



Press release

TREASoURcE, a new European project to develop systemic circular economy solutions in cities and regions, launched in June

Helsinki (Finland), June 22, 2022. – TREASoURcE, a new European project receives close EUR 10 million to develop 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 in the Nordics and the Baltic Sea Region. The four-year project is coordinated by VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland Ltd and has 17 partners in the consortium.

The Nordic region has a population of over 27 million, and forms the 12th largest economy in the world; together with 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.

The objective of TREASoURcE is to initiate systemic change by implementing sustainable systemic circular economy demonstrations that significantly increase product and material circulation of highly consumed and waste generating plastics, batteries and biobased side and waste streams. The circularity is boosted by executing replicable demonstrations across the value chains, developing and scaling up technical solutions, and innovating with a broad range of stakeholders, such as businesses, decision makers, consumers, local communities and experts in the field. The circular economy solutions will be demonstrated in cities and regions located in the Nordic countries including Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark. The demonstrations will be replicated in the Baltic Sea Region countries, namely Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Northern Germany.

“We have a large and highly qualified project consortium working together to develop and scale technical solutions for efficient demonstration and further widespread replication of systemic circular economy solutions”, states the Project Coordinator Anna Tenhunen-Lunkka from VTT. “The fact that the project has three very different key value chains that all apply different circular strategies, it will be very important to see how we can learn from the different value chains and co-develop circularity. This is a great start for initiating systemic change – however, it is not enough as such. Typical issues with being able to transition and adapt to circular economy relate to technical, regulatory, market and cultural challenges. As these challenges are often interlinked and benefit from being developed and solved simultaneously, these kind of large consortiums with broad range of stakeholders involved are key in being able to successfully demonstrate circular economy solutions. We take a step further in the project as we get hands-on involved with consumers, citizens and communities, and furthermore, instead of just making policy recommendations, we will actually implement them on regional levels. We look forward to making a real change and tackle the challenges of truly transitioning to circular economy.”



TREASoURcE

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. TREASoURcE is also 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 Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI) is an important initiative that put at the centre cities and regions as the engine for the EU's transition to a circular economy", says the Project Officer Davide Delaiti from the European Commission. "We find that the TREASoURcE project perfectly embeds this purpose by using innovative technologies and methods to implement circular economy practices in the field of plastics, batteries, and biobased side streams. The strong expertise and complementarity of the 17 partners will certainly contribute to the creation of new business opportunities in cities and regions in the Nordics, Baltics, Poland and Germany."

About TREASoURcE

TREASoURcE is an initiative funded by the European Union under the Horizon Europe research and innovation programme with a total budget of EUR 9.99 million. The four-year project is coordinated by VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland Ltd, and the consortium consists of 17 partners from seven European countries. The partner organisations include four research and technology organisations or universities: VTT, SINTEF, SDU, TalTech; seven cities and regions: Forum Virium Helsinki, EcoFellows Ltd, Business Tampere, Viken County Council, Fredrikstad kommune, City of Tallinn, Tartu City; a rural and primary producers' union MTK; two small and medium size enterprises: GreenDelta, CLIC Innovation; and three industrial partners: Topsoe, Green Ideas Group and ECO STOR.

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