

20 Years Of Collaborating Towards A Good Life





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The Huppertsberg Factory in Wuppertal, Germany, home of the CSCP
Photo © Marc Wessendarp



→ Dr. Flandra Sylva-Beqiri
Senior Communication Manager

The First Twenty Years

Editor's note by Dr. Flandra Sylva-Beqiri

The first spark for this publication came on a late spring day in 2024 in a converted factory space in Wuppertal, where our CSCP team was gathered for the annual Team Day. This is an important event in our internal calendar, when we step back from our daily project work to think together: what matters now and what we want to make possible in the year ahead.

In a dedicated session, we came together to reflect on the CSCP's 20-year journey and the significance of this milestone. Team members contributed notes, but also questions: How do you capture twenty years of work without flattening it into data points? What does "success" mean in sustainability work—when progress is seldom linear and impact often takes time? What should a 20-year anniversary make visible, beyond celebration—about responsibility, learning, and the next chapter?

These questions take us back to where our story begins: a different world, when sustainability occupied a far less prominent place in public discourse. The term "circular economy" was still emerging and lacking clarity; production and consumption were mainly thought of separately; and the idea of sustainable lifestyles had barely entered public debate. In this context, in 2005, a small team, driven by a bold vision and strong commitment, came together to establish the CSCP—a think-and-do tank rooted in Wuppertal, Germany, but with an international scope from day one.

We have come a long way and taken some sharp turns: surges of momentum, tough times, urgency colliding with complexity. Yet one thread has remained steady throughout: **our vision of a good life for all!**

This publication is our way of telling the story from within. You'll find the foundations: the early impulses, the first big ideas, and the building blocks that still guide our work—collaboration, interdisciplinarity, holistic thinking, and trust-based partnerships. Along the way, we revisit our milestone projects and collaborations and reflect on what has become our distinctive strength.

But, you won't only hear our voice. This publication makes room for the people and organisations that have supported us—**our partners and friends**—who have challenged our thinking and helped sharpen our work. Their perspectives sit alongside ours, because this journey has always been shared.

You will also find glimpses of the organisation behind the projects: short anecdotes, turning points, and the everyday moments that rarely appear in formal publications, but often show how work really happens.

In this publication, you'll also hear from our **CSCP alumni**, whose contributions continue to shape our story, and from **family and friends**, who share an outside perspective on what this work asks of us.

Twenty years are an occasion to look back, but also to look ahead with clarity. This publication is shaped by many voices because our work has always been shaped by many hands. We do this work with partners, and we do it together. We are grateful you are here—and we invite you to read on, as the next chapter is already taking shape. ●

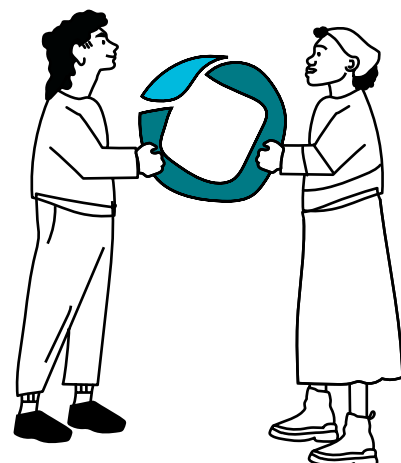


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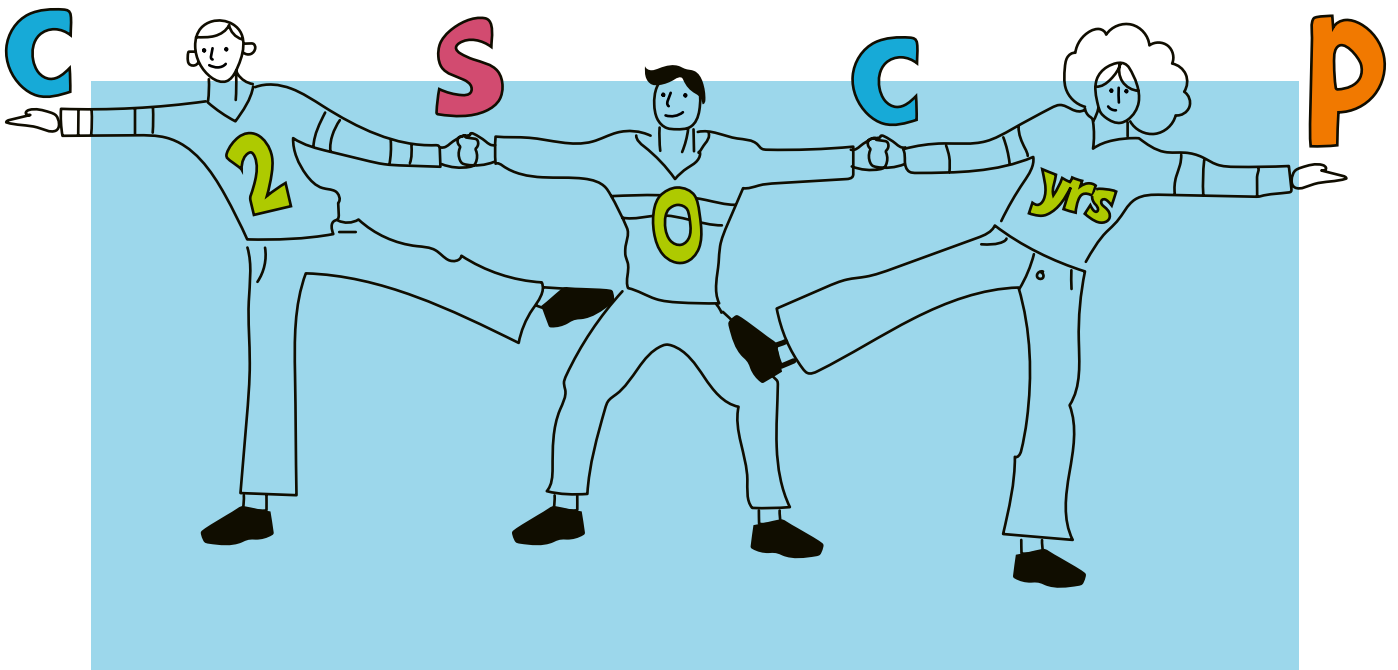
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The CSCP marks two decades of work—from early challenges to bold innovations, from crisis response to empowering changemakers—it’s been a journey shaped by impact, learning, and transformation.



20 Years of the CSCP

An Interview with Michael Kuhndt, CSCP Executive Director

As an overture to this interview, we asked the Executive Director, Michael Kuhndt, to look back—and ahead—in five questions to give us a sense of the people, ideas, and turning points that have shaped the CSCP.

An “aha” moment that redefined the sustainability narrative?

20 years ago, sustainability was mainly thought of in terms of the image of the polar bear on melting ice. This was a problem, but it failed to communicate the profound impact climate change would have on our lives. Step by step, we began translating sustainability into tangible actions and relatable messages. We believed then, as we do now, that sustainability should speak to what truly matters: a good life for all!

A breakthrough approach that changed things for real?

Two decades ago, the focus was either on production or on consumption. The CSCP’s breakthrough was to frame production and consumption as part of a cycle—think of circular economy before the term came into widespread use.

CSCP’s superpower?

Acknowledging that it doesn’t have one! Positive change never happens alone—whether with governments, corporations, small and medium-sized enterprises, labour unions, civil society, or citizens, our role is often to sit at the table and build trust, bridge perspectives, and facilitate action.

Local roots and a global scope, how is that a match?

We are deeply rooted in Wuppertal, Germany, where we are based, but have led and participated in projects and initiatives across continents and in over 70 countries. This global-local dynamic allows us to stay both grounded and visionary, while cross-pollinating ideas and approaches that strengthen one another.

Milestones that moved the needle?

Every time we managed to build trust and align diverse actors around shared goals stands out—from influencing major global policy frameworks and action plans to co-developing tools and innovations that have been adopted by local governments, businesses, civil society, industry associations, or communities worldwide.

Hard-earned wisdom?

The road hasn’t always been smooth: some partnerships didn’t work right from the start and some innovations didn’t land or scale as intended. Change takes time, persistence, trust and adaptability.

What led to the founding of the CSCP as a Think and Do Tank back in 2005?

The CSCP emerged from a collaboration between the *United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)* and the *Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy*. From the beginning, what set the CSCP apart was its strong “do” component—combining visionary thinking with action. Unlike many organisations that focused solely on research or policy, the CSCP actively engaged in implementing solutions.

What’s more, the CSCP embraced a global perspective early on, recognising that sustainability challenges require cross-border collaboration and systemic approaches. This foundation allowed us to work closely with UN Member States—from China to Pakistan to Kenya to Germany—and diverse partners, paving the way for the ongoing contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals and other major frameworks in our mission to mainstream sustainability.

Over the past two decades, approaches to sustainability have evolved significantly. How has the CSCP contributed to setting new agendas during this time?

I think there are at least three dimensions where our work has helped catalyse transformative change. The first one is translating sustainability into the pursuit of a good life for everyone. By focusing on how inclusive and holistic sustainable practices can support well-being, equity, and personal as well as collective prosperity, the CSCP helped shift narratives—from technical or policy-heavy language to a values-based dialogue about what truly constitutes a good life.

The second point is our emphasis on the systemic link between the way goods and services are produced and the way they are consumed, particularly through our pioneering work on consumer behaviour and sustainable lifestyles. By bringing these two parts of the value chain into dialogue, we have been able to gain valuable insights from both perspectives: how consumption patterns shape production systems and how production realities influence what is available, affordable, and attractive to consumers. This approach has been instrumental in breaking down silo thinking in both policy and practice.

The third one is that from day one we have worked with very diverse stakeholders—businesses, governments, civil society, and academia—redefining what meaningful collaboration means and showcasing what it can achieve. Our emphasis has been on co-creation, mutual learning, and bridging differences across cultures, sectors, disciplines, viewpoints, and crucially, among competitors. This inclusive and partnership-based model has proven instrumental in advancing holistic, long-term solutions.

What are the CSCP's key ingredients for collaborations that drive change?

The first “C” in our name, collaboration, is not just a word, it is a principle that defines how we work. True collaboration requires showing up with integrity and facilitating from the

backseat—prioritising shared progress over recognition or position. Over the years, we have learned to lean into complexity, treating it not as a barrier but as fertile ground for innovation and transformation.

A long-term mindset is also essential. Rather than pursuing quick wins, we invest in building trust and alignment over time—laying the groundwork for systemic impact that lasts.

And above all, collaboration begins with listening—deeply and openly—to diverse voices. Some of the most meaningful partnerships we’ve helped foster brought together actors who, at first, appeared misaligned—not only in their methods, but often in their goals. This is because collaboration is about more than working together—it’s about discovering shared values and co-creating spaces where people and organisations can move forward together, even when they start from very different places.

What’s next—how is the CSCP stepping into the future?

At the CSCP, the future is not something we wait for but rather something we shape now. That’s why we launched the *co-do lab*, which runs as a social business and was born out of the urgency to radically scale up our efforts in transforming businesses, municipalities, and cities. Based in the historic Gut Einern in Wuppertal, the *co-do lab* is a launchpad where pioneers, changemakers, experts, and communities come together to connect vision with action, backed by the full strength of the CSCP team and our global network. ●



Our Vision & Mission



Participatory infographic at the CSCP Team Day 2023 in Essen, Germany, Photo © Marc Wessendarp

We are an international, non-profit **think and do tank**. Together with businesses, policymakers, partner organisations and civil society, we pursue our mission to mainstream sustainability towards our vision to enable a **good life for all**.

By taking a holistic approach, we are able to connect the dots and leverage synergies as well as identify and enable collaborations that lead to impactful solutions towards greater social and environmental sustainability at all levels: **local, regional, and global**.

Our Areas of Expertise

Sustainable
Business
Models &
Entrepreneurship



Sustainable
Infrastructure,
Products &
Services



Good
Life

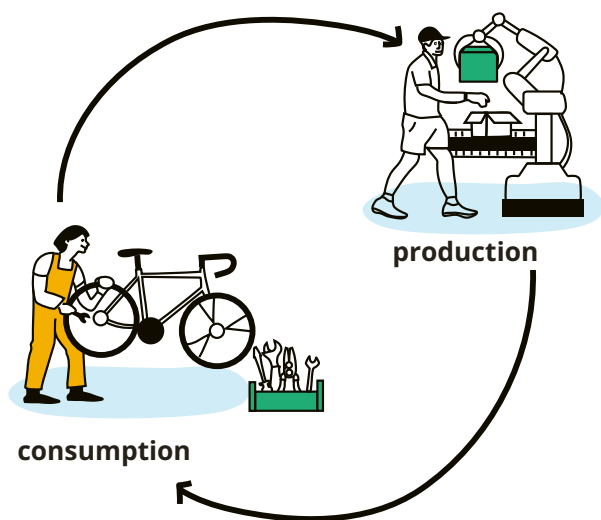
Sustainable
Lifestyles &
Behaviour



Our Approach & Key Topics

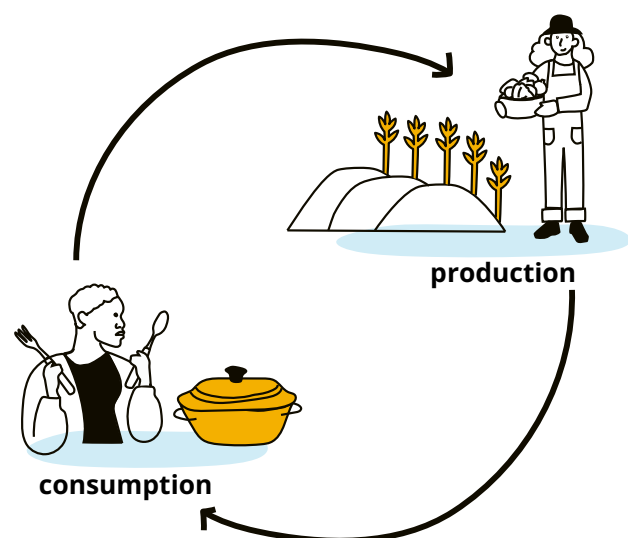
We are driven by the ambition to generate positive and long-term impact by approaching sustainability goals as interrelated and not advancing one goal at the expense of another, in line with major strategic frameworks such as the EU Clean Industrial Deal and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Our **key topics** are a reflection of areas where we see great potential to have a positive impact and are shaped by **twenty years of experience** in the field of sustainable consumption and production.



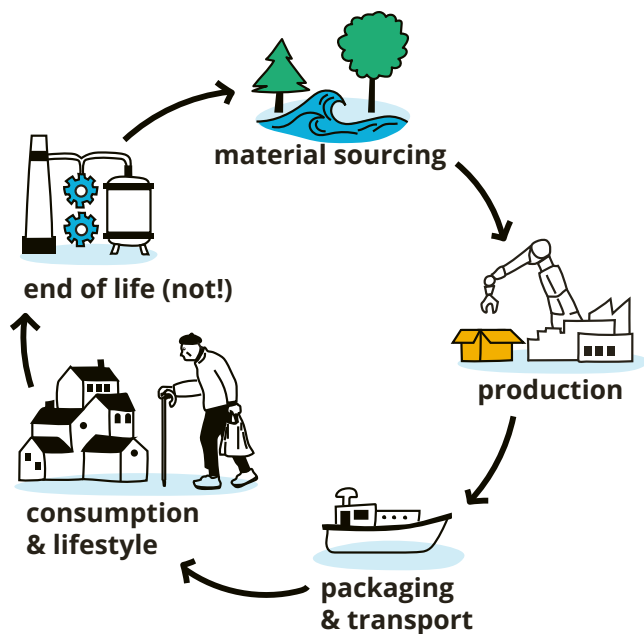
Sustainable Circular

We approach circularity as a means to sustainability, not as a stand-alone goal. Discerning between circular and sustainable circular is key when it comes to generating positive impact across all hallmarks: economic, social, and environmental. Products might be (re)manufactured using recycled materials solely, but if produced at a high energy cost or designed to become obsolete, the circular falls short of being sustainable as well. Moreover, if consumer insights and behavioural factors are not accounted for—the use phase of products and services often being the most carbon intensive one—circular efforts might not be successful.



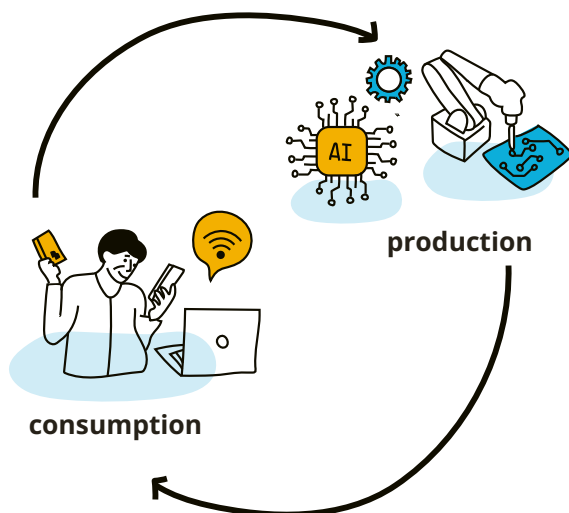
Food

Current food systems are responsible for about one third of the global carbon emissions and part of the root cause to resource depletion, biodiversity loss as well as unfair practices in the value chain. Putting food systems on a clear sustainability path can be a powerful mechanism to mitigate climate change, achieve zero-pollution, protect and preserve biodiversity, and make healthy and sustainable diets available to everyone. In line with major frameworks, such as the EU Farm to Fork Strategy and the SDGs, we work with all actors in the food value chain on topics from reducing food waste, integrating consumer insights or anchoring sustainability across the whole food portfolio of companies.



