waste stream value chains will be supported by a developed e-market place, which is also easily replicable and transferable, and market values/pricing for underutilized streams. Also new kind of cooperative models will be exploited, such as biogas cooperatives.

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**Objectives**

01

Demonstrated environmental, social, economic and political impacts of the systemic circular economy solutions (Circular plastics, batteries, and biobased side and waste streams) in the Nordics

02

Replicated locally tailored systemic CE solutions in the Baltics, Poland and beyond

03

Inclusive and just transition to CE for all supported by high level cooperation with all relevant stakeholders

**Impact**

TREASoURcE is expected to have significant environmental, social, economic and political impacts, supporting an inclusive and just transition to circular economy for all.

**Efficient management and valorisation of local resources**

TREASoURcE territories share together an important natural ecosystem, the Baltic Sea, which is subject to unnecessary logistics as e.g. plastic waste is exported and shipped due to lacking waste management infrastructure. Proper management of biobased side and waste streams and circulating nutrients is important to protect the Baltic Sea from eutrophication, which is a major environmental issue in the marine ecosystem. TREASoURcE optimises nutrient recirculation and flows, raw material use and limiting the need for land and energy use connected to TREASoURcE’s approach in both production and waste management as well as circular business models.

**By 2035, TREASoURcE will have contributed to 9,5 Mtonnes of GHG emission savings**

TREASoURcE focuses on greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction throughout the whole project, tackling streams that are currently not circulated and producing added value materials and products for new loops. The focus is especially in urban-rural regions, since it is common that these streams could be circulated but they are produced in a decentralized manner. Greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced throughout the project activities and further in widespread exploitation of the project demonstrations and other practices.

**Systemic circular economy solutions for sustainable growth of economies, sectors and regions**

Local and regional economies and actors have a big role in TREASoURcE, the demonstrations will formulate new value chains and business opportunities reaching through the urban-rural settings. TREASoURcE will demonstrate at least 8 new circular business models that will be disseminated to primary producers (agriculture) and CE entrepreneurs (reuse, refurbishment) who can exploit the new business opportunities. TREASoURcE’s CE business opportunities and new employment will support the European future wealth and competitiveness, and as an immediate impact, help bounce back from the effects of COVID-19. Circulating the targeted side and waste streams will provide security to the value chains and minimize investment and business risks by ensuring local supply of raw materials.

**Methodology**

WP1 CE framework

WP2 Stakeholder engagement

WP3 Circular plastics

WP4 Circular batteries

WP5 Biostreams

WP6 Replication

WP7 Sustainability assessments

WP8 Communication

WP9 Management

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**WP1 - CE framework analysis and actions to enhance CE**

Work package 1 aims to map the state-of-the-art of circular economy (CE) in the target countries and set up the framework to be applied to the different demonstration work packages (WPs 3-5).

**Objectives**

* Provide an assessment of how value chains for plastics, batteries, and biobased materials can be optimized in the territorial clusters, from a national and regional perspective.
* Identify opportunities and challenges for circular strategies identified in value chains of plastics, batteries, and biobased materials from national and regional perspectives.
* Map national and regional material flows and relevant value chains to provide a baseline for the demonstrations and replication in WPs 3-6.

**Main activities**

* Analysis of the current CE roadmaps, strategies and action plans of the targeted countries, cities, rural areas and regions.
* Material flow and value chain mapping of the plastics, batteries, and biobased waste streams.
* Assessments of the targeted value chains, value creation and value chain optimization.
* Regulatory framework mapping (on EU, national regional and local level) for collection, treatment and recycling of plastics, batteries and processing of biobased side and waste streams.
* Review of state-of-the-art technology and best practices for circular strategies in the targeted value chains, practices and framework for eco-design and circular business models.

**Expected impact**

* Provide key insights on how current roadmaps and legislative and regulatory frameworks promote a circular economy within plastics, batteries and biobased waste streams in the targeted territories.
* Develop knowledge on the material flows and potential value creation for the different waste streams and their associated value chains.

**WP1 leaders**

Moana Simas, SINTEF
Henrik Brynthe Lund, SINTEF

**WP2 - Understanding key stakeholders’ incentive and roles**

Work package 2 builds on existing value chain networks in order to establish and strengthen stakeholder engagement structures supporting circular economy transition in TREASoURcE cities and regions. Involving a broad range of stakeholders, the idea is to build long-term cross-sectorial cooperation.

**Objectives**

* Achieve transparent decision-making processes and transitions to CE supported by relevant stakeholders.
* Strengthen the decision makers capability of enabling CE.
* Learn from stakeholders and understand their perspectives, perceptions and positions in the CE transition.
* Build knowledge and stakeholder capacity to ensure they understand the benefits of CE and can participate in implementing CE on different stakeholder levels.

**Main activities**

* The structures for stakeholder engagement will be established by setting up cross-sectorial task forces in 3-4 geographical areas. The aim is to cooperate with a broad range of stakeholders.
* Once the stakeholder cooperation established, concrete cooperative actions will be carried out through five different demonstrations, including activities such as workshops for consumers and industry actors, hackathons, fixing workshops, seminars, procurement recipes, and larger cultural and sports events.

