Press Release

For release on 24 March

HOOP Launches Urban Bioeconomy Network For Cities And Regions

Brussels, 24 March 2022 – The HOOP Network of cities and regions has been launched to facilitate exchange of knowledge and mutual learning among cities and regions willing to recover valuable resources from urban biowaste and wastewater.

According to the EU Bioeconomy Strategy, "cities should become major circular bioeconomy hubs"[1], where biowaste is a feedstock for safe and sustainable bio-based products. HOOP aims to be the catalyst, providing Project Development Assistance (PDA) to 8 lighthouse cities and regions and creating the only city/region network dedicated to urban circular bioeconomy.

The network will be managed by the Association of Cities and Regions for Sustainable Resource management (ACR+).

> **By joining the HOOP Network, cities and regions will have the chance to access information on innovative bioeconomy solutions, exchange with their peers and learn from leading technical experts.**
>
> – Jean-Benoît Bel (ACR+), HOOP Network Manager

The HOOP Network of cities and regions is open to **organisations that plan or operate municipal waste management or wastewater treatment** (for instance local or regional authorities, or waste management companies). Activities foreseen within the network include:

---

[1] A sustainable Bioeconomy for Europe: Strengthening the connection between economy, society and the environment, COM(2018) 673

- ***HOOP lunch talks**, monthly 30 minutes online exchanges about the urban circular bioeconomy involving an expert from the HOOP team, who will share information and practical solutions with the members of the HOOP Network. The first episode will be held on <u>31 March at 2 pm CET</u> focusing on the 8 technologies being implemented by the HOOP Lighthouses.*
- ***Knowledge exchange programme:** cities and regions will be invited to take part in various activities such as working groups and study visits, and even one-on-one capacity building activities, allowing connections with local waste experts and HOOP partners to discuss specific aspects of their system and obtain first-hand information on good practices.*
- ***Circularity label,** a circular ranking system to serve as the baseline for green policies and to boost investment projects for the production of urban biowaste & wastewater-based products.*
- ***Urban Circular Bioeconomy Hub (UCBH),** an online platform to foster knowledge exchange and replication in cities and regions across Europe. The Hub will also be the place where members can connect with other cities and regions part of the network, interact with the HOOP partners, and access the different services offered by HOOP. It will be launched in the second semester 2022.*
- ***Virtual Academy**, an online space hosted on the UCBH providing cities and regions with access to resources and interactive services related to Urban Bioeconomy. Furthermore, all the results developed by the Lighthouses in the pilot sites will be integrated in the Virtual Academy.*

The involvement in the network and the time spent to follow the project activities depends on the need and will of each member. HOOP will invite members of the network to take part in project events, study visits, and workshops based on the interests and addressed challenges expressed by each of them. Being part of the HOOP Network is easy and **totally free of charge,** and thanks to the EU funding, **the project has a dedicated budget to cover travel expenses** of members of the HOOP Network taking part in the project's activities.

The 8 lighthouse cities and regions, and founding members of the HOOP Network, are Albano-Laziale (Italy), Almere (The Netherlands), Bergen (Norway), Kuopio (Finland), Münster (Germany), Murcia (Spain), Greater Porto (Portugal), and Western Macedonia (Greece).

The HOOP Network of cities and regions counts already 30 members from 12 different countries, including 18 cities and 12 regions. Check the map displaying the current members.

If you are interested in getting involved in the HOOP project and have access to the services listed above, **sign up to the HOOP Network of Cities and Regions via the project website:** https://hoopproject.eu/network/#join-us

www.hoopproject.eu   @hoop_eu   hoop-project

*** ENDS ***

KEYWORDS

Cities, circular economy, bioeconomy, waste management, wastewater, biowaste, food waste, investments, public procurement, financial engineering, business models, innovation, Europe.

ABOUT HOOP

Coordinated by Centro Technológico de la Energia y del Medio Ambiente (CETENMA) in Cartagena (Murcia), Spain, **HOOP** (**H**ub of circular cities b**OO**sting **P**latform to foster investments for the valorisation of urban biowaste and wastewater) is a four-year project that has received funding from the EU's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement #101000836. HOOP includes 23 partners from 10 European countries, including 8 'lighthouse' cities/regions with an estimated total population of close to 2.5 million inhabitants. For more details, please visit:

www.hoopproject.eu

MEDIA CONTACTS

Belén Gutiérrez
Communication Officer, REVOLVE
email: **belen@revolve.media**
phone: +32 2 318 3984

James Ling
Communication & Projects Coordinator,
Greenovate! Europe
email: j.ling@greenovate-europe.eu
phone: +32 2400 1007

NETWORK CONTACTS

Jean-Benoit Bel
Program Manager, ACR+
email: jbb@acrplus.org
phone: +32 2 234 65 00

Serena Lisai
Project Officer, ACR+
email: sli@acrplus.org
phone: +32 2 234 65 00

www.hoopproject.eu   @hoop_eu   hoop-project