Biodiversity & Climate Change

Biodiversity loss and climate change are two major crises of our time. The goal to mitigate climate change and reduce and reverse biodiversity loss is anchored throughout all of our projects and work streams. Sustainable circular systems can be key to climate change mitigation (also through eliminating waste and pollution), while sustainable food value chains hold great potential when it comes to stopping biodiversity degradation and potentially supporting regeneration. We support these through our hotspot analysis, co-creation of new sustainable business models, or fostering new cooperation among stakeholders.



Digitalisation with Purpose

As a mega trend of our time, digitalisation is a powerful means to enable innovation, accelerate processes, and connect people. On the downside, data can have a huge energy footprint, data collection raises many security-related questions, automation and AI makes the need for certain jobs shrink, and the benefits of digitalisation are not made available to everyone equally. The opportunities as well as the challenges call for an interlinkage of digitalisation to other key ambitions, such as sustainability (mitigating climate change, supporting the zero-pollution ambition, protecting biodiversity, decreasing resource waste) or equity (increasing media literacy among all groups in society, reducing existing inequalities). We implement our projects collaboratively and approach digitalisation as a means toward achieving greater sustainability across topics.

Our Partners & Clients

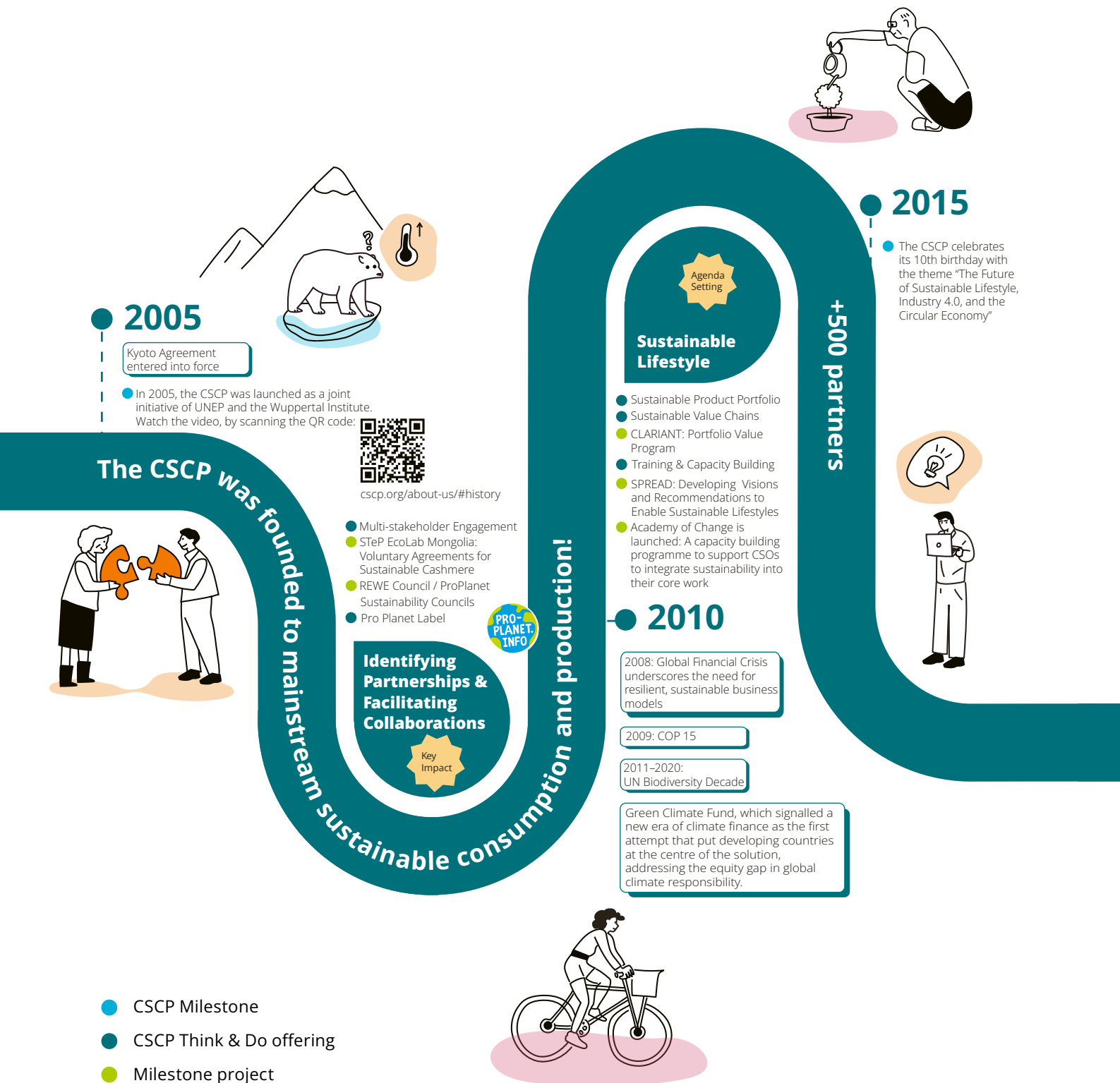
Some of the partners we have collaborated with over the years





The CSCP Sustainability Story

A Visual Timeline





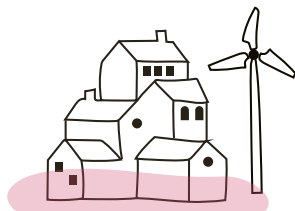
2015: Paris Agreement

2015: UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- R2PI Project: The CSCP leads a consortium of 15 partners from 9 EU Member States aimed at transitioning from linear to circular economy through policy and innovation
- HOOP (SCALIBUR): Biowaste Clubs to foster collaboration for biowaste valorisation in cities

Circular Economy

Sustainable Circular!



- Sustainable Island Mauritius
- Sustainable Business Models
- CEE2ACT: Empowering the Central and Eastern European Countries to develop Bioeconomy Strategies and Action Plans

Food

The CSCP launches the co-do! lab to increase impact & scale transformations

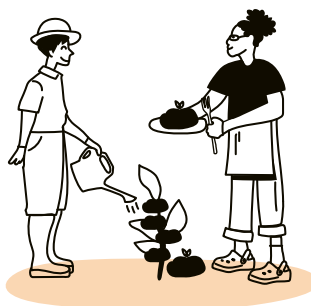
2020

Fridays for Future

2019: EU Green Deal

EU Circular Economy Action Plan

- The CSCP moderates the Dialogue Forum for the Reduction of Food Waste in Wholesale and Retail in Germany



Climate and Biodiversity

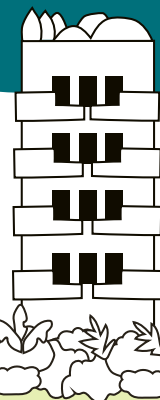
CSCP becomes a EUPD Top Brand Corporate Sustainability

2025

EU Clean Industrial Deal

- Policy
- Competence Centre eStandards and Digital Centre WertNetzWerke
- Launch of the co-do-lab

20th Birthday of the CSCP



Digitalisation

Digitalisation with Purpose



+78 Countries

+265 Projects

We often hear the saying “walk the talk”, a great English idiom meaning matching one’s actions with one’s words. Yet, sometimes, it is important to do the reverse and ‘talk the walk’. As we mark two decades of walking together with partners from around the world towards our vision of a good life for all, we want to take a moment to acknowledge and celebrate some of the sustainability advancements and developments that have shaped these past two decades. We have come a long way together—and we can look back to find inspiration and courage as we continue forward.

Things Change!

Inspiring Stories of Transformation

Closing the Loop: Rethinking the Circular Economy

When you mention circular economy today, people no longer get confused or start thinking about literal circles. Initially focused on technical solutions like recycling and material recovery, circular economy is becoming increasingly about system-level integration, bridging supply chains, consumer behaviours, social norms, and cultural practices. The transition hinges not just on technological innovation but also on governance, collaboration, and incentives that make circular practices economically viable. Companies embracing repair, reuse, and remanufacturing are unlocking new revenue through service-based models and platform solutions, while reducing risks linked to resource volatility and regulation. Artificial intelligence is amplifying this shift—optimising material flows, predicting product lifecycles, and enabling smarter decisions from design to urban planning. Despite challenges such as linear infrastructure and systems not yet fit for reuse, momentum is growing: cross-sector partnerships are expanding, and digital tools like the Digital Product Passport are closing critical knowledge and implementation gaps. The circular economy is not a perfect circle yet—but it continues to evolve as a powerful pathway towards a more adaptive, competitive, and regenerative economic system.

→ Alexander Mannweiler,
Head of Sustainable Business and Entrepreneurship

Turning Food Waste Awareness into Action

The facts are straightforward: food waste is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions worldwide, a reality quantified in FAO’s landmark 2011 study. Yet, only a few decades ago, there was marginal awareness or efforts to tackle this challenge. Over the years, we have come to recognise food waste as a major contributor to climate change and resource depletion—and a stark symbol of inequality in a world where hunger persists. In response, the prevention and reduction of food waste and loss has become central to national government strategies and international frameworks, most notably the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Farmers, retailers, and field experts are coming together to find workable solutions. New business models have emerged with food waste prevention at their core, be it based on dynamic pricing or simply by normalising aesthetically imperfect foods. Moreover, countless tools and innovative approaches have been introduced to the market to support consumers cut down waste. We still have a long way to go, but the gap between accepting food waste as a by-product of the system and developing strategies to combat it is narrowing day by day.

→ Lea Leimann,
CSCP Junior Project Manager



Bringing Biodiversity to the Boardroom

Over the past 20 years, the narrative around biodiversity has shifted from a conservation issue to a strategic priority for resilience and risk management. In the early 2000s, it was largely seen as a moral and ecological concern, focused on species protection, until business-relevant framing emerged through initiatives like the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity. That lens deepened as the European Union linked finance and ecosystems under the EU Taxonomy Regulation in 2020 and set a long-term path with the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. On the other hand, the global community raised ambition through the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Within companies, biodiversity moved from “nice to have” to a board-level strategic topic that is increasingly recognised as key to making value chains more resilient, supporting climate adaptation, and reducing systemic risks. Consequently, companies are now developing nature-positive business models that not only reduce exposure to biodiversity-related risks but also strengthen their long-term competitiveness in evolving markets.

→ Michael Mühlenbein,
CSCP Project Manager



Shaping Digitalisation with Purpose

In the early 2000s, the discourse surrounding digitalisation was dominated by a paradigm of uncritical acceleration. In practice, this meant technology was deployed to enhance the efficiency of the linear economy, while its systemic consequences remained a peripheral concern.

Over the past two decades, this mindset has undergone a profound transformation. What began as a niche critique has evolved into a strategic priority, reflected in concepts like the EU’s “twin green & digital transition”. Today, an expanding coalition of businesses, policymakers, and civil society organisations is working not just to harness technology, but to intentionally steer it towards sustainability goals. One of the great achievements of the last 20 years is that “digitalisation with purpose” has moved from the margins to become a powerful, necessary guiding vision.

Yet this vision is now in a high-stakes race against the default path. The rapid rise of AI—with its extraordinary potential and equally significant environmental and societal impacts—has become the defining arena of this contest. This is where the CSCP operates: not only advocating for a better trajectory, but actively shaping it. Together with our partners, we work to close the gap between an evolving narrative and real-world, sustainable impact.

→ Arne von Hofe,
CSCP Senior Expert

Rethinking Tourism

If you wanted to book a holiday in the 2000s, sustainability options were unlikely to be found in the search filters. Back then, tourism was largely measured in arrivals and revenue, with little attention to its climate, environmental, and social costs. Today, awareness of issues like greenhouse gas emissions, water scarcity, biodiversity loss, cultural erosion, and housing pressure has grown, and terms such as “overtourism” have entered the mainstream. Destinations are beginning to spread demand, set visitor limits, and use data to manage flows. UNWTO (now UN Tourism) has been instrumental with initiatives like the Glasgow Declaration to encourage more operators to measure impacts, cut waste, and adopt circular practices. Some businesses have shifted to renewables, local sourcing, and service redesign, and more travellers are making lower-impact choices. Still, progress is uneven: emissions remain high, policies often lack enforcement, and economic pressures can outweigh sustainability goals. Tourism is evolving—even if true sustainability remains a destination not yet reached.

→ Dr. Adriana Ballón Ossio,
CSCP Project Manager

Cracking Old Soil Narratives

Once, soil was just dirt. In sustainability conversations, it was overshadowed by more visible crises such as deforestation, pollution, and melting ice caps. But when cracks began to show—literally and figuratively—with fields turning to deserts and heavy rains washing away layers of topsoil, things started to change. Old narratives of soil just as a medium for crop growth started to give way to the realisation of soil as a key player in maintaining ecosystem health, capturing carbon, and filtering water—an evolution crystallised in the EU Soil Strategy for 2030, which reframed soil health as an integral part of climate, biodiversity, and food security policy. In short, soil moved from backdrop to protagonist: a quiet infrastructure for resilience that, once restored, pays dividends across farms, cities, and entire regions.

→ Livia El-Khawad,
CSCP Project Manager

Consumer Behaviour: From Buying Power to Change Power

As sustainability challenges become more urgent and complex, the need to meaningfully link production and consumption has become increasingly clear. It is no longer enough to focus on how products are made—how they are used, valued, and disposed of is also part of the equation. From durability and circularity to transparency and ethical sourcing, businesses are responding to lifestyle trends shaped by regulatory frameworks such as the EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles and deforestation-free supply chains in view of the EU Deforestation Regulation. Within this evolving landscape, new narratives around consumption are gaining ground. In some high-income societies, there is an emerging trend in which “more, faster, cheaper” is giving way to “less, slower, better”. Movements such as slow fashion, product-as-a-service, do-it-yourself, prosumption, repairing, and buy-nothing groups reflect this pivot. While this post-consumption mindset remains shaped by context, privilege, and access, it offers a glimpse into how rethinking consumption can become a powerful contributor to a more fulfilling and sustainable life.

→ Alexandra Kessler-an der Brügge,
CSCP Project Manager





Permaculture garden at Gut Einern in Wuppertal, Germany © Juliane Herrmann

From Niche to Norm: The Rise of Sustainable Diets

Since the early 2010s, plant-based eating has gradually moved beyond the niche across Europe. What was once largely confined to specialised food outlets and dedicated cafés has become more visible in mainstream retail and food service, with major brands and fast-food chains introducing plant-based options. Rather than a uniform shift away from meat, protein consumption patterns across Europe have diversified, shaped by health considerations, environmental awareness, changing lifestyles, and cultural preferences. Alongside this evolution, “next food” has moved from novelty into broader public awareness. Insect-based products, hemp foods, precision-fermented ingredients, and cultivated meat, once largely unfamiliar, now point to a wider rethinking of protein sources, even as their social acceptance and market maturity continue to evolve. Policy developments have supported this transition: the EU’s updated Novel Foods Regulation in 2015 introduced clearer safety pathways for innovation, while the EU Farm to Fork Strategy articulated a long-term vision for a healthier and more sustainable food system. Together, cultural momentum and policy direction have encouraged investment and experimentation, while ongoing discussions continue around transparency, evidence, and how emerging protein sources might complement, rather than replace, existing food practices, and help make food practices more sustainable.