**Main outcomes**

Work package 2 will develop, test and showcase best practices for engagement and cooperation with consumers, citizens, and communities regarding circular economy. This will result in reports, guidance booklets, procurement recipes, and a range of learning materials supporting CE training.

**WP2 leader**

Guri Bugge, Viken County Council

**WP3 - KVC-DEMOs: Circular plastics value chain**

Work package 3 aims to improve the recyclability of the targeted plastic waste streams (agricultural plastics, municipal waste management mechanical recycling rejects, plastics from batteries) by complementary mechanical and chemical recycling approaches.

**Objectives**

* Efficient plastic collection, sorting and pre-treatment.
* Mechanical recycling of targeted plastic waste streams.
* Chemical recycling technology to treat rejected plastic waste from mechanical recycling.
* Upgrading technologies to final valuable products.

**Main activities**

* Collection, analysis, pre-treatment and mechanical recycling of feedstock: The feedstock will be collected and characterised using physical and chemical content.
* Thermochemical recycling of currently non-recycled plastic waste: Technical assessment of pyrolysis process and full-scale testing of feedstock pyrolysis, use of catalyst to improve end product.

**Expected impact**

* Improved mechanical recycling of targeted plastic waste streams.
* Produced data will be used by the waste handling companies to improve their separation techniques for undesirable contaminants in the waste fractions.

**WP3 leaders**

Lars Thoresen, POLYFUELS AB
Erik Thyge Hansen, POLYFUELS AB

**WP4 - KVC-DEMOs: Batteries reuse and recycling value chain**

Work package 4 explores the potential for use of second life electric vehicle (EV) batteries as energy storage systems.

**Main objectives and activities**

* Evaluate possibilities and potential for use of 2nd life EV batteries as energy storage systems.
* Demonstrate functionality and sustainability of 2nd life EV batteries in two demo cases for energy storage for solar power.

**Main outcomes**

Main outcome of this work package is to demonstrate environmental and economic viability of implementing 2nd life batteries in stationary energy storage systems through evaluating different business models and life cycle analysis. Stationary battery systems will be demonstrated through implementation on two different sites in Norway and Finland and data will be collected to validate the environmental gain.

**Expected impact**

Contributing with data and knowledge to the Replication Handbook and efficient communication to the public will enable increased implementation of 2nd life battery energy storage systems, ultimately establishing a fully circular battery value chain when these batteries are recycled.

**WP4 leaders**

Fride Vullum-Bruer, SINTEF
Hanne Kathrine Waade, ECO STOR AS

**WP5 - KVC-DEMOs: Circular biobased side and waste streams for biogas and fertilizers**

Work package 5 aims to strengthen local economies, find added value uses for currently non-used biobased side and waste streams and create new business opportunities. The targeted side and waste streams include for example manure, sludge and grass from agriculture and branches, tops, bark and sawdust from forestry.

**Objectives and main activities**

* New value chains and business models for unused biobased side and waste streams demonstrated.
* A local circular bioeconomy model created, tested and validated that is ready for replication.
* A functioning e-market and a digital platform for side and waste streams created.
* A tool created to identify local urban-rural symbiosis models.

**Main outcomes**

* Functioning circular economy e-marketplace and value chain models.
* Tool for modelling local urban rural symbiosis.
* Model for territorial circular economy.

**Expected impact**

The work package 5 activities will lead to powering local economies through new circular bioeconomy investments. As a result, there will be new business possibilities for rural producers, and local economies will find resource efficient models for their area. The rural and urban areas will work in cooperation through an adapted local symbiosis model.

**WP5 leader**

Riina Kärki, The Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK)

**WP6 - Exploitation, replication and transferable practices**

The overall objective of WP6 is to analyse transferrable practices based on the developed and tested demonstrations in work packages 3-5.

**Objectives and main activities**

* Interpret stakeholder and other relevant analysis results of WP1 and WP2 to realise critical and necessary factors to be taken into consideration in the process to create a replication plan for different target areas.
* Screening of replication target area’s possibilities to gain public and private funding, enhance SME participation, and include other industry value chains related to CE.
* Increase understanding of the created models’ scalability to other CE purposes.
* Case study that includes plans for establishing local plastic waste collection system in the pilot city.

**Main outcomes**

* A compilation of best replicable CE practices.
* Roadmaps, CE strategies and CE business plans according to the local conditions.
* Logistics and spatial optimisation with adjusted solution for each area.
* TREASoURcE Replication Handbook or replication localisation modelling: a living digital document and guide for public use.

**Expected impact**

Active collaboration with interested external stakeholders will assure a widespread transfer of information and good practices as well as their uptake throughout TREASoURcE regions and beyond. TREASoURcE demos are all open access and developed so that they are within the project designed, tested and validated and then conceptualised for efficient replication.

