Integrating SCP policies in Europe - towards a circular economy

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’Putting words into action with independent ecolabels’
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Themes
• Climate change mitigation and adaptation
• Sustainable management of the Baltic Sea and freshwater resources
• Sustainability of consumption and production and sustainable use of natural resources
• Sustainability of land use and the built environment
• Ecosystem services and conservation of biodiversity
• Producing and exploiting environmental information
Contents

Policy toolbox for IPP (and SCP)

Strategies and decisions

’New’ product-policy topics in circular economy

How type 1 eco-labels promote circular economy?

Challenges and the way ahead

INFORMATION INSTRUMENTS

- Voluntary eco-labels, declarations
- Media and education
- Public procurement
- Economic subsidies
- Taxes and charges
- Environmental permits
- Research, information to eco-design
- Co-operation - committees - product panels - standardisation
- Voluntary agreements - Env. Manag. Systems
- Producer responsibility
- Eco-Design Directive - Other product norms - Restricted chemicals

Ecologically more sustainable products and services

LEGAL INSTRUMENTS

- Producer responsibility
- Eco-Design Directive - Other product norms
- Restricted chemicals

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Strategies and decisions in EU

**IPP, 2001 and 2003:**


Communication…Integrated Product Policy - Building on Environmental Life-Cycle Thinking. COM/2003/0302 final

**SCP, 2008:**

Sustainable Consumption and Production and Sustainable Industrial Policy (SCP/SIP) Action Plan COM/2008/0397 final

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Strategies and decisions /2

Resource efficiency, 2011:

The Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe
COM(2011) 571

Circular economy, 2014-:

Communication from… Towards a circular economy: A zero waste programme for Europe. COM/2014/0398 final

Communication from… Closing the loop - An EU action plan for the Circular Economy. COM/2015/0614 final


Strategies and decisions /4

Some other ‘more international’ strategies and decisions:

Paris Climate Agreement 2016

UN Agenda 2030

UN Sustainable Development Goals

UN 10YFP, 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns

Nordic Council of Ministers,
The Environment Action Plan 2013-2018

(HKP Working group, link to many interesting reports!)
Policy toolbox for SCP

- EU eco-label
- Energy-label
- PEF?

Information instruments:
- Media and education
- Public procurement

Economic instruments:
- Economic subsidies
- Taxes and charges

Legal instruments:
- Environmental permits
- Restricted chemicals
- Eco-design directive

Instrument panels:
- Co-operation committees - product panels - standardisation
- Voluntary agreements - Management systems
- Research information to eco-design
- Voluntary eco-labels, declarations

- Eco-Design Directive
- Other product norms
- Producer responsibility

- Green Public Procurement

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New product-policy topics in circular economy

A new goal in the eco-design directive: to make products more durable, and easier to repair, reuse or recycle (directive so far used mostly for energy efficiency).

+ Standardisation mandate regarding material efficiency aspects

Focus on durability also at other fields, e.g.:
• German Environment Agency 2017. Obsolescence - Political strategies for improved durability of products
  • www.umweltbundesamt.de/sites/default/files/medien/376/dokumente/policy_brief_obsolescence_-_political_strategies_for_improved_durability_of_products.pdf
• PLATE, the conference on Product Lifetimes and the Environment, www.plateconference.org/second-plate-conference/

Sharing economy services (collaborative consumption)

Chemicals and clean circles
Product trends important for circular economy

- Increasingly complex product design, materials and functionality
- Increasing use of modular design
- Production on demand
- Services instead of products, and services around products
- Home delivery systems – including Internet shopping
- Internet of things
- Changing product lifespans (for many product groups decreasing life-time)
- Collaborative consumption and sharing economy services
- Markets for recycling, and for reused products

How type 1 eco-labels promote circular economy?

The product-specific criteria already include requirements for durability, the use of recycled materials, and recycling.

When updating the criteria, circular economy principles could be taken into consideration even more, through tougher requirements on durability and other requirements that extend the product's service life:

- warranties
- reparability
- availability of spare parts
- recyclability of the materials and components
- possibilities for reuse and remanufacturing.

Source: Suikkanen & Nissinen 2017, Circular economy and…, see last slide.
Criteria could increasingly be set in line with C.E.

- **RAW MATERIAL CHOICES**
  - Secondary raw material and components

- **MATERIAL CIRCULATION**
  - Take back systems
  - Limited hazardous chemicals

- **MATERIAL CIRCULATION**
  - Recycling in production
  - By-product use

- **EXTENDING PRODUCT LIFE**
  - Multi-functional
  - Upgradable
  - Repairable
  - Remanufactured

- **DISMANTLING**
  - Modular
  - Separable

- **USE INTENSITY**
  - Sharing economy services
It is often said that consumer is the king/queen – is it so?

Many important decisions are taken in the product design phase

Ecolabel criteria create a push for the design and manufacturing phases

Ecolabelled products act as a benchmark for designers/manufacturers, buyers/purchasers and consumers

Retailers also important for determining the sortiment at the market
Challenges and the way ahead

Quality is focused (environmentally preferable products and services), but also the quantity of consumption matters - how to deal with it?

Circular and low-carbon economy — hand in hand

Consumption and urban form – how to avoid locks, and how sustainable cities make sustainable consumption and lifestyles easy?


Product Environmental Footprint PEF (EU)
• more reliable comparable environmental information
• but how large work load and cost?
• co-operation with type 1 eco-labels - how to find synergies and avoid different messages?
Further Information

Project: The Nordic Swan Ecolabel, Circular Economy and Product Environmental Footprint (SCEPEF)

www.syke.fi/projects/scepef

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