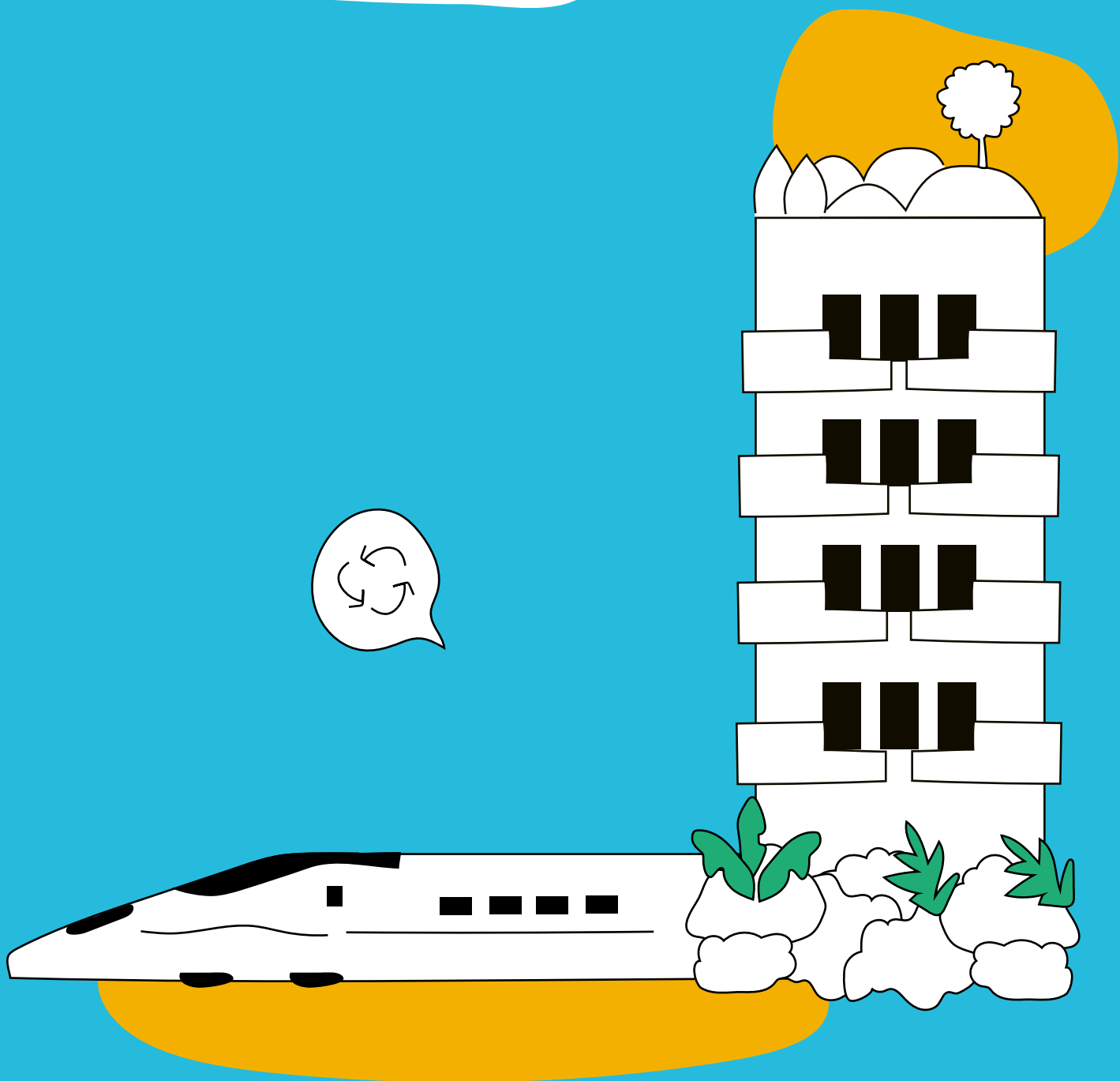
→ [Arlind Xhelili](#),
CSCP Project Manager

Water Reimagined: From Utility to Strategy

For years, water took a back seat—it was seen as an inexhaustible resource that could be pumped, transported through pipes and priced. Then droughts struck, rivers ran low, cities were flooded and aquifers reached their limits. The discussion shifted. Water went from being a ‘resource’ to a strategic, finite commodity—one that is central to climate resilience, biodiversity and economic stability. The focus broadened beyond supply and quality to include integrated water management: restoring wetlands and floodplains, preserving river connections, reducing pollution at source, reusing water where appropriate, and managing entire river basins as living systems. This development is enshrined in the European Water Framework Directive, which focuses on the ecological health and planning of river basins and was later reinforced by the Floods Directive. In practice, this means sponge cities instead of hard surfaces, buffer strips instead of bare banks, smarter leakage control, and industries that close loops to ensure a resilient future.

→ [Dr. Britta Holzberg](#),
CSCP Senior Expert

Our Impact



Collaborations and Partnerships

Our greatest legacy isn't measured in single efforts or particular projects. It lives in the long-term partnerships we've built over the years—collaborations rooted in shared values and focused on real impact.

Driving Structural Change Through Long-Term Partnerships and Collaborations

No one can become sustainable alone. We go farther together, even when the path is winding or may slow us down.

Sustainability challenges are systemic—they are interwoven with the economy, culture and everyday decisions, which is why lasting progress requires structural change. The kinds of shifts needed for sustainable consumption and production—new norms, new incentives, new ways of working and living—require time to design, test, and anchor.

Through long-standing and new partnerships, we've built the trust and flexibility to weather change and address emerging challenges inclusively.



→ Cristina Fedato, Head of Sustainable Infrastructure, Products and Services



Connecting Dots and Connecting Actors

Complex transitions rarely fail due to a lack of good ideas; they usually come to a standstill at the interfaces. For two decades, the CSCP has been acting as a link, bringing together cities with circular economy actors, industry leaders with civil society actors, and local pioneers with national and international agendas.



→ Mike Tabel, CSCP Project Manager

Participatory by Design

Our collaborative, participatory approach is what makes continuity possible. Co-creation distributes ownership; when stakeholders see their fingerprints in the solution, they keep it alive. We combine this with content expertise in sustainable consumption and production, ensuring that participation yields technically sound and equitable outcomes. The result: lasting, impactful interventions, grounded in the needs of stakeholders.



→ Luca Emanuel Sander,
CSCP Junior Project Manager

Governance That Outlasts Individual Projects

When we start a project, we already start thinking about its afterlife: who will host the governance, how will learnings circulate, where the next tranche of investment may come from, and how the work nests into wider agendas. We look to embed governance structures—steering groups, advisory panels, communities of practice, living labs, and learning communities as mechanisms that keep momentum, hold partners accountable, and provide a home for continuous improvement once project cycles end.



→ Ahmad Hafiz,
CSCP Project Management

Global Perspective, Mutual Learning

For two decades now, we have partnered locally and globally with an inclusive and context-aware approach. We don't treat collaboration as one-way "knowledge transfer", but as genuine knowledge exchange. We recognise and build on cultural backgrounds and local practices to co-create nuanced, workable solutions. Developing countries bring experiences Europe can learn from—on diversity and inclusion, resource efficiency, circularity, community governance, or leapfrogging technologies. We recognise and value this and incorporate it into the design of our projects so that solutions are not only relevant and effective but also legitimate and supported by those affected, ensuring local ownership and lasting impact.



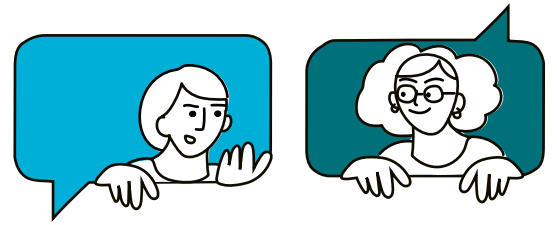
→ Joshua Aseto,
CSCP Project Manager

Testing the Future Together

The most powerful innovations don't start in boardrooms or end in reports. They emerge when ideas are tested in the real world, shaped by real people, and refined through lived experience. Over the years, we have worked to bridge this gap through Pilots and Living Labs—hands-on, real-time environments where innovation is put into practice. By working directly with communities, organisations, and policymakers, we turn concepts into tested solutions that respond to actual needs and everyday behaviours.



→ Arlind Xhelili,
CSCP Project Manager



Highlights from Years of Partnerships and Collaborations

→ Ninety Projects, One Network: The Legacy of SWITCH-Asia Network Facility

Across Asia's fast-growing and diverse economies, sustainability is a major system shift that should bridge cultures, markets, and policy.

From 2007 to 2020, the CSCP co-implemented the SWITCH-Asia Network Facility together with the GFA Consulting Group, supporting the EU's largest SCP programme in the region. In figures: over 90 grant projects and policy actions, 18 countries, and €300 million in funding support from the European Union. Our role: connect actors that rarely meet, distil what works, and help good ideas travel.

As the programme's hub, the Network Facility acted as a platform for projects to maximise results and communicate their achievements. We organised networking events and peer exchanges so involved actors could share lessons learned, success stories, and best practices. We also promoted synergies across programme components—linking projects, policy support, and research—to amplify impact and strengthen the long-term sustainability of actions beyond any single grant. We started by listening and learning, then shaped our approach to combine local knowledge with proven technical methods.

Building on this legacy, the CSCP continues to draw from the rich experience gained through close collaboration with partners and projects across Asia. Working with such a wide range of countries and contexts has deepened our understanding of how sustainable consumption and production take shape in practice—how local innovation, policy, and collaboration can reinforce one another. These insights have shaped how we work internationally today: with greater cultural sensitivity, a stronger focus on systems thinking, and an ongoing commitment to learning with our partners. The approaches we co-developed through SWITCH-Asia continue to inform how we connect people, ideas, and solutions for a more sustainable future.

→ When Policy Meets Practice: 15 Years of Partnership with EEA and the Eionet Community

Across Europe, sustainable consumption and production advance when policy, research, and public administration learn together. Since 2009, we have contributed to this aim through our collaboration with the European Environment Agency (EEA) and the Eionet Network, supporting knowledge exchange and practical implementation across EU countries.

The “Going Green” project by the SWITCH-Asia Network provided women-only self-help groups in India with new, improved livelihoods through sustainable textile businesses
Photo © Silvia Sartori CSCP



In the early years, we worked on sustainable consumption and production (SCP) activities by connecting national experts, facilitating exchanges on emerging practices and contributing to shared collaboration formats, including support to Eionet Forum on SCP via stakeholder oriented activities linking policy, research, and practice.

Between 2014 and 2021, we continued our work within the European Topic Centre on Waste and Materials in a Green Economy. Our task was straightforward but demanding: turn fragmented data on waste, materials, and production–consumption into information people can act on. We looked at issues through the consumer’s eyes, tested fresh business ideas and digital tools, brought the right actors into the same room, and turned our findings into hands-on outputs: workshops, webinars, and easy-to-read briefs.

Since 2022, the work has continued under the Topic Centre on Circular Economy and Resource Use contributing to circular economy monitoring, policy support and value-chain analysis across areas such as food, energy and mobility while facilitating dialogue between policymakers, researchers, businesses, and practitioners to support evidence-based decision-making.

What endures isn’t a single report or platform, but a living network—hundreds of experts and institutions who trust each other enough to share data, compare experiences, and move faster together than they could alone.

→ Collaborating for Resilient and Sustainable Business Growth

At the CSCP, we act as enablers and bridge builders in the transition towards resilient, efficient, and sustainable business models. By fostering collaboration across supply chains, connecting businesses with end consumers and relevant societal actors, and supporting transformation from within, we support companies to innovate in ways that reduce environmental impacts while strengthening their competitiveness. Embracing digitalisation and AI as key accelerators, we guide businesses of all types and sizes—from startups to global corporations—through systemic change built on strong stakeholder engagement and collaboration.

Over the years, we have partnered with diverse companies on their sustainability journeys:

We supported *Storch-Ciret Group*, a Wuppertal-based painting tools supplier, embed sustainability into the core business. Together, we created a cross-functional team, introduced agile ways of working, and developed tools and training for sustainable products and business models—turning sustainability into a driver of innovation, efficiency, and market strength.

With *Wuppertaler Stadtwerke (WSW)*, a public service company in Wuppertal, Germany, we co-developed a roadmap to strengthen its diverse sustainability efforts supporting the company’s goal of climate neutrality by 2035. The resulting strategy engages employees and integrates decarbonisation, renewable energy, and sustainable mobility as part of WSW’s core operations.

For *Vaude*, we facilitated the development of its “Product-as-a-Service” model, guiding the shift from selling products to offering access and performance. This approach reduced resource use, extended product life, and reinforced Vaude’s circular and customer-centred business model.

With *Rockwool*, we supported the design and rollout of the RockCycle programme, a circular model that recovers and reuses mineral wool across the value chain. This transformed product responsibility into a business opportunity—enhancing resource efficiency and creating long-term value.

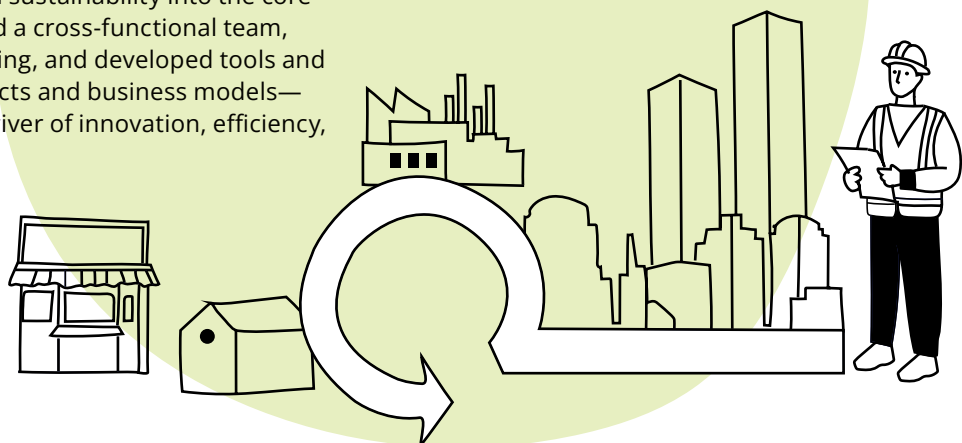
Based on 20 years of working together with businesses to address challenges and create new opportunities, we look forward to shaping the next generation of sustainable, competitive businesses.

→ Driving Europe’s Circular Transition with the ECESP

The European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform (ECESP)—a joint initiative of the European Commission and the European Economic and Social Committee—was set up as a “network of networks” to turn Europe’s circular ambitions into shared action. We’ve been part of that journey for years, helping make the platform practical, and people-centred.

Today, the CSCP serves on the ECESP Coordination Group for the third term in a row, where we design conversations like the #EUCircularTalks series and shape workstreams where policy, business, cities, and citizens learn from each other. As of February 2026, the CSCP coordinates the Leadership Group “Enabling an inclusive circular society” together with the Rediscovery Centre and Generation Climate Europe.

Up to 2025, we co-led the Leadership Group on Citizen Engagement & Circular Behaviours, convening partners to translate insights into everyday choices and scalable solutions. Earlier, together with SITRA, we set up the Consumer Insight Action Panel to bring behavioural evidence into policy and market decisions.





At the FAB Festival 2025 in Wuppertal, Germany, citizens could experience the circular economy firsthand through upcycling workshops, immersive nature activities, and meaningful networking.
Photo © Juliane Herrmann



→ Partnering for Circular Cities

Cities are where the action is: dense hubs of people, capital, infrastructure, and services, along with the bulk of consumption, waste, and investment decisions.

Together with ICLEI and their network of 2,500+ local and regional governments, we helped shape and support the European Circular Cities Declaration (CCD), an initiative through which cities commit, compare progress and find their way to a circular economy. Beyond the pledge, we've contributed to making the CCD practical—highlighting city examples, co-creating guidance, and sharing good practice through reports and exchanges.

We also connect city work to the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI)—the EU platform that offers tools, mentoring, and a knowledge hub for circular projects. Through CSCP's CCRI workstreams and Communities of Practice, we enable cities to align solutions with local realities so they move from pilots to procurement, and from strategies to services.

In Germany, we work with **CircularCities.NRW** to turn municipal circular ambitions into everyday practice. In Wuppertal, **Smart Circular Wuppertal** uses real data to steer repair, reuse, and new services that last. In Aachen, the **Circular City Aachen** brings city teams, businesses, and residents together to build and learn—so circular ideas become habits, not pilots. With the **DU.zirkulär** project in the city of Duisburg, the CSCP is working hand-in-hand with stakeholders to drive a transformative effort that makes sustainability practical and embedded in everyday life. Set within a real-world laboratory in the Ruhrort district, innovative circular economy solutions are tested, implemented, and refined to foster a local ecosystem for zero waste and sustainable urban development.

Zooming out, the **FAB Region** (Wuppertal–Remscheid–Solingen) links local innovation spaces to the global **Fab City** movement, pairing neighbourhood creativity with open, shared know-how. The thread is simple: test locally, learn together, share widely. That loop turns community pilots into launchpads for larger, positive change.

→ Shaping a Sustainable Digital Future

At the CSCP, we act as enablers and catalysts in the transition towards sustainable digitalisation and AI. By fostering collaboration within innovation ecosystems, connecting tech leaders with societal needs, and supporting transformation from within, we help companies innovate in ways that create positive impact while strengthening their market position. Embracing digitalisation and AI as key accelerators, we support businesses of all sizes—from IT SMEs to global corporations—through systemic change built on strong stakeholder engagement and partnership.

Delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda requires immediate change of course and joined forces of multiple actors. Since 2020, we've been part of the board of the Global Enabling Sustainability Initiative (GeSI), an important platform for multi-stakeholder engagement towards sustainability through digital technologies.

Working with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) companies and other organisations around the world, GeSI is a hub for information, resources and best practices for achieving social and environmental sustainability through technology.

A hallmark of CSCP's engagement at GeSI has been "Digital with Purpose: Delivering a SMARTer2030" movement, which is oriented towards more informed and purposeful development and deployment of digital technologies.

