MANIFESTO FOR A RESOURCE-EFFICIENT EUROPE

In a world with growing pressures on resources and the environment, the EU has no choice but to go for the transition to a resource-efficient and ultimately regenerative circular economy. Our future jobs and competitiveness, as a major importer of resources, are dependent on our ability to get more added value, and achieve overall decoupling, through a systemic change in the use and recovery of resources in the economy. According to the OECD, this could lead to steady economic growth with business opportunities across the whole economy.

Europe is taking important decisions on strengthening economic and monetary union, the future EU budget and engaging with the international community in the follow up of the Rio+20 Summit. Against this background, the European Resource Efficiency Platform is calling on business, labour and civil society leaders to support resource efficiency and the transformation to a circular economy and society now because this offers a path out of the current crisis towards a reindustrialisation of the European economy on the basis of resource-efficient growth that will last. A circular, resource-efficient and resilient economy should be achieved in a socially inclusive and responsible way by:

1. Encouraging innovation and accelerating public and private investment in resource-efficient technologies, systems and skills, also in SMEs, through a dynamic and predictable political, economic and regulatory framework, a supportive financial system and sustainable growth enhancing resource-efficient priorities in public expenditure and procurement.

2. Implementing, using and adopting smart regulation, standards and codes of conduct that a) create a level playing-field, b) reward front-runners and c) accelerate the transition, and d) take into account the social and international implications of our actions.

3. Abolishing environmentally harmful subsidies and tax-breaks that waste public money on obsolete practices, taking care to address affordability for people whose incomes are hardest-pressed. Shifting the tax burden away from jobs to encourage resource-efficiency, and using taxes and charges to stimulate innovation and development of a job-rich, socially cohesive, resource-efficient and climate-resilient economy.

4. Creating better market conditions for products and services that have lower impacts across their life-cycles, and that are durable, repairable and recyclable, progressively taking the worst performing products off the market; inspiring sustainable life-styles by informing and incentivising consumers, using the latest insights into behavioural economics and information technology, and encouraging sustainable sourcing, new business models and the use of waste as raw materials.
5. **Integrating** current and future resource scarcities and vulnerabilities more coherently into wider policy areas, at national, European and global level, such as in the fields of transport, food, water and construction.

6. Providing clear signals to all economic actors by adopting policy goals to achieve a resource-efficient economy and society by 2020, setting **targets** that give a clear direction and **indicators** to measure progress relating to the use of land, material, water and greenhouse gas emissions, as well as biodiversity. Such indicators must go beyond conventional measures of economic activity, help guide the decisions of all actors, and assist public authorities in timely action. All organisations above a meaningful size and impact must be held accountable to measure and report key non-financial progress indicators on a comparable basis.

The Platform will issue a more detailed set of short term policy recommendations to address these issues in June 2013.

**The Members of the European Resource Efficiency Platform are:**

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