**WP6 leader**

Pekka Niskasaari, Forum Virium Helsinki (FVH)

**Systemic circular economy solutions for sustainable growth of economies, sectors and regions**

Local and regional economies and actors have a big role in TREASoURcE, the demonstrations will formulate new value chains and business opportunities reaching through the urban-rural settings. TREASoURcE will demonstrate at least 8 new circular business models that will be disseminated to primary producers (agriculture) and CE entrepreneurs (reuse, refurbishment) who can exploit the new business opportunities. TREASoURcE’s CE business opportunities and new employment will support the European future wealth and competitiveness, and as an immediate impact, help bounce back from the effects of COVID-19. Circulating the targeted side and waste streams will provide security to the value chains and minimize investment and business risks by ensuring local supply of raw materials.

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WP7 Sustainability assessments

WP8 Communication

WP9 Management

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**WP7 - Sustainability Assessments**

Work package 7 provides metrics, tools, and data for assessing the sustainability of TREASoURcE solutions.

**Objectives**

* Identify in secure way solutions that are ill-suited from sustainability perspective.
* Identify critical success factors and potential risks of existing or planned circular systems.
* Generate and document indicator results for stakeholders to enable opinion formulation and informed decisions making.
* Provide guidance and lessons learned to support a sound transfer and replication of successful circular systems.

**Main activities**

* Developing a framework for sustainability and circularity assessment that integrates impact indicators for sustainability (in a social, environmental, and economic dimension), performance indicators for circularity, and also context indicators.
* In parallel, an assessment toolset will be created, in close coordination with project stakeholders. The toolset will be tailored to expert and non-expert audiences and is to be further complemented by a guideline for data collection, data curation and data maintenance.
* With the framework, the work package will conduct an analysis of the three main project cases: Circular plastics value chain sustainability assessment, Batteries reuse and recycling value chain assessment, and Biobased waste streams for biogas and fertilizers assessment.

**Main outcomes**

Work package 7 expects three main outcomes. For one, an assessment framework for sustainability and circular economy of circular systems. Second, expert and non-expert tools and a data pool and guideline for project-specific assessments. Third, applied sustainability assessment of the key value chains in the project. Each of these outcomes will also be captured in an extensive report.

**Expected impact**

The metrics, tools, and data provided by this work package will help understand whether and how far circular economy systems are indeed sustainable, and thus can be applied for finding best ways to transfer and scale up new and existing circular systems. The project outcomes are applied to existing regional value chains, delivering results and supporting the transferability of circular systems of key value chains in the EU. Assessment results will guide initiatives for improved circularity, efficient management and the valorisation of local resources, leading to e.g. the reduction of GHG emissions. It is expected that by 2035, TREASoURcE will have contributed to 9.5 Mtonnes of GHG emission savings.

**WP7 leader**

Andreas Ciroth, GreenDelta

**Systemic circular economy solutions for sustainable growth of economies, sectors and regions**

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**WP8 - Communication and dissemination**

The expected results of TREASoURcE will have a consistent and maximised impact only if communicated and disseminated appropriately, reaching the relevant stakeholders and decision makers that can boost the transition to CE and uptake of CE systemic solutions.

**Objectives**

* Achieving visibility and making TREASoURcE an active and recognised actor in CE in the territories.
* Engaging and reaching out to stakeholders via communication channels and activities.
* Providing communication expertise to the other WPs in organising various stakeholder engagement workshops, campaigns, and events.
* Raising awareness and deepening understanding of circular systemic solutions by offering fact-based results and policy recommendations.Disseminating TREASoURcE results to ensure maximum exploitation and impact.

**Main activities**

* Design and implementation of the Communication and dissemination plan.
* Establishing and maintaining active exchanges with stakeholders covering all the targeted key value chains via targeted and tailored communication and dissemination content, tools and channels.
* Close collaboration with the replication and exploitation work package (WP6) for maximised impact during and after the project lifetime.
* Active collaboration with other circular economy projects and the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI) to enhance knowledge sharing and a wide uptake of the identified solutions in the TREASoURcE territories and beyond.

**Main outcomes and expected impact**

Effective cross-WP collaboration with the replication and exploitation activities but also other work packages is expected to result in effective and widespread uptake, replication, scalability and visibility of circular systemic solutions at local, regional, national, European and international levels.

**WP8 leader**

Kaisa Simola, CLIC Innovation

**Systemic circular economy solutions for sustainable growth of economies, sectors and regions**

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**WP9 – Coordination and management**

The aim of the coordination and management work package is to ensure efficient planning, organization, monitoring, and managing of all aspects of a project and to nurture high motivation and good working environment of all involved to achieve project overall objectives.

**Objectives and main activities**

* Ensure efficient management, timely and quality results according to the work plan, contractual timeframe and budget.
* Provide financial, legal and administrative guidance.
* Organise the necessary management structures.
* Ensure efficient communication between the European Commission and the consortium.
* Organise the Advisory Board and ensure good communication with AB.
* Continuously quality assurance, proper risk assessment and management.
* Ensure efficient data management under FAIR principles.
* Ethics management.

**Main outcomes and expected impact**

The main outcomes and expected impact of the coordination and management work package are high-quality project results, and ethically compliant and smooth project execution that is operated within the time and budget restraints of the project plan.

**WP9 leader**

Anna Tenhunen-Lunkka, VTT