While many digital companies are improving their own operations and addressing social and environmental impacts, they are also beginning to explore how their technologies can help others advance the SDGs and create positive impacts. As part of GeSI, we focus on strengthening collaboration across organisations and industries to constantly steer digitalisation towards purpose and a good life for all. ●

Partners and Friends

Over the past 20 years, our partners have been integral to our journey, supporting us, challenging us, and growing with us. Who we are is best reflected in the voices of those who have walked alongside us.

→ **Edgar Valverde Estrella**
Team Lead, PNO Innovation

Our collaboration has always been marked by CSCP's proactivity, scientific rigor, and operational excellence. A partner that truly adds value every step of the way and through every role they take on. Working with the CSCP has strengthened our awareness of the importance of stakeholder engagement in research and innovation processes. It has also helped us consolidate our work in citizen science and the integration of social sciences and humanities. Together with CSCP, we've successfully managed complex consortia and attracted public investment for high-impact projects.

→ **Veerle Labeeuw**
Facilitator Circular Economy,
Circular Flanders

The collaboration with CSCP has taught us many valuable lessons. The personal approach combined with an open view towards the world and other cultures has led to many new insights being gained from this partnership.

→ **Beatriz Brandão**
Project Manager, Center for
Sustainability Studies of Fundação
Getulio Vargas (FGVces), Brazil

Working with CSCP has been a gift. The team we work with—Cristina Fedato, Adriana Ballón Ossio and Francesca Capello—constantly inspire us with their topic expertise, collaborative approach, and above all humane work. Thank you!

→ **Ana Coelho**
Project Manager, Center for Sustainability
Studies of Fundação Getulio Vargas (FGVces)

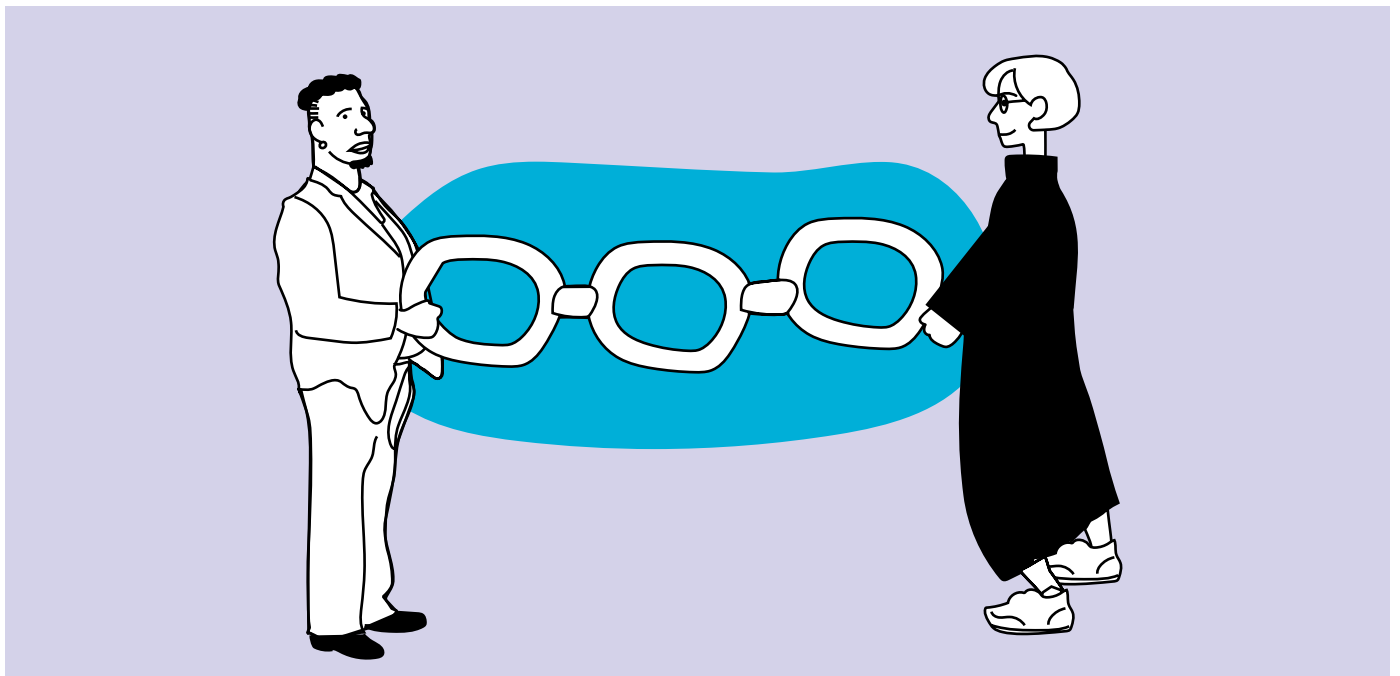
The CSCP and FGVces share similar values, a common vision, and a commitment to advancing the sustainability agenda. From this common ground, it's no surprise that our partnership has been such a great experience and is progressing towards creating lasting impact. What a joy it is to lead the ARABICA-CANEPHORA project alongside the CSCP and our other partners and stakeholders involved.

→ **Jussi Nevanlinna**
Senior Advisor and Lead,
SITRA Fund

It is such a pleasure to work with everyone at the CSCP—always professional, always delivering high-quality work, and above all, incredibly friendly, approachable, and easy to work with. We at Sitra really love working with the CSCP and congratulate you on your first 20 years!

→ **Thijs Wentik**
Procurement Officer, SKAO –
CO₂ Performance Ladder

Put simply, collaborating with the CSCP is a combination of meticulous work combined with sharing good moments together!



→ **Vicky Mosteyrin**

Managing Director, Greenovate! Europe

The CSCP brings in the best added value to the Greenovate! Europe family and we are very proud to have them as an active member, always bringing in the right social and participatory angle. Today, the work that the CSCP does is more important than ever, and without them our collaborative projects would not be the same. Bringing the CSCP into our projects has meant bringing in consumers, citizens, and stakeholders—meaning real engagement!

→ **Martin Soriano**

Head of Unit, Technological Center for Energy and the Environment (CETENMA)

Thanks to the CSCP's invaluable contribution, the HOOP project was successful in creating the necessary conditions for circularity in our cities and regions, playing a pivotal role as the stakeholder engagement leader and the developer of the Biowaste Clubs. My best wishes on this very important milestone for the CSCP!

→ **Karsten Treptow**

Head of Human Resources,
WSW Group

Together with CSCP, we laid the foundation for sustainability within the WSW Group and supported WSW step by step on its journey toward sustainability. Today, we have independent initiatives and reporting processes across all ESG areas, and the coordinating function "Employees" is now firmly established, staffed by two dedicated team members and centrally managed.

→ **Simon Clement**

Head of Circular Economy European
Secretariat, ICLEI Local
Governments for Sustainability

The CSCP has been a valued partner for ICLEI from the beginning. As a global city network promoting sustainable urban development, ICLEI and the CSCP share a common mission and vision. For my work on circular economy in cities, the CSCP is always one of the first partners we call.

→ **Liesbeth Casier**

Lead, Sustainable Infrastructure and Public
Procurement, International Institute for
Sustainable Development

Our collaboration with CSCP has been instrumental in advancing green public procurement, from delivering capacity building in Bhutan to supporting the implementation of the CO₂ Performance Ladder in Germany. The CSCP has consistently proven to be a reliable and insightful partner, bringing both expertise and commitment to our shared sustainability goals.

→ **Antonella Samoggia**

Professor, University of Bologna

Our experience of collaborating with the CSCP was enriching and marked by genuine dialogue. What stands out is CSCP's ability to create a professional open space where ideas can grow and partnerships can mutually benefit.

→ **Sanna Due**

Circular Economy Expert,
European Environment Agency

Working with CSCP has always meant engaging with true professionals—deeply knowledgeable, genuinely dedicated, and consistently creative in shaping solutions for sustainability. Their work on food waste policies in the EU is just one example of how they bring deep insights and strategic thinking to complex challenges, making every collaboration both impactful and inspiring.

→ **Sandra Vartan**

Senior Key Account Manager,
World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF) Germany

We have been working with the CSCP for over three years as part of the colder washing initiative #WirDrehenRunter, which the CSCP supports as a scientific partner. We greatly value the expertise of Rosa Strube and her (Sustainable Lifestyles) team and have learned a lot about behaviour change over time. Together, we aim to motivate consumers to adopt more sustainable behaviour patterns—and we will continue to pursue this goal jointly. We truly look forward to further collaboration, which we find both valuable and enjoyable!

→ **Sara Martin**

Head of Public Affairs,
Nestlé Germany

For more than a decade, we have appreciated the CSCP as a valuable partner in our stakeholder dialogue, especially as a neutral party in our collaboration with our NGO and expert advisory board. We would particularly like to thank Nora Brüggemann and Mike Tabel. Thank you very much for supporting us with your professional expertise, insightful understanding, and your solution-oriented approach. We look forward to many more years of collaborating with the CSCP!

→ **Cherly Marie Cordeiro**

Senior Researcher, RISE Research
Institutes of Sweden

We began working with CSCP in the context of the European project, iCOSHELLS because of their outstanding reputation in facilitating stakeholder co-creation processes and integrating social sciences into sustainability transitions. Partnering with CSCP has been a cornerstone in advancing co-creative, science-driven approaches to soil health. CSCP's ability to build trust, facilitate dialogue, and bridge research with local action is unmatched.

→ **Christoph Baumann**

Project Manager & Climate Officer,
Municipal Waste Management Company (AWM),
City of Münster

The City of Münster, represented by Abfallwirtschaftsbetriebe Münster (awm), was one of the eight lighthouse cities for the EU project HOOP, which focused on improving the quality and quantity of urban biowaste. The CSCP guided us in the development, implementation, and continuation of a dialogue platform that enabled an ongoing, fruitful, and flexible exchange with key stakeholders. Through its strong network, the CSCP facilitated numerous insightful exchanges with other key players in our industry and related sectors, significantly strengthening our network in crucial areas and providing valuable new insights.

→ **Christopher Blum**

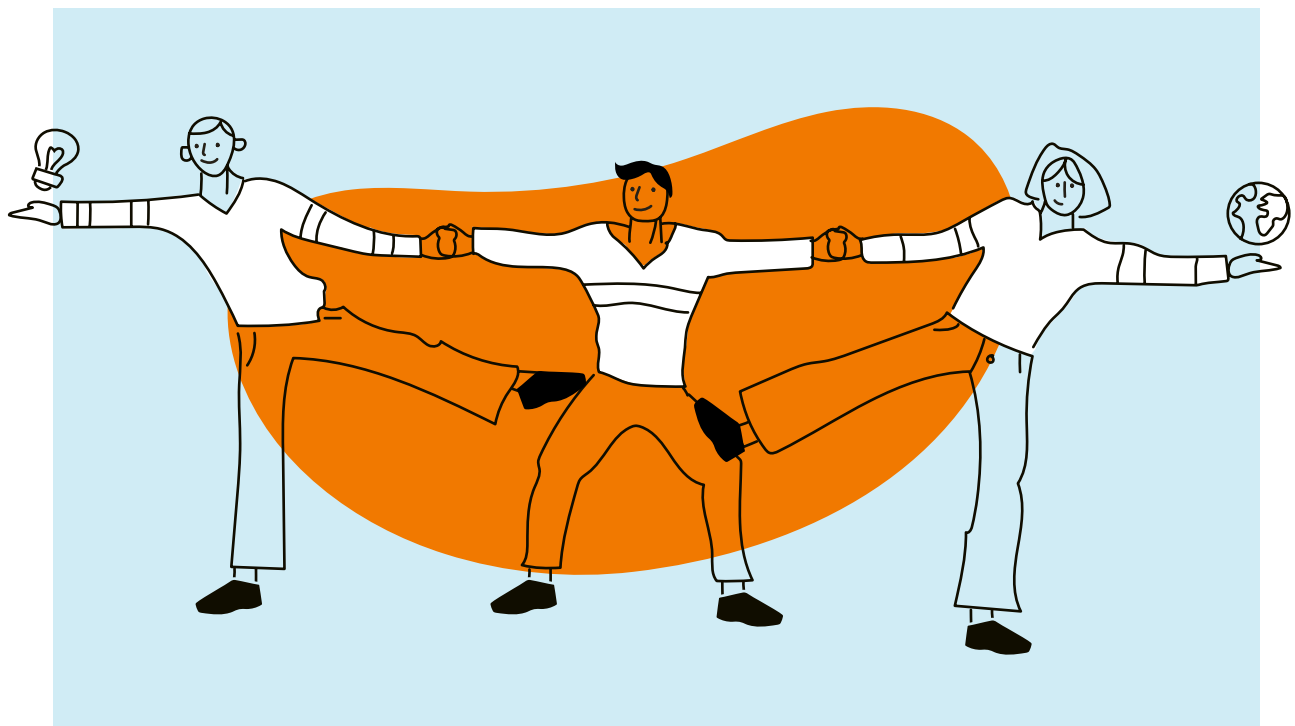
Head of Section International Chemicals
Management (interim in charge),
German Environment Agency (UBA)

The CSCP has a very professional team with multiple connections to practitioners and decision makers, delivering excellent expertise.

→ **Jörg Lefèvre**

Head of Department, Lead of the Competence Centre
nachhaltig.digital at the German Federal Environmental
Foundation (DBU)

The CSCP is a valuable partner for the DBU, always actively engaged at the forefront of current societal needs and developments in the sustainability context—often achieving surprising results. Joint projects have also helped the DBU to orient itself and sharpen its own positions.



→ Jonas Carlehed

Healthy & Sustainable Living Specialist
at Ingka Services AB, IKEA

Arlind Xhelili and Nora Brüggemann at the CSCP have brought a deep competence, great passion and a strong service-minded attitude to our collaboration on infusing behaviour science into our activity on food waste in life at home.

Together with you we have upskilled key stakeholders in the organisation on how behaviour science can give us more relevant messaging for the many customers. The key milestone is that CSCP has supported us to create our first ever behaviour science informed activity on a sustainability topic. Therefore, you have influenced and kick-started our strategic focus on how to infuse behaviour science into our content creation.

→ Caroline Costongs

Director, EuroHealthNet

The CSCP was instrumental in introducing EuroHealthNet, a pan-European public health Partnership, to the concept of Sustainable Lifestyles through the SPREAD initiative. Sustainable consuming, living and travelling as well as behaviour change is key to achieving population health. Our joint project, SPREAD was ahead of its time, and we are still taking its results forward in our work on the Wellbeing Economy. Thank you, team CSCP, for the valuable insights!

→ Aneta Kiankova

M&C Planer, IKEA Marketing & Communication (IMC)

Through close and patient collaboration, the CSCP empowered our creative teams to craft customer-centric messages designed to drive meaningful behavioural change.

→ Martin Kuhne

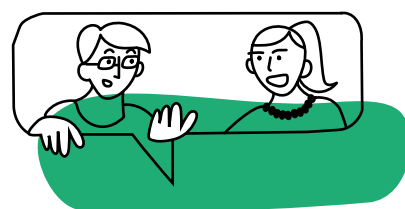
Head of the Department of Nutrition and Environment, Consumer Advice Centre NRW

Collaborating with the CSCP enables us to engage in interesting and exciting dialogues with business representatives. As a partner, the CSCP provides important impulses to companies and policymakers to advance sustainability.

→ Evelin Diels

Program Manager Circular Economy, VITO

A dedicated and knowledgeable partner of ours since 2014 in the European Topic Centre on Circular Economy and in several other endeavours since. A collaboration which will continue, I am sure, in plenty of future opportunities throughout the next 20 years. Cheers to the warm, smart, inspiring and cheerful group of people that is the CSCP!



→ **Tim Stoffel**

Political Referent,
Fairtrade Germany

When working on sustainable solutions, the CSCP almost always comes up. Working on sustainable public procurement for more than 10 years, I often connected and worked with the highly professional and enthusiastic people at the CSCP. Through our collaboration, we learned how important it is to consider psychological factors when aiming to successfully engage stakeholders in sustainable public procurement.

→ **Demetrios Eliades**

Research Assistant Professor, KIOS-
Research and Innovation Center of
Excellence, University of Cyprus

Working with the CSCP team was one of the most enjoyable moments of the EU Horizon project, PathoCERT. Professional, human and passionate about interconnecting technology with stakeholders, the CSCP managed to enable the consortium to transform our inventions into value-added innovations. Engaging stakeholders is not an easy task, and it required significantly more effort than what we had forecasted. By following the appropriate methodology, proposed by CSCP, we were able to bring stakeholders together, and in some cases for the first time, create communities of experts in the area of water contamination management. It is impossible for me now not to consider the social aspects and implications of our technologies. Thanks CSCP!

→ **Thomas Schmidt**

Senior Researcher, Thünen-Institute

The fruitful collaboration between the CSCP and the Thünen Institute in every project is geared towards a result-orientated further development of our joint topics. The development of the voluntary agreement “Pact against Food Waste” between the German Federal Ministry of Food & Agriculture and the retail and wholesale sector was a milestone in our collaboration and in our shared goal of reducing food waste.

→ **Ani Melkonyan-Gottschalk**

Professor for Sustainability and
Socio-technical Transformation,
Technical University (TU) Clausthal

Professional, reliable and a friendly partner in circularity, sustainable consumption and lifestyles.

