

Foreword

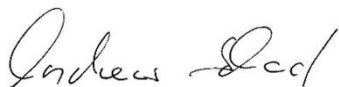
In the pursuit of sustainable development and European Union (EU) and regional integration, Albania is actively confronting challenges stemming from climate change vulnerabilities, increased demand for raw materials and growing waste. The country is seeing rising momentum for the circular economy transition – one of the key pillars of the Green Agenda of the Western Balkans – and has recognised its significance in attaining national and regional environmental objectives.

The Ministry of Tourism and Environment is leading this transformative journey, notably through its newly established Directorate for Circular Economy. Despite commendable efforts and increased political and public focus on the circular economy, accompanied by the development of corresponding strategic documents, tangible outcomes of the circular transition remain incomplete. Insufficient awareness, scarce infrastructure, and limited financing options compounded by a lack of co-ordinated action collectively impede the effectiveness of current laws, policies, and overall initiatives, hindering the realisation of the full potential of the circular economy in Albania.

Guided by the OECD's circular economy methodology, this roadmap aims to assist the Albanian government in establishing a robust policy foundation for a successful circular transition. Drawing from a thorough diagnostic of Albania's circular economy landscape, the roadmap strategically incorporates current policy initiatives, and promotes strong alignment across the sectors, policy measures, and stakeholders involved in this transformative process. The in-depth analysis identifies a set of priority areas key for developing circular economy policies in Albania. Accompanied by a monitoring framework, the roadmap puts forward concrete policy recommendations for selected priority areas, including economic instruments, circular business models for small and medium-sized enterprises, and targeted solutions for plastics, with a focus on marine litter.

Integrating reforms for sustainable economic growth and implementing action plans for the green agenda are vital for fostering the production of sustainable products within the Common Regional Market. This approach, and the paradigm shift driven by circular economy principles, not only paves the way for access to the EU single market, but also underlines the commitment to environmental sustainability and economic resilience in alignment with EU standards.

The roadmap was produced by the OECD's South East Europe and Environment and Economy Integration Divisions, co-ordinated by the OECD South East Europe Regional Programme. It benefitted from inputs by a wide range of circular economy stakeholders, co-ordinated by the Ministry of Tourism and Environment of Albania. The work is co-funded by the European Union as part of the "EU Support to Competitiveness and Sustainability in the Western Balkans and Türkiye" project, which aims to reinforce economic governance and integration, and strengthen resilient and competitive markets.



Andreas Schaal

OECD Director for Global Relations and Co-operation and OECD Sherpa to the G7, the G20 and APEC



Mathieu Bousquet

Director for Thematic Support, Coordination of Policy and Financial Instruments, DG NEAR, European Commission

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The work was led by Anita Richter, Deputy Head, and Jovana Pavlovic Djukic, Team Lead for Green Economy and Sustainability, both from the OECD South East Europe Division.

The principal authors are Jovana Pavlovic Djukic, Clémence Girin and Dafina Marashi (all from the OECD South East Europe Division) and Katarína Svatíková (OECD Environment and Economy Integration Division). The roadmap benefitted from substantive inputs and guidance from Peter Börkey (OECD Environment and Economy Integration Division). The lead review of the report was conducted by William Tompson (OECD Eurasia Division).

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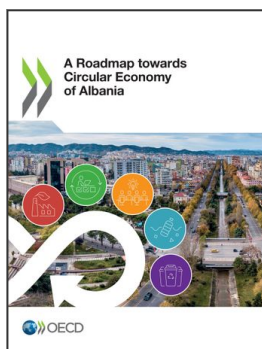
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