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A circular bio-economy in the European agriculture and forestry sectors

The European Union is committed to fostering resource efficiency and reducing its reliance on fossil resources by, on the one hand, developing a circular economy and, on the other, broadening the Union's bio-economy. So far, these two concepts have been developed in parallel but, as IEEP's Ben Allen outlines in an interview to the [Horizon 2020 Portal magazine](#), their integration could offer real opportunities for Europe. A transition towards a circular bio-economy could see the traditional approaches to circular economy and bio-economy integrated together, leading to more sustainable resource use at a lower cost while developing new income streams, favouring the emergence of new sectors, adding value to products and boosting jobs. Achieving this will not be easy, it will involve a change in the way we think about resources and wastes, but the potential opportunities are substantial. Key activities in the transition include improving knowledge through research and sharing of best practice, improved stakeholder engagement and policy interaction, and enhancement of markets in the bio-economy and circular economy while fostering collaboration within and between sectors.

The above ideas were explored in a forward-looking workshop on the [Opportunities for Agriculture and Forestry in the Circular Economy](#) was organised by the European Innovation Partnership for Agriculture productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI) in Naantali, Finland, on 28 and 29 October 2015. The aim of the workshop was to foster innovation partnerships and define concrete actions in the EU's agriculture and forestry sectors. The two-day workshop brought together over 90 participants, including agriculture and forestry practitioners, researchers, decision makers and industries.

Information on the European Commission's initiative on the Circular Economy is available [here](#). The final report of the EIP-AGRI workshop report can be found [here](#).

For more information on our work in this area, please contact Ben Allen (ballen@ieep.eu)

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