→ **Nurzat Abdyrasulova**

Founder and leader of the
UNISON Group

What makes CSCP truly unique is the people — dedicated professionals who bring both heart and expertise to everything they do. As a partner in the PERETO project, UNISON has experienced their clear processes, openness to collaboration, and deep knowledge of sustainable consumption and production. Their willingness to share and co-create solutions, grounded in rich international experience, makes working with CSCP not only effective but deeply inspiring. But what stands out most is the sense of trust and support. I've always felt that I could reach out for advice, and there would be friendly, knowledgeable people ready to help whether through sharing insights or connecting me with valuable networks. That spirit of openness and generosity is something I deeply appreciate and will always remember.

→ **Agnieszka Szynek**

President of the Board at INNOWO

My collaboration with CSCP has been truly transformative—it's the organisation that first inspired my journey into the circular economy and deeply influenced the creation of INNOWO. From the very beginning, I was impressed by their professionalism, openness, and genuine commitment to advancing sustainability without falling into the trap of superficial communication or empty PR. The CSCP stands out as a global leader that combines expertise with authenticity, continuously fostering meaningful change and collaboration across sectors and countries. I'm also personally grateful to Michael Kuhndt—not only an exceptional expert, but a person of great empathy and integrity, whose wisdom, friendship and sense of humor I value immensely.



CSCP Team Day 2023, Photo © Marc Wessendarp

Working Towards a Good Life for All Since 2005





20

years

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projects

78

countries

+600

locations

+500

partners



project



capacity building



knowledge transfer



www.cscp.org/#map

Accelerating Change

20 Years of Leveraging Public Funding for Impact

Since its founding in 2005, the CSCP has journeyed through two transformative decades, navigating the evolving landscape of public funding while shaping and refining its expertise in alignment with shifting sustainability priorities. More than a chronology of projects, this is a story of experimentation, learning, and enduring commitment to systemic transformation.

Over the past 20 years, public funding priorities have evolved—from a focus on resource efficiency to the Circular Economy, and recently towards regenerative systems thinking. What once centred on policy frameworks now embraces behaviour change, citizen engagement, and socio-technical innovation. This journey mirrors our own: from a niche sustainability actor to a recognised thought leader in sustainability shaping systemic solutions.

European programmes, together with national and regional German funding, have been vital in this evolution. They allowed us to pilot new approaches locally, test methodologies on smaller scales, and work hand-in-hand with municipalities, SMEs, and civil society. This combination of European reach and German roots has strengthened our agility and firmly positioned us within both the German and European sustainability landscapes.

As funding landscapes evolved, so did we. The CSCP has continuously broadened its focus, sharpened its methodologies, and grown its competencies. Our strength lies in anticipating change and translating complex sustainability challenges into concrete, actionable solutions. Guided by a strong interdisciplinary approach and a collaborative spirit, we have not only kept pace with emerging agendas, but actively contributed to shaping them. Rather than following a perfect linear trajectory, our journey has been an ongoing dialogue between ambition

and context, opportunity and constraint. Some projects flourished, others taught us vital lessons. Our acquisition journey reflects, and at times anticipates, the broader transformation of sustainability priorities in Europe and Germany alike.

2007–2013 | Laying the Foundation in FP7 & German Federal Programmes

The early years of the CSCP coincided with the 7th Framework Programme (FP7), an EU funding phase that prioritised research, innovation, and competitiveness across Europe. In parallel, national-level projects funded by the German Environment Agency (UBA) and the German Federal Ministry of Environment (BMU, now BMUV) supported our initial efforts to translate sustainability theory into practice within German contexts. At the European level, we focused on resource efficiency, eco-innovation, and sustainable production and consumption (SCP). Our projects during this phase shaped our identity as an organisation bridging systems thinking with stakeholder collaboration. Initiatives such as **SPREAD (Sustainable Lifestyles 2050)** enabled us to explore future societal visions and foster communities of practice. At the same time, national-level funding helped build our foundation. Through the **UBA-funded project on sustainable chemicals management**, we led multi-stakeholder processes to develop indicators for better monitoring and governance. Additionally, our leadership in the **SWITCH-Asia Network Facility** extended our reach beyond Europe, supporting awareness-raising and multi-stakeholder engagement for SCP across Asia.

2014–2020 | Scaling Up under Horizon 2020 & Expanding National-Level Impact

With Horizon 2020, European funding moved towards addressing grand societal challenges, and the CSCP scaled

“Public acquisition is not just a financial instrument—it’s a means to co-create sustainable futures. As we celebrate 20 years of engagement, we reaffirm our commitment to shaping the next generation of EU- and nationally-funded projects that deliver real-world transformation. Our journey has never been linear, but always purpose-driven. Public acquisition for the CSCP has been more than a funding source: it has been a catalyst for learning, growth, and impact.”



→ Dr. Francesca Grossi,
Head of Acquisition and
Senior Project Manager

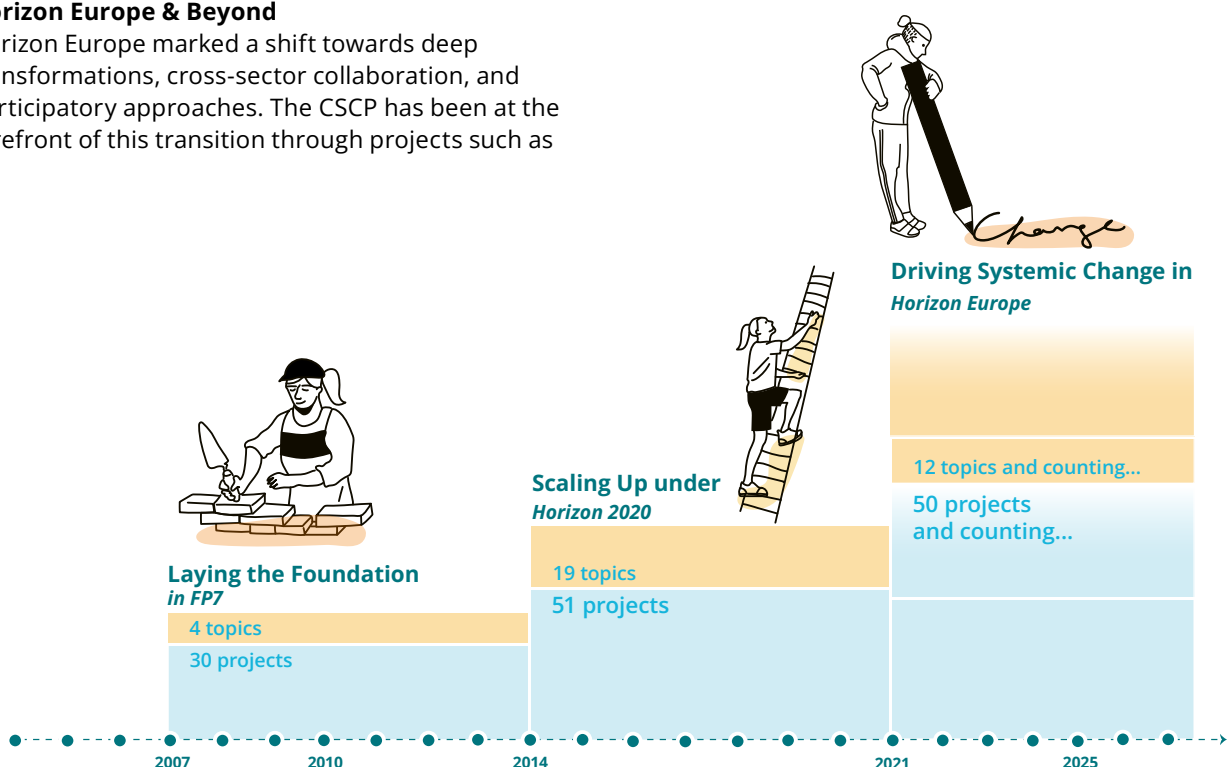
up its ambitions. We led and contributed to projects like **INHERIT**, **REFRESH**, and **SCALIBUR**, which tackled issues such as sustainable food systems, circularity, and integrated health and environmental outcomes. Parallel to this, German-funded projects allowed us to deepen local impact. In our UBA-supported research project on **sustainable raw materials in the automobile sector**, we explored challenges and pathways for the responsible sourcing of metals. Through **BMU-funded stakeholder dialogues**, we worked with trade unions, companies, and policymakers to improve resource efficiency in the aluminium industry. These projects grounded our systemic work in national policy contexts and gave us space to test and adapt behavioural insights in real-world settings. This period marked a key turning point: from participating in projects to shaping and driving them.

2021–2027 | Driving Systemic Change through Horizon Europe & Beyond

Horizon Europe marked a shift towards deep transformations, cross-sector collaboration, and participatory approaches. The CSCP has been at the forefront of this transition through projects such as

VERNE (circular tourism), **SPOON** (citizen science for food systems), and **bioSOILUTIONS** and **iCOSHELLS** (soil health and sustainable horticulture). At the same time, we have continued innovating at the national level. The BMU-funded **KochCup initiative** engaged culinary trainees across Germany in sustainable cooking competitions, promoting awareness around sustainable food systems. Meanwhile, our role in the **UBi project** has helped businesses better understand and act on their biodiversity impacts.

This complementary approach to public acquisition strengthens our ability to drive change across multiple levels, allowing projects to function not as isolated outcomes, but as platforms for lasting transformation. Through them all, we have remained grounded in our purpose: to enable a good life for all. ●



Why Design is Key for Impact?

Design is on everyone's lips, so we asked our design team to share how they integrate design in our work. In this interview, Nikola Berger (Head of Creative and Communication) and Eva Rudolf (Senior Designer) explain how design can be a lever to achieve greater impact.



The CSCP lives by a holistic and impact-oriented understanding of design. Can you explain what this means in a nutshell?

Nikola Berger: Design has been integral to how CSCP works for 20 years: translating research and complex sustainability topics into clear language and visuals that can be grasped by a wide audience is key to supporting our goal to mainstream sustainability. This translation is not only about grasping; it is also about connection. Sustainability is rooted in science and can feel abstract or distant from everyday life, so we use motivating visuals and narratives to add an emotional dimension to facts and figures, fostering empathy, reflection, and meaning in ways that support engagement and action.

Eva Rudolf: Beyond communication, we use design processes—storytelling, design thinking, service design, and human- and non-human-centric approaches—to bring holistic sustainability perspectives into change processes, which is a core aspect of our work. The majority of our projects have a transformational component, where design helps achieve solutions on multiple levels and through different means: sometimes through creative workshop formats that center experience, interactive participation, collaboration, and inspiration; other times through formats such as participatory exhibitions, videos, and other creative outputs that open doors for new ideas, shape desires and expectations, and help people act more sustainably—whether in their everyday lives, within their organisations, or across society.

Can you give us an example?

Nikola Berger: In our Sustainable Island Mauritius (SIM) project, our design team was tasked to support over 40 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to develop new products or redevelop existing ones more sustainably. Most of these organisations don't have a product designer and consist of rather small teams that multitask to grow their business on an island with limited local resources. For this group, we translated the enormous amount of design resources that is now available (through many great organisations) into modules focused on values and impact closely linked to the local context. We started with sustainable design concepts but included the CSCP's handprint approach. Then we created a co-creation process between SMEs and the tourism industry to work together to have a positive impact but our approach applies to any design process.



→ Nikola Berger, Head of Creative and Communication



→ Eva Rudolf, Senior Designer



In real contexts, how do you design for positive impact?

Nikola Berger: We should design with people and the environment in mind. Is this product (or a service, infrastructure, or system) needed? How will it make the world (someone's life) better? Does it have to be a product or can we develop a service or experience? Then, as we develop sustainable products or services with the smallest possible footprint, we can consider the positive and regenerative effects we want to have. This often means that we need to collaborate, maybe with the community, across sectors, with civil society organisations (CSOs) and our clients.

So, basically, we need more design in our projects?

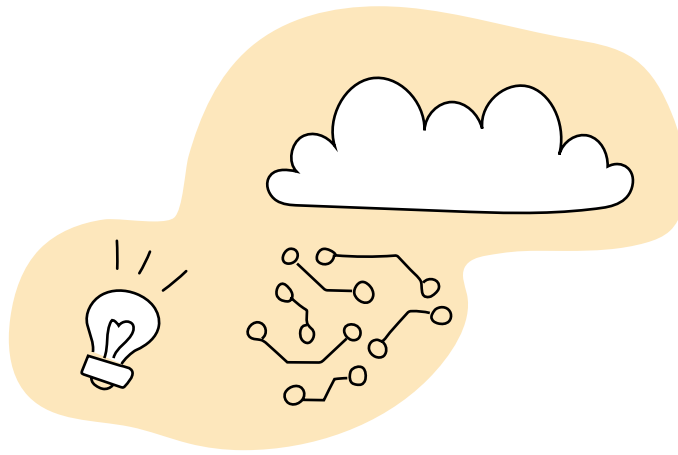
Eva Rudolf: Many things we use or see every day were conceived and designed by people: When you sit in a subway, use an app on your mobile, or pick up a package in the supermarket. All these objects, spaces, and processes were designed and planned by people and influence our behaviour. In short, our entire world is full of design. This is what brings it to the centre of transformation processes, making it to an important driver of change.

To bring it to the sustainability field, it is widely cited that a large share (often quoted as up to ~80%) of a product's life-cycle environmental impact is influenced by design-stage decisions—in particular its resource and energy consumption along its entire value chain—are already determined in the design phase.

I think it's strategically important to include design right from the start of a project. We designers bring a different perspective and are equipped with skills and methods (e.g. design thinking, co-creation) that enable co-created innovative ideas as well as prototyping them in a short amount of time. The results are often eye-opening, and key stakeholders become drivers when they are included in the process. Design processes also help to save time and resources, as they enable functional and effective solutions to be implemented more quickly.

Across all our projects, we work toward achieving the goals and visions set in major frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or the EU Frameworks. All of these frameworks refer to design as a core tool in change processes. ●





20 Years of Setting Agendas Together



→ Cristina Fedato,
Head of Sustainable Infrastructure,
Products and Services

→ Sustainable Circular

"Circularity is not an end in itself, it's a way to deliver real environmental, social, and economic value. That takes systems thinking and collaboration—no one becomes circular alone! We focus on what's sustainably circular: not just recycled materials, but low-impact production, slower loops, long life, and smart use. Working across sectors—and in line with the German Circular Economy Act (Kreislaufwirtschaftsgesetz), the EU Circular Economy Action Plan, and the new Ecodesign for Sustainable Products requirements—we keep pushing for a fair and just circular transition."



→ Nora Brüggemann,
Senior Project Manager

→ Enhancing Sustainability in Food Systems

"Food systems drive a huge share of emissions, but they're also a powerful lever for change. For more than two decades, we have worked across the food chain—cutting waste (in line with SDG 12.3), incorporating insights from consumers, and anchoring sustainability across entire portfolios aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and the EU Farm to Fork strategy. By joining hands with farmers, brands, retailers, cities, schools, researchers, and citizens, we have tested new approaches, learned from pilots, and built coalitions that move us closer to resilient and sustainable food systems."

→ Digitalisation with Purpose

"Digitalisation is advancing rapidly—and not always in the right direction. It brings speed and connectivity, but also high energy consumption, privacy risks, changes in the labour market and inequalities in access. Our goal is to align digitalisation with sustainability and fairness—in line with important frameworks such as the General Data Protection Regulation, the Digital Services Act and the EU AI Act. From AI that reduces food waste to data that enables circular business models, we support digitalisation with the aim of changing real decisions for the better."



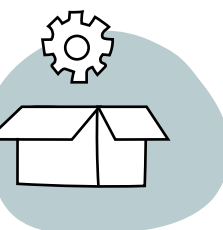
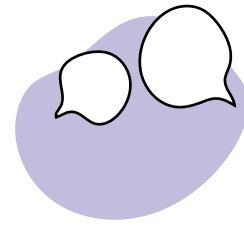
→ Alexander Mannweiler,
Head of Sustainable Business and Entrepreneurship



→ Rosa Strube,
Head of Sustainable Lifestyles

→ Enabling Sustainable Lifestyles for All

"Sustainable behaviours stick when they are the easy choice. We look at capabilities, motivations, supporting infrastructure, and social norms, and design behaviour-informed interventions that close gaps—not widen them. Since 2012, building on the One Planet Network (10YFP) and, more recently, the comprehensive EU Clean Industrial Deal, we've identified pathways for transitioning lifestyles and changing behaviours, turning intention into everyday practice."

