

Press Release

To be released immediately

19 June 2024

Cities and regions commit for a just, sufficient, and circular future under the guidance of ACR+



For the 30th time in its existence, the ACR+ network gathered its members to exchange on current challenges and find common solutions to reach together their circular ambitions. This year, the General Assembly took place in Marseille on 18-19 June, together with the closing conference of the [LIFE IP SMART WASTE](#) project, implemented by the French [Region Sud](#), co-host of the event and member of ACR+.



Marseille, France – Since its first years, members of the [Association of Cities and Regions for sustainable Resource management](#) (ACR+) have been striving to be front runners in the field of material-resources-products, using the strength of the network to anticipate EU and national legislation. Following developments in the field, preoccupations of the network

moved from boosting recycling (back in the 1990s) to accelerating circular economy (integrating it clearly to its vision since 2014). Acknowledging that progresses have been done over 30 years, ACR+ members are now gearing their attention on the necessity of a just and sufficient transition and how to support it.

Under the title “No sustainable future without a just, sufficient, and circular society”, the event included a keynote speech by Janez Potočnik, co-Chair of the International Resource Panel, followed by a panel discussion gathering the deputy Director-General of DG ENV of the

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European Commission and representatives of OVAM – the Flemish waste agency, the European Environmental Bureau, and Behaven. A crucial point on which participants agreed is **the adoption of a material footprint target**. Organised right after the European elections, the conference brought reassurance that despite the current uncertain perspectives for environmental issues, local and regional authorities are more than ever committed to drive the change. What they need is to be given the right resources and tools, especially by their national and European institutions.

“One of the network’s priorities over the coming years is to support ACR+ members to develop circular economy strategies that integrate social equity and based on the sufficiency principle” explains Françoise Bonnet, Secretary General of ACR+.

This 30th General Assembly is also a milestone for ACR+ as it saw the re-election of Iain Gulland, CEO of Zero Waste Scotland at the head of the network, for another two-year mandate. He will be accompanied in his mission by a Board of Directors composed by the regions of Brussels-Capital (Bruxelles Environment), Pays de la Loire, Catalonia (Catalan Waste Agency), Navarra, Eastern Midlands, Friesland, and the cities of Porto (LIPOR), Genova (AMIU), Odense.



“I am honoured to be re-elected President of ACR+ for another term. It is an exciting time for the organisation as we celebrate 30 years of success in supporting our members, providing a platform for them to share and expand their expertise in pursuit of a more sustainable and fair society for all. I am looking forward to working with my fellow Directors and the dedicated team at ACR+ in furthering our work, connecting with more local and regional authorities and increasing the accessibility of tools and knowledge to accelerate action on the ground.” Iain Gulland, President of ACR+.

In parallel to the ACR+ Annual Assembly, the 15th Awards Ceremony of the [EWWR](#) celebrated the best actions of the 2023 edition. Five winners received special trophies made of plastic collected from the beaches. For the second year, the Ceremony welcomed the best practices identified and supported by the EU-Med Weeks of Waste Reduction, organised in collaboration with Med-Waves. In addition, ACR+ and Region Sud joined forces with the team of the [Innovative Sustainable Economy \(ISE\) Mission of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme](#) for an workshop on scaling up innovative solutions to achieve zero waste in the Mediterranean region during the first Med Innovation Day.



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The Association of Cities and Regions for sustainable Resource management (ACR+) is an international network of cities and regions sharing the aim of promoting sustainable resource management and accelerating the transition towards a circular economy on their territories and beyond. The network, gathering around 90 members, is open to other key players in the field of material resource management such as NGOs, academic institutions, consultancies or private organisations. Members' needs and priorities define the network's activities, which include facilitating the exchange of experiences between members, sharing technical and policy information and livening up the network. To strengthen the knowledge and capacities of the network and push for innovation in the field of material resource management, ACR+ is also involved in several projects at European level and in the Mediterranean region, in cooperation with its members.

For more information visit our website: www.acrplus.org or follow us on Twitter: [@ACRplus](https://twitter.com/ACRplus)