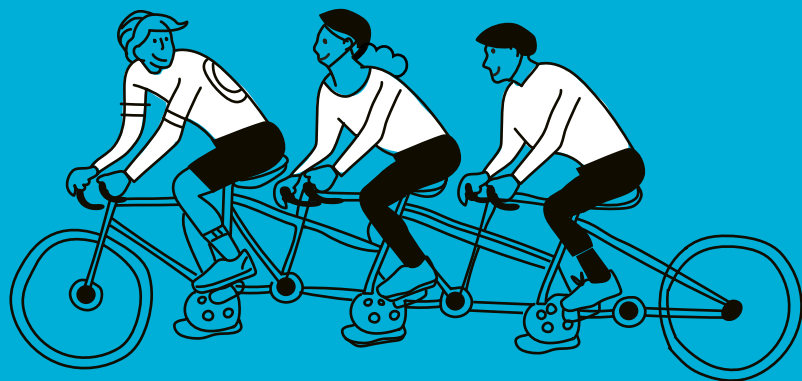


→ Dr. Francesca Grossi,
Head of Acquisition and Senior Project Manager

→ Twin Crises, Twin Solutions

"Climate change and biodiversity loss are among the defining crises of our time. Addressing them by mitigating emissions as well as halting and reversing the decline of biodiversity runs through all our projects and initiatives. Over the years, we have raised awareness of their interconnectedness, mapped critical hotspots, co-created circular solutions, and supported systems and value chains to reduce negative impacts while strengthening positive ones. Building on this foundation, we are committed to bridging the ambition of the Paris Agreement with the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework."

Our Milestone Projects





SPREAD

Visualising Sustainable Lifestyles of the Future



A journey to the future of our lives to understand what needs to change today—in a nutshell, this is what the SPREAD Sustainable Lifestyles 2050 project was about. What used to be a novel approach back in 2011/2012—which jump-started the Sustainable Lifestyles team at the CSCP and was a building block of our multi-stakeholder engagement work—retains its innovative strength to the day.

Looking back, why was SPREAD such a breakthrough project?

SPREAD marked a turning point by including lifestyles as a key to sustainability—showing that our eating, moving, housing, and consuming are as critical to change as the technologies and policies that support it.

What was the starting point in the SPREAD project?

We started by analysing the most relevant domains of our lives—housing, transport, food, health and society—setting the ground for a thorough understanding of European lifestyles and their impacts, both at the time and for the future.

The project developed innovative tools for assessing environmental impact, such as the material footprint calculator. Can you tell us more about it?

The material footprint calculator was a groundbreaking tool—it was one of the first ones to go beyond just CO₂ and include other environmental indicators. It also compared test results against a target of 8 tons of material footprint per person, representing a sustainable and fair share of resources for each individual worldwide, which made it pretty unique. Over the years, this approach has been picked up in other CSCP projects and embedded into user-friendly digital tools—like Vodafone's Mission Green face-to-face and digital employee engagement programme and PSLifestyles, a tool co-created with citizens to calculate their footprint and find ways to reduce it.

The future scenarios developed by SPREAD are still referred to today. What made these scenarios unique and impactful?

From **Singular Super Champions**, a scenario where technology plays a major role to **Local Loops**, which focuses on local products and culture, the **SPREAD future scenarios** painted different positive visions of a sustainable future in the year 2050. Its novelty was on the approach which put individuals and lifestyles at the centre of the scenarios, shedding light on social innovation and creating positive storylines, and inspiring actors across Europe to work towards these goals.

“To unlearn unsustainable habits and mindsets to transition to different ways of living, doing and being, the SPREAD project can add value by delivering insights and deeper understanding of individual motivations and triggers to behaviour change.”

→ Kerstin Ochs, Head Laundry & Homecare, International Governmental Relations & Public Affairs, HENKEL



→ Rosa Strube,
Head of Sustainable Lifestyles

Rosa Strube reflects on the role of SPREAD in understanding European lifestyles and their sustainability impact at the time and for the future.

“SPREAD really set the agenda in many ways: from reviewing how European lifestyles affect sustainability to creating an easy material footprint calculator, exploring future scenarios for sustainable living, and using backcasting to support policymakers design policies and actions to achieve sustainable living goals.”

How did the project ensure these future scenarios could be transformed into actionable plans?

To turn these future scenarios into reality, we created roadmaps in collaboration with key stakeholders from all sectors: policy, business, and civil society. Backcasting workshops were a big part of the process, ensuring the ideas were practical and could be easily adopted. The CSCP also used these scenarios to help people see beyond short-term challenges and connect their personal future with their role as change-makers. It was all about broadening perspectives.

Have other projects or initiatives drawn from SPREAD's work on future visioning?

Yes! Future visioning processes that draw on the work of SPREAD include scenarios for healthy, equitable, and sustainable lifestyles up to 2040 as part of the INHERIT project or for rural regions in Germany as part of the Tecklenburger Region 2030 project.

How has SPREAD influenced personal lifestyle changes among individuals involved in the project?

SPREAD supported people to understand what a shift to sustainable lifestyles could look like in 2050. This kind of personalised projection has inspired the CSCP's living labs

“The SPREAD project is (also) a pioneer in exploring the topic of sustainable lifestyles.”

→ Perla Srour-Gandon, Scientific Officer at the European Commission and project officer of the SPREAD project in 2012

“The SPREAD project's multi-stakeholder engagement and involvement of entrepreneurs provide a unique opportunity to question business as usual and scale new solutions.”

→ Kirsi Sormunen, Vice President, Sustainability, Nokia

“Motivating people starts from the heart. Understanding what people feel and desire will help us provide options that deliver what is desired more sustainably. The SPREAD project's human-centered approach will provide important insights for companies to develop sustainable product options that people also desire.”

→ Per Stoltz, Deputy Sustainability Manager, IKEA Sweden

up until today. Citizens who took part in the project's activities showed a strong willingness to change their lifestyles, sometimes drastically, as long as the changes aligned with their personal values and positive alternatives were offered. These insights are just as relevant today as they were at the time.

What was distinctive about how SPREAD engaged with stakeholders during the project?

None of the project activities were carried out only from the partners' desks: SPREAD was one of the first social platform projects funded by the European Commission, giving room for a new type of research based on the broad integration of different stakeholders from civil society, business, and policy in all relevant project activities. ●

Project factbox

→ **Duration:** 2011–2013

→ **Funder:** 7th Research Framework Programme of the European Commission (FP7)

→ **Partners:** Ashoka France; Demos Helsinki, Finland; Ecoinstitut Barcelona (ECOI), Spain; Energy Research Centre of the Netherlands (ECN), The Netherlands; EuroHealthNet; Lund University (ULUND), Sweden; The Northern Alliance for Sustainability (ANPED); Politecnico di Milano (Polimi), Italy; Regional Environmental Center for CEE Countries (REC), Hungary.



REWE

Sustainability Council

A Journey of Trust, Transformation, and Trailblazing:
15 Years of the REWE Sustainability Council

In 2011, REWE Group and the CSCP set out to do something bold: create a platform where critical voices and corporate strategies could meet not in conflict but in collaboration. The result was the founding of a Sustainability Council made up of five civil society organisations (CSOs), each bringing in-depth expertise—from biodiversity and human rights to organic agriculture and consumer advocacy.

What was novel about the REWE Sustainability Council when it launched in 2011?

At a time when sustainability in food retail was often limited to marketing claims, this council chose a different path: substance over slogans. The REWE Group, the CSCP, and the Sustainability Council brought to life REWE's sustainability label, PRO PLANET based on robust hotspot analyses of supply chains and clear criteria for more sustainable products. PRO PLANET was not just about labelling—it was the beginning of an internal learning journey for product and category managers, procurement experts, and many more. It focused on key questions, such as: What are the critical social and environmental hotspots of certain products? What can we do to reduce or avoid them? At the same time, the label provided consumers with something they often lack: clear, credible guidance for making more sustainable choices.



Photo: © REWE Group

What do the results of the PRO PLANET label say?

They speak volumes: over 1,500 products carrying the PRO PLANET label, dozens of raw material groups improved, and growing public awareness about the sustainability impact of everyday choices. The council's work also extended beyond food: since 2011, it has supported toom Baumarkt, REWE Group's DIY subsidiary, in becoming a sustainability frontrunner in its own sector. REWE Group, the Council and the CSCP followed a common vision from the beginning: We wanted to make more sustainable choices accessible and affordable for mainstream consumers.

What role did leadership play in this sustainability journey?

It takes courage to lead—and to step out of the comfort zone. Through the council, REWE Group embedded long-term, trust-based dialogue with civil society actors at the heart of its sustainability strategy. The multi-stakeholder nature of the council enriched decision-making and helped REWE Group anticipate and respond to evolving challenges—from climate action and biodiversity loss to human rights and EU regulations. As these issues grew more complex, so too did the council's role, evolving into a strategic think tank anticipating and co-shaping the future of sustainable retail.



→ Stephan Schaller,
CSCP Senior Expert

"In our long-standing partnership with the CSCP, we have benefited from their high level of expertise and integrative approach. Beyond our collaboration within the Sustainability Council, the CSCP has made valuable contributions to our sustainability initiatives and strategy through various projects."

→ Nicola Tanaskovic, Head of
Corporate Responsibility at
REWE Group

That sounds like a harmonious process. Was there never any friction?

Of course there was tension. Sometimes it got really loud and controversial. And it was also more than once that both sides questioned the collaboration. In the end, however, conflicts were often very productive, especially when they were an expression of a joint struggle to find the best solution. We must not forget that this is where civil society positions and science collide with economic conditions. One of the greatest successes and added values of this collaboration is that, over time, the advisory boards have developed a deeper understanding of business processes, while the REWE Group has gained insight into civil society organisation (CSO) perspectives on its processes and business models.

Recently, this collaboration entered a new chapter. Can you tell us about this transition?

In 2023, the collaboration entered a new phase: The REWE Group, the CSCP and the Sustainability Council decided to turn the latter into the REWE Group Sustainability Advisory Board. With a stronger mandate and a broader approach, the board now addresses more strategic and systemic sustainability challenges, aiming at driving transformative change at scale.

Stephan Schaller, has been involved in the CSCP moderation of the REWE Sustainability Council for years. In this interview, he shares what keeps this 15-year-old journey running.

"What happens when a retailer joins forces with civil society and sustainability experts in a spirit of trust and transparency is a quiet revolution. This is the case with the REWE Sustainability Council."



Photo: © REWE

Project factbox

→ **Duration:** 2011–today
→ **Partner:** REWE Group

Looking at the broader picture, what does this story tell us about business and sustainability?

What began as a project about labels has become a blueprint for co-creative transformation. It's a story of how deep collaboration, patience, and trust can reshape an industry—and how the courage to open up to external expertise and feedback can leave a lasting legacy.

What has been the CSCP's role throughout this journey?

The CSCP has been there every step of the way—initiating, hosting, moderating, and guiding this unique process. And this is far less administrative than it sounds. We regularly reflect on how to continuously improve the joint work and processes, and the advisory board in particular emphasizes how important a trusted, neutral mediator is for both sides. And while the journey isn't over, the milestone is clear: this partnership didn't just set a new standard. It redefined what's possible when business and civil society walk the path of sustainability together. ●

The Clariant Portfolio Value Programme

Pioneering Sustainable Product Portfolio Management In The Chemicals Industry



Sustainability and performance leadership is not just about meeting today's standards—it is about building the tools that set tomorrow's. Launched in 2012, Clariant's Sustainability@Clariant Portfolio Value Program (PVP), developed with methodological support from the CSCP, created a structured, company-wide way to steer the product portfolio using sustainability and market performance together. The programme documents an early, holistic approach that aimed to influence not only the company but also value-chain partners.

What sat at the heart of this holistic approach?

The PVP System applied two lenses: first, a relative assessment versus market benchmarks and customer needs, and second, an absolute view of sustainability benefits and risks. Product screening outcomes fell into clear categories, from best-in-class (eligible for promotion/labeling) to improvement, road-mapping, and in some cases substitution or phase-out, so teams could act, not just report. The design explicitly relied on cross-functional involvement and internal training to translate tool results into decisions.

Can you tell us more how this methodology supported the creation of Clariant's EcoTain® label?

With the CSCP methodology embedded in its system, Clariant created EcoTain®, a flagship label for products meeting stringent criteria across the categories People, Performance, and Planet. EcoTain was tied to portfolio steering (recognising leaders and guiding improvement) and to customer communication. By the end of 2016, over 140 products carried the EcoTain label, a figure reported across Clariant's 2016 Integrated & Sustainability Reports.

How was the PVP built into product development?

The PVP wasn't just used in portfolio reviews. Clariant's Corporate Sustainability Index for R&D made it mandatory

to check sustainability at key stages in every major R&D project, linking innovation choices to the same criteria used in portfolio screening. That alignment helped teams prioritise improvements, reformulations, or next-gen products early in the pipeline.

Where did the Clariant Portfolio Value Program fit in the wider context?

When PVP was launched in 2012, sustainability assessments at portfolio level were still new in the chemicals sector. Methodological guidance came later, with PSA guidance published by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development in 2018 and updated in 2023. Since then, many organisations have developed similar assessment approaches, and industry groups increasingly promote portfolio-level steering to anticipate regulatory and market changes.

In what ways is this program still relevant today?

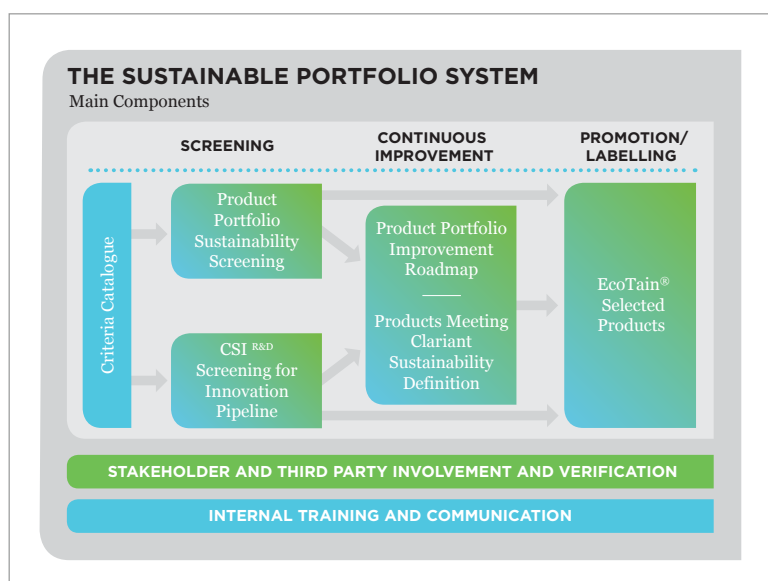
Clariant continues to describe PVP as integrated with product innovation and development and focused on identifying improvement opportunities, best-in-class solutions, and risk reduction, a through-line from the original design. Recent industry commentary also frames PVP as supporting the transition towards products with reduced human-health and environmental risk. ●



→ Dr. Esther Heidebüchel,
CSCP Senior Project Manager

Dr. Esther Heidebüchel, chemical industry expert, reflects on the Clariant project—its impact then and its relevance today.

“By embracing a comprehensive ‘triple bottom line’ approach that looked at environmental, social, and economic factors, CSCP’s work with Clariant helped develop pioneering tools and methods that reshaped portfolio management and decision-making.”



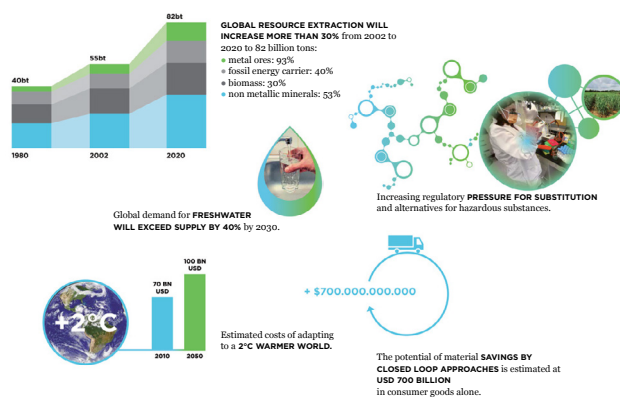
“[Sustainable Portfolio Assessment] was the foundation upon which to redefine our product portfolio”
→ Lynette Chung, former Head of Corporate Sustainability Strategy & Advocacy, Clariant speaks about her experience collaborating with the CSCP.

Graphics from the report “Developing Tools for Sustainable Product Portfolio Management”,
Design © CSCP, Photos © shutterstock.com

Project factbox

→ **Duration:** 2012–2015
→ **Partner:** Clariant

RESOURCE SCARCITY, SUBSTITUTION AND CLOSED LOOP SOLUTIONS



References: Gijun, S. et al., 2005; KPMG, 2012; European Chemicals Agency, 2013; World Bank, 2011; Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2013.



R2Pi—The Route to the Circular Economy

Getting the Circular Transition into Motion

The transition to a circular economy is central to the Clean Industrial Deal as one of the main levers for achieving EU's 2050 climate neutrality ambitions. Back in 2016, the EU funded the R2Pi project as one of the pioneering initiatives to lay the groundwork for this transformation. R2Pi, which stands for “tRansitioning from linear 2 circular: Policy and Innovation”, was a breakthrough, concerted effort of 15 partners from 9 European countries along with businesses, cities, and policymakers aiming to put the circular transition into motion.

In 2016, circular economy wasn't a universal concept as it is today. What was your starting point in R2Pi?

We began by mapping market circular initiatives and identifying circular patterns, to build a comprehensive Circular Economy Business Model framework based on existing experiences. This methodological framework, validated by many stakeholders, was a relevant contribution of the project for organisations of different sizes and sectors to understand how to develop roadmaps towards circularity. In parallel, we collaboratively identified policy gaps needed to make possible and/or foster circular approaches instead of linear value chains, aiming for more sustainable circular solutions. We conducted around 20 case studies across six sectors—construction, electronics, food, plastics, textiles, and water—to identify patterns and opportunities to shift value chains towards circularity.

What did the case studies reveal?

In R2Pi, a case study was an in-depth look at how an organisation was applying circular principles at that time—what worked, what didn't, and why. This was distinct from circular business model innovation in the project, which meant actively designing or refining a business model to increase circularity, using our tools and frameworks. The studies showed that circularity isn't about company size. Global manufacturers such as *ROCKWOOL*, municipalities like *Venlo (Netherlands)*, and SMEs such as *MUD Jeans* can all adopt circular business models. They also revealed the tangible benefits and challenges of moving from linear to circular approaches.

How did stakeholders benefit from the case study findings?

Every organisation needs its own pathway and pace. We stressed the importance of cross-sector collaboration and integration along value chains; engaging customers early; pushing for a level playing field; communicating progress clearly; and investing where it matters—integration, harmonisation, and policy innovation.

How did the case studies inform the development of the R2Pi toolbox and policy guidelines?

They were the evidence base for the Circular Business Model Innovation Toolkit, our main practical resource for companies. The toolkit includes process steps, worksheets, and readiness/circularity diagnostics, helping organisations clarify their model options, assess conditions, and decide where to act—whether they were early in the journey or already advanced.

What was the main offering of the toolbox?

It gave businesses and other actors a structured way to identify their priorities, gauge readiness, and prioritise action fields—even in less-than-ideal market or policy environments.

Project factbox

→ **Duration:** 2016–2019

→ **Funder:** Horizon 2020

→ **Partners:** 15 partners, led by the CSCP
www.cscp.org/our-work/r2pi



→ Cristina Fedato,
Head of Sustainable Infrastructure,
Products, and Services

Cristina Fedato talks us through R2Pi's pioneering work and CSCP's role in leading the project.

"The R2Pi project was a breakthrough initiative. Launched a decade ago, it developed cornerstones for mainstreaming circular economy business models and proposed concrete policy packages to support their implementation and scale-up."

"R2Pi was a milestone project because until then, few had created a typology of Circular Economy Business Models (CEBM) and had linked them to 'best-of-breed' industrial examples. Indeed, we examined case-studies of CEBM implemented in real-life commercial settings. Moreover, we also helped three further companies in embarking on their CEBM innovation journey. To achieve this milestone project, we had put together a consortium of 15 organisations spanning academia, trade associations, CE actors such as Landbell and the Cradle-to-Cradle Product Innovations Institute and with CSCP at the centre of the spider's web, coordinating the lot!"

Alexis Figeac, Former Head of SBE Team at the CSCP & R2Pi Project Director



Photo: © shutterstock / tai11

How did the R2Pi project help address policy gaps?

We identified concrete gaps and designed policy packages for the six sectors studied, cataloguing well over a hundred measures to enable wider uptake of circular business models. These were consolidated into a comprehensive Circular Economy Policy Packages report. While the R2Pi project website is phased out, the full guidelines and tools remain archived on the European Commission's CORDIS portal and in several institutional repositories. Even today, the sector patterns, diagnostic approach, and policy measures remain relevant for shaping circular economy implementation. ●



Academy of Change



Empowering CSOs to Increase their Impact Through Behaviour Change

Applying behaviour change interventions to a range of projects—biking to work, protecting wildlife in South Africa, increasing waste recycling rates—across cultural contexts from France to India to Australia, has been one of the proud achievements of our landmark capacity-building programme, the Academy of Change (AoC).

How did the idea for the Academy of Change first come about?

Back in 2017, our civil society partners shared with us that one of their key goals was to engage citizens in environmental action—yet, they had limited knowledge on how to initiate and drive behaviour change. A survey conducted by us at the end of the same year with around 50 civil society organisations (CSOs) from around the world confirmed this: while 75 % identified citizen behaviour change as a major priority, only 22 % felt their organisation had sufficient knowledge of behaviour change theory and practice.

What was your response to this clear gap in knowledge among civil society organisations?

In response to this need and thanks to funding from the KR foundation, we designed and launched the Academy of Change in a great partnership with the organisation *Behaviour Change* and later also with the *International Civil Society Centre*, a capacity building programme on sustainable behaviours designed for future leaders working on climate change and sustainability within the civil society sector.

What was unique about the Academy of Change?

The Academy of Change transformed years of behavioural science research and practical experience into a series of seven hands-on modules to support organisations design behaviour change interventions on the ground. From understanding target groups to defining barriers and drivers for specific behaviours to selecting the most impactful behaviour change tools, civil society organisations gained key knowledge and tools to take action both within and outside their organisations.

What did a CSO representative who participated in AoC get out of the programme?

Quite a lot! The modules included a mix of online and in-person meetings, a pre-reading, further literature, a personal scrapbook to transfer the knowledge to the individual's own work, and in some cases additional material like podcasts or videos.

Moreover, we wanted to ensure that intensive and impact-oriented peer-to-peer exchange was central to the programme. At the end of the day, despite working in different countries and on different topics, many CSOs faced similar challenges, therefore, frequent exchange was really valuable.

How long did the programme run, and what was the scope of participation?

The Academy of Change ran for three rounds, with a total of around 150 participants between 2017 and 2021. The programme was complemented by a total of 6 pilot interventions, where participating CSOs could apply the new knowledge with close support of the Academy of Change team.

What kind of real-world applications did the pilot interventions focus on?

To further strengthen the impact of the Academy of Change, the CSCP created the Academy of Change Catalyst Programme. Its aim was to empower a selected group of participants to act as ambassadors for behavioural know-how within their organisation. They received more dedicated training and materials to further distribute such knowledge within their CSOs, like a workshop in a box, or a quick ten step guide. Some of the Academy of Change Catalyst participants also implemented a pilot intervention as part of the programme.

Project factbox

→ **Duration:** 2017–2021

→ **Funder:** KR Foundation

→ **Partners:** Behaviour Change, International Civil Society Centre (ICSC)



→ Jennifer Wiegard,
CSCP Project Manager

What started as a conversation with two large civil society organisations, turned into one of the flagship projects of the CSCP. **Jennifer Wiegard** tells us more in this interview.

"The Academy of Change distilled years of behavioural science and real-world practice into seven practical modules, equipping changemakers to design and implement effective behaviour change interventions on the ground."

TASTE the CHANGE

A Behaviour Change Journey by the Academy of Change



"Taste the Change" is a Behaviour Change Journey by the Academy of Change. You can meet Chris online: aochange.org/taste-the-change

"This has been an incredible experience, I have learnt so much to take away/digest/share/test—I am so grateful for the opportunity. I know this course will have a powerful ripple effect into the wider world and influence sustainable behaviours globally."

→ Natasha Yorke-Edgell,
RSPB, UK

"I don't think there's anything like the Academy—and I searched extensively."

→ Paulette van Ommen, Senior Advisor, WaterBear Network & Resilience Foundation, The Netherlands

"This programme motivates everyone to start right away new projects for a more sustainable world."

→ Leon Leuser, Project Manager, adelphi, Germany

The pilots focused on different topics ranging from testing the reduction of meat consumption in university canteens to shortening shower times to reduce water consumption in private households.

Can you give us an idea of the interventions implemented as part of the Academy of Change Catalyst Programme?

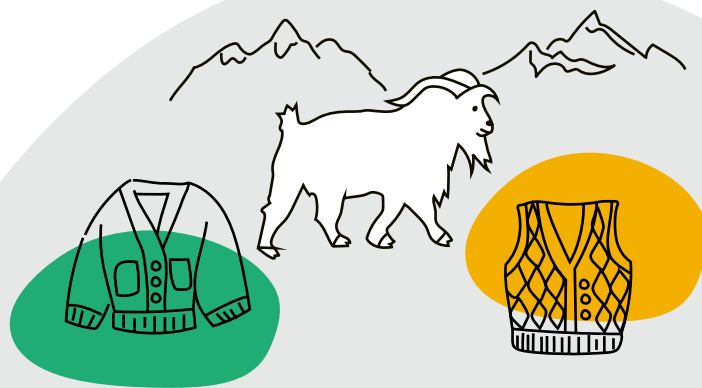
In Lyon, France, a student accommodation provider was trying to reduce the environmental impact of their buildings. To address this, HESPUL, one of the organisations taking part in the Academy of Change Catalyst programme, introduced the Game of Showers, a behaviour change intervention that used gamification to reduce the amount of water students used in their student rooms. CEED, a civil society organisation based in Sofia, Bulgaria worked with businesses to provide employees e-bikes to commute to work, making it an easy choice. RARE, an organisation based in Virginia, US developed an app to help coastal fishing communities worldwide collect and access vital data on catches and fish stocks, enabling more sustainable and informed fisheries management.

You also launched a series of podcasts on key behaviour change topics.

Yes, the Academy of Change provided deep dives into each topic covered in the academy modules with insights from international experts in the field. The podcasts are a source of inspiration and information for CSOs who wish to integrate behavioural know-how into their work and increase the impact of their efforts. The podcasts are available in our CSCP library: www.cscp.org/library/videos

Has the Academy of Change approach been adopted or adapted elsewhere?

The German capacity building programme *weiter_wirken* has brought the Academy of Change concept to the local level in North-Rhine Westphalia. Shorter training sessions have been used in many different contexts, including workshops for the retailer Ahold Delhaize or the Innovative Sustainable Economy (ISE) Mission of the Interreg Euro-MED Program. ●



STeP EcoLab Mongolia

Putting Mongolia on a Fast Track to Sustainable Cashmere Production

Although vital to rural livelihoods, Mongolia's cashmere sector is facing increased pressure from environmental degradation and market volatility. Launched in 2018, the first round of the STeP EcoLab Mongolia project laid a foundation for more sustainable practices by supporting cashmere goat farmers to integrate sustainable production practices for long-term impact. In 2025, a follow-up project builds on this progress: tackling fair pricing, EU market access, and circularity to ensure lasting change.

Can you describe the traditional approach to cashmere production in Mongolia?

Traditional cashmere making in Mongolia is a centuries-old craft, deeply tied to nomadic heritage. Each spring, herders comb the soft undercoat of goats by hand—a sustainable practice that yields some of the world's finest fibres, valued for their softness and warmth. In recent years, however, the sector has faced growing challenges. Overgrazing, land degradation, weak environmental oversight, and limited market opportunities now threaten both the long-term sustainability of cashmere and the wellbeing of the ecosystems and rural communities that depend on it.

What role did the CSCP and its partners play in addressing these challenges?

Our team worked closely with the local partners *AVSF Mongolia* and the *Mongolian Wool and Cashmere Association* to provide guidance and support. As a result, we managed to introduce practical tools for cleaner production, launch Mongolia's first voluntary code of practice for sustainable processing, and facilitate access to green finance.

What made this project stand out in terms of its approach?

What really made this project stand out was how it brought everyone to the table. It supported SMEs with hands-on training, helped herder cooperatives improve pasture

management and animal welfare, and created space for policymakers, industry leaders, and NGOs to work together on shared standards. This broad collaboration built a strong sense of ownership and made sure sustainability wasn't just a top-down goal—it became a shared mission.

Can you explain the significance of the voluntary code of practice?

In order to improve the industry's sustainability performance in the long term, a voluntary code of practice (VCP) was developed with industry stakeholders. The document was signed by 18 companies, among them the leading Mongolian companies for wool and cashmere production. The aim of this VCP was ambitious: On one hand, the focus was to increase the sustainability of cashmere production and, on the other hand, to convert the business model according to criteria of established European textile sustainability standards such as GOTS or the EU Ecolabel for Textiles.

What impact did the VCP have at the national level?

The VCP developed as part of the project became national law in Mongolia (MNS 6926:2021), establishing a national standard for sustainable textile production. This major achievement challenges the status quo of fragmented practices and instead promotes coherence and accountability across the sector.



→ Pawel Zylka,
CSCP Project Manager

“Mongolia, as a developing country, is strongly committed to promoting sustainable development in the wool and cashmere value chain and driving economic growth. The STeP EcoLab project has made significant contributions to the implementation of Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) practices in the Mongolian textile and livestock sectors, gaining global recognition. However, this is just the beginning, and much more needs to be achieved.”

→ Sarangoo Ukhnaa, Project Manager
Agronomes et Vétérinaires sans frontières (AVSF) in Mongolia

How were these standards reinforced and promoted in the industry?

The creation of a sustainability handbook for the industry and pilot projects that demonstrated the feasibility of greener technologies helped anchor these changes further. Mongolian cashmere producers gained tools and credibility to position their products in environmentally conscious markets. Internationally, the project created awareness of Mongolia's potential as a source of high-quality, sustainable fiber. It also opened doors to new partnerships, including participation in global events such as the Première Vision trade fair in Paris.

What's next for the sector following this initial success?

Building on this legacy, the second phase, STeP EcoLab Mongolia II focuses on fair pricing, EU market access, and circular economy principles. This is a long-term investment in reshaping one of Mongolia's most important sectors for a sustainable future. ●

Pawel Zylka has been involved in the STeP EcoLab project since the launch of round one in 2018. In this interview, he explains how farmer-centred innovation has been driving positive change ever since.

“Witnessing an entire industry transform towards sustainability has been remarkable. STeP EcoLab helped make that possible, not by approaching sustainability as an add-on, but by weaving it into every step of the value chain.”

“The STeP EcoLab projects mark a turning point for Mongolia's wool and cashmere sector—demonstrating that sustainability, economic resilience, and international competitiveness can go hand-in-hand. They have laid a strong foundation for a greener, fairer future rooted in Mongolian traditions and global standards.”

→ Dondogdorj M., Head of the Light Industry Policy Implementation and Coordination
Department of the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry in Mongolia



Graphic: STeP EcoLab Logo

Project factbox

→ **Duration:** 2018–ongoing (currently phase 2)

→ **Funder:** Switch Asia Programme

→ **Partners:** Agronomes et Vétérinaires Sans Frontières – AVSF Mongolia (Lead); Mongolian Wool and Cashmere Association; Environment and Security Center of Mongolia; National Association of Pasture Users Group; Mongolian Bankers' Association; Mongolian Sustainable Finance Association

Sustainable Island Mauritius

Driving Sustainable Tourism Through a Pro-Handprint Approach



The Sustainable Island Mauritius (SIM) project set out to tackle a core challenge: how to sustain tourism without compromising the island's environment, economy, and way of life. From 2018–2022, the Mauritius Tourism Authority and the CSCP, under the EU Switch Africa Green programme, applied a handprint approach—highlighting and scaling positive impacts along tourism value chains. By combining circular economy principles with deep local engagement, SIM transformed industry perceptions, influenced policy, and supported Mauritius on its path towards its 2030 Green Destination goal.

How did the SIM project make a difference in promoting sustainable tourism on Mauritius?

The SIM project was all about working with the local community to consider their needs and protect the ecosystems while innovating in waste reduction and energy efficiency. Through open-minded and participatory collaboration, it became possible to address pressing challenges effectively and pave the way for meaningful, lasting change.

The Mauritius Pro-Handprint Innovation Framework played a central role in the project. How did it support local businesses?

The Pro-Handprint Framework helped small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) reduce negative impacts while creating positive actions. It enabled businesses to identify, measure, and enhance their sustainability efforts. Hotels, tour operators, and suppliers explored creative ways to reduce waste, conserve resources, and support the local economy. The framework provided tools like impact monitoring, self-diagnosis guides, and communication strategies to help businesses implement sustainable practices.

How were local communities and businesses involved as strategic partners in the co-creation process?

Co-creation was essential. We brought together hotels, SMEs including local makers through partners like *Made in Moris* to develop local products and services together. Too often local SMEs are left out of the tourism industries and its benefits but carry the burden of the negative impacts. The goal was to change that status quo and co-create solutions towards meaningful, positive change.

How did this co-creation process impact the long-term success of the project?

Co-creation made the solutions locally relevant. Involving SMEs, NGOs, and tourists helped us address Mauritius' specific challenges. This approach led to innovations like turning waste into products and creating new sustainable services. Three businesses we worked with went on to win the Sustainable Tourism Mauritius Award 2022, highlighting how collaboration can lead to lasting, positive change. A hotel-beekeeper collaboration that installed beehives on hotel grounds, boosting pollinators and biodiversity while offering guests local honey; a lagoon-excursion operator that redesigned trips around lower-emission/electric craft and reef-safe practices to cut fuel use and protect sensitive habitats; and *The Good Shop*, a second-hand social



→ Nikola Berger,
Head of Creative and Communication

Unlike the well-known carbon footprint, the handprint assessment highlights the positive impacts of a product or service—promoting biodiversity, ecological health, and social wellbeing. **Nikola Berger** explains how this method was implemented in the Sustainable Island Mauritius project to boost sustainable tourism.

“Mauritius welcomes about 1.3 million visitors a year—roughly the size of its population—so the question was: how can tourism deliver value without degrading the very ecosystems and communities that make the island special? Our answer was to pair classic footprint reduction with a handprint approach—helping businesses create positive impacts and new value along the tourism value chain.”

“It’s been very inspiring and eye-opening to work with Nikola Berger and her team at Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production (CSCP). The fact that we were involved in designing the workshop led to a tailor-made approach and resulted in more impactful sessions for our members. The CSCP’s team took the time to benchmark local Mauritian brands which made it relevant and relatable for our participants. We appreciated the hands-on approach and the interactive sessions which contributed to the success of the workshop.”

→ Shirin Gunny, Managing Director
of Made in Moris.



This Guide Book has been created for entrepreneurs, artisans, designers and small and mediums-sized enterprises (SMEs) to support businesses on their sustainable product journey in Mauritius and all over the world: cscp.org/publications/creative-guidebook/

enterprise that extends product lifetimes through repair, resale and community programmes, keeping materials in use and value local.

How is Mauritius positioning itself to become a leader in sustainable tourism, and what role did the SIM project play in this journey?

Mauritius is on track to becoming a leader in sustainable development and, by 2030, also an official Green Destination. The SIM project showed that sustainability doesn’t just reduce harm—it drives business growth and creates positive social and environmental impacts. By continuing to engage stakeholders and innovate, Mauritius can integrate sustainability deeply into its tourism sector. The project was rewarded with *Best Tourism NDC Investment Initiative* at COP27’s African NDC Investment Awards, and a *WTM Africa Responsible Tourism Silver Award*—signals that the blend of handprint, co-creation and value-chain focus resonates beyond Mauritius.

Why was this project a milestone?

The SIM project was a milestone because it shifted sustainable tourism in Mauritius from focusing on harm reduction only to actively creating positive impacts. By collaborating and co-creating with local communities, businesses, and SMEs solutions were locally relevant, sparking innovations like turning waste into products and supporting biodiversity through unique partnerships. ●

Project factbox

- **Duration:** 2018–2022
- **Funder:** Switch Asia Green Programme
- **Partners:** Mauritius Tourism Authority

The Dialogue Forum

Making Real Progress in Food Waste Through a Voluntary Agreement

At the CSCP, we have been working towards reducing food waste in over 10 projects during the past 20 years. In our role as moderator of the Dialogue Forum for the Reduction of Food Waste in Wholesale and Retail, we helped shape a voluntary agreement to reduce food waste between German retail and wholesale companies and the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture. A monitoring report (2024) reveals that a 24 % reduction of food waste was recorded in the first year following the signing of the voluntary agreement.



How did the German Pact Against Food Waste emerge from the Dialogue Forum process?

The German Pact Against Food Waste (*Pakt gegen Lebensmittelverschwendung*) emerged from a three-year trust-building and negotiation process within the Dialogue Forum for the Reduction of Food Waste in Retail and Wholesale, coordinated and moderated by the CSCP. Our role was to bring together and engage a diverse group of 21 companies from the sector, explore possibilities, overcome challenges, and facilitate the joint development of an ambitious but realistic public-private voluntary agreement. Our partner in this project, the Thünen Institute, was responsible for testing and implementing a monitoring process alongside the companies.

What commitments did companies make under the voluntary agreement?

Companies committed to reduce their own food waste by 30 % by 2025 and 50 % by 2030, and fulfil 5 compulsory measures, including to respect the "food use hierarchy" and conduct internal training measures. Moreover, the companies signed up to support food waste reduction at the interfaces with their suppliers, customers, and redistribution organisations with a minimum of eight elective measures to be chosen annually. These elective measures allow companies to select actions from a catalogue of options each year. These can include initiatives to improve product shelf life, better waste tracking, or collaborating with food redistribution organisations.

How far have participating companies come in meeting the goals of the voluntary agreement?

In autumn 2024, one year after signing the voluntary agreement, a monitoring report conducted by the Thünen Institute showed a 24 % reduction in food waste for the year 2023. In addition, the 14 signatories of the German Pact Against Food Waste have implemented a total of 132 measures, not only within their own businesses but also in their dealings with suppliers, customers, and through food donations. According to the report, the companies are on track to meet the obligations of the voluntary agreement signed in summer 2023.

What were some of the challenges in getting such a diverse group of companies to commit to a voluntary agreement?

One of the main challenges was aligning the interests of companies from various parts of the sector. Some were already taking action on food waste, while others were just beginning to address the issue. Building trust among the companies was crucial for ensuring long-term commitment to the pact's goals. Here it was possible to leverage our extensive multi-stakeholder engagement expertise and our previous experience from the REFRESH project. This was a milestone project in the field, during which the CSCP already brought together representatives from the food industry, retail and ministries at the national level as well as civil society organisations in the REFRESH Pilot Working Platform Germany. Here, we discussed the status quo on food waste and food waste policy in Germany and developed a Framework for Action.



→ Nora Brüggemann,
CSCP Senior Project Manager

Project factbox

- **Duration:** 2019–2022
- **Funder:** German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture
- **Partner:** Thünen Institute

Nora Brüggemann, CSCP Senior Project Manager has led the Dialogue Forum among other food waste projects. We spoke with Nora about key factors that led to the success of the Dialogue Forum.

“We are proud to have supported the set up of the German Pact Against Food Waste, a voluntary agreement aimed at supporting SDG 12.3 on food waste reduction. A key legacy of the Dialogue Forum is that the 14 signatories of the agreement, including all the major wholesale and retail players, are in the position to set positive examples and inspire others.”

“Since 2021, we’ve taken action on many things that had been neglected for far too long. [...] Together with major wholesale and retail companies, we’ve set new standards through a strong pact against food waste.”

→ Cem Özdemir, former German Minister of Food and Agriculture.*

How does the CSCP leverage its extensive insights with voluntary agreements as well as with food waste prevention and reduction?

The successful pact that emerged out of the forum is a strong example of our track record in using voluntary agreements to bring about real change, be it on sustainable cashmere in Mongolia, deforestation-free coffee supply chains in Brazil, or sustainable cocoa in Costa Rica. Following REFRESH and the Dialogue Forum, the CSCP now has a total of 11 projects focused specifically on food waste prevention and reduction.

You mentioned other examples of voluntary agreements. What makes them such an effective tool for driving change?

Voluntary agreements are effective because they bring together various stakeholders to collaborate on common goals. They allow businesses to share knowledge, resources, and best practices, helping to set collective standards for action. Through precompetitive collaboration, businesses can achieve more than they could individually. Although they are not legally binding, voluntary agreements enable companies to act quickly, often ahead of regulatory action. Successful agreements can also inform policy development, as demonstrated in our project on sustainable cashmere in Mongolia.

How do you think the Dialogue Forum can inspire other countries, especially in light of new EU targets?

The new EU targets foresee a reduction of food waste at the retail and consumer levels by 30 % and of food loss in processing and manufacturing by 10 % by 2030. Voluntary agreements for food waste reduction and prevention also exist in other European countries. Among these, I believe the German Pact Against Food Waste stands out as an excellent example how such initiatives can contribute to these goals: Not only does the Pact set even more ambitious reduction targets—aiming for a 50 % cut among its participants—but it also adopts with its catalogue of elective measures a holistic, value-chain-wide approach, recognising that responsibility must be shared across all stages of the value chain. ●



* Original quote in German: Özdemir: „Seit 2021 haben wir vieles auf den Weg gebracht, was viel zu lang liegen geblieben war. [...] Wir haben [...] mit einem starken Pakt gegen Lebensmittelverschwendung gemeinsam mit Groß- und Einzelhandelsunternehmen neue Standards gesetzt.“ Source: <https://www.bmleh.de/SharedDocs/Meldungen/DE/Presse/2025/250124-gw.html>, 24 January 2025

HOOP

Engaging Stakeholders Across Europe for the Urban Circular Bioeconomy

The EU Bioeconomy Strategy places cities as circular bioeconomy hubs for turning biowaste into safe and sustainable bio-based products. The HOOP project provided Project Development Assistance to eight lighthouse cities and regions in Europe, supporting them in developing large-scale urban circular bioeconomy projects and initiatives.



Why did HOOP choose to focus on the post-consumption stage of the circular economy?

Sustainability efforts often focus on what happens at the start of the production process, things like designing sustainable food systems or ensuring healthy soils. But the stages that come after consumption are just as important. Biomass, for example, still holds tremendous value even after it's discarded. It retains nutrients that can be recovered and reused in meaningful ways. That's why HOOP chose to focus on the post-consumption stage of the circular economy—because there's huge potential for creating a circular, regenerative system right at the point where waste is generated.

What kind of approach did HOOP take to tackle its goal?

The approach of the HOOP project was holistic and ambitious. It wasn't just about solving a singular issue; it was about looking at the entire value chain. Some of the solutions focused on making biowaste sorting more efficient at the consumer level. Others aimed at guiding public decision-makers through the complex processes of getting new technologies into practice.

How were the solutions implemented?

The eight lighthouse regions and cities involved in HOOP were essentially laboratories for circular solutions in the urban bioeconomy. They were the testbeds for innovation. Through Project Development Assistance (PDA), HOOP provided tailored support to these regions, helping them

navigate everything from cutting-edge technological options to the often tricky task of securing financial backing. It was like giving these cities the tools and the confidence they needed to take bold steps towards a circular future.

Central to the HOOP project was our CSCP club model—what is unique about it?

We had originally developed the Biowaste Club model in our SCALIBUR project. The idea behind it was simple yet powerful: communication and collaboration are often overlooked in transition projects, but they are key to success. The Biowaste Club model allowed all stakeholders—businesses, citizens, policymakers—to come together in a way that was open, inclusive, and focused on shared goals. By ensuring that all voices were heard and that leadership was driven locally, we created a space for relevant, sustained engagement.

What results were possible due to this engagement format?

The Biowaste Clubs created room for exchange with over a thousand stakeholders in about 40 biowaste club meetings that took place in the lighthouses over the course of the four and a half years of the project duration.

What activities did the clubs carry out?

The Clubs hosted different types of meetings, each tailored to the specific needs of a given lighthouse. If in Bergen, Norway actors came together at a high-level conference, in Murcia, Spain tailored workshops were designed to meet the needs of the senior population in the city. This level of

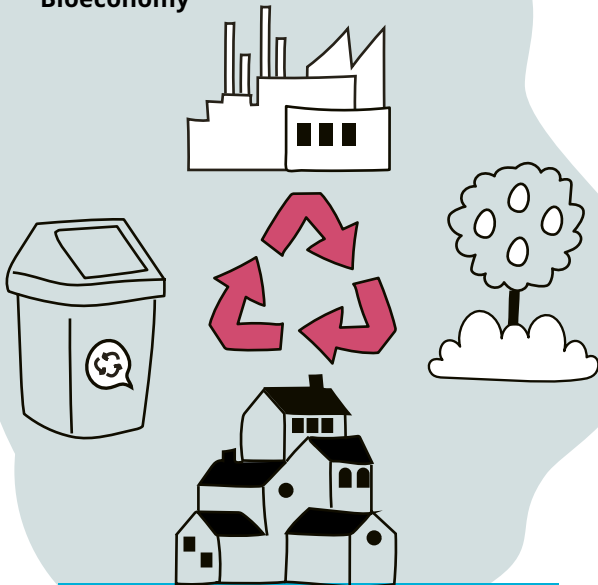


→ Kilian Braun,
CSCP Project Coordinator

The HOOP project supported European cities and regions to rethink biomass use, inspiring and enabling new circular solutions. **Kilian Braun**, who has been involved in the project shares insights on HOOP's unique approach and its legacy.

"While technologies like composting are well established across Europe, their added value often remains limited. The HOOP project helped cities and regions unlock greater potential—turning bio-waste management into a driver of innovation and circular growth."

The Circular Bioeconomy



Project factbox

- **Duration:** 2020–2024
 - **Funder:** EU Horizon Europe
 - **Partners:** 23 European partners
- www.cscp.org/our-work/hoop

flexibility and adaptability placed the Biowaste Club model as an important lever in the overall project work, supporting a major goal: identifying all relevant stakeholders and enabling them to take ownership and drive the process.

What is the main legacy of HOOP?

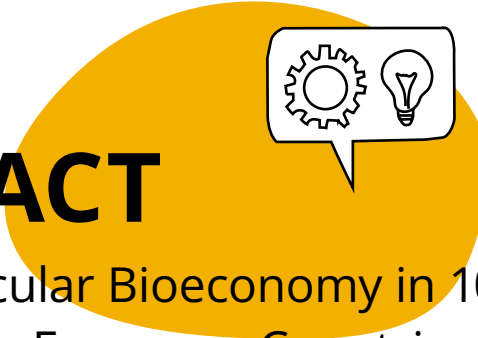
As part of HOOP, the CSCP facilitated national replication workshops and supported project partners to build a network of follower cities and regions willing to learn from the experience of the lighthouses. By the end of the project roughly 120 follower cities were attracted. During its lifecycle, HOOP managed to unlock over €120 million for urban circular bioeconomy investments and is a demonstration project of the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI). ●

"In its four and a half years, HOOP unlocked €120 million for urban circular bioeconomy investments, through a coordinated technological, legal and financial assistance to cities and regions. These territories (lighthouses), in parallel, undertook well-structured and impactful stakeholder engagement activities under the guidance of CSCP, which resulted in working groups with new insights for biowaste valorisation."

→ Elisa Gambuzzi,
Técnico I+D+i, Área Medio Ambiente

"One of HOOP's key achievements has been the establishment of the necessary circular environments in our cities and regions. This success has been largely driven by the invaluable contribution of CSCP, which has played a pivotal role as the stakeholder engagement leader and the developer of the Biowaste Clubs."

→ Martín Soriano, PhD
Head of the Circular Systems
Unit | CETENMA



CEE2ACT

Driving Circular Bioeconomy in 10 Central and Eastern European Countries Through Bottom-Up Stakeholder Engagement

The circular bioeconomy is a vital pathway to using natural resources sustainably—transforming biomass into valuable products, reducing dependency on fossil-based raw materials, and supporting climate resilience. For years, we have been working at the intersection of sustainability, innovation, and systems thinking, developing extensive expertise in bio-based solutions and stakeholder collaboration across value chains. Building on this foundation, the CEE2ACT project was launched in 2022 to advance the bioeconomy in 10 Central and Eastern Europe countries.

How did the CEE2ACT project advance the bioeconomy across Central and Eastern Europe (CEE)?

Across the region, the bioeconomy is rich in potential, but still in the emerging phase. In CEE2ACT, we worked hand-in-hand with key actors to embed bioeconomy into relevant national policy frameworks and strategies. More precisely, the project supported ten CEE countries—Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, and Slovenia—to co-create national circular-bioeconomy roadmaps and strategies using innovative, bottom-up governance models.

How did this bottom-up, multi-actor model work on the ground?

CEE2ACT was built around an engagement framework that aims to close knowledge gaps by connecting sectors that rarely exchanged on a regular basis and build trust among them. We see these as key conditions for durable bioeconomy strategies. The role of the CSCP was to conduct stakeholder mapping and pre-analysis in each country so that we could tailor our engagement to local needs. That's why we supported the set-up of **National Bioeconomy Hubs**, a stakeholder engagement format that convenes diverse actors in each country and supports the co-development of national roadmaps and future strategies.

What is exactly the role of these hubs?

The ten National Bioeconomy Hubs were launched in 2023 to serve as platforms that bring together ministries, industry, academia, civil society and others. Through workshops and other exchanges, the hubs were used to build trust, share knowledge, and ultimately co-create the national roadmaps for a circular bioeconomy. They are designed as broad, multi-stakeholder platforms that can remain active beyond political cycles by fostering ownership across sectors. In several countries the hubs engage closely with relevant ministries—for example Hungary, Serbia and Slovakia have already reported ministerial participation. This helps raise the profile of the circular bioeconomy within national governments considerably. All ten hubs are actively planning for their continuity beyond the lifetime of the project.

What other mechanism have you put in place to support long-term impact?

The coordinators of the National Bioeconomy Hubs are facilitating Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) among hub members and other key public and private sector partners. These MoUs help formalise cooperation, clarify roles, and encourage commitments that outlast the project cycle. In practice, this has included MoU signings organised by the CEE2ACT hubs and the structured use of MoUs to align different stakeholder groups. By the end of the project, almost all of the participating countries have an agreed memorandum, anchoring hub governance, priority actions, and sustainability pathways—putting these countries on a clear pathway from roadmap to implementation. ●



→ Kartika Anggraeni,
CSCP Project Manager

Kartika Anggraeni shares how the project has connected key national actors that do not usually come together to build momentum and chart clear pathways towards national bioeconomy strategies.

“By connecting policymakers, researchers, industry, and civil society in inclusive, bottom-up processes, CEE2ACT helped turn local insights into national roadmaps—building regional momentum aligned with Europe’s sustainability goals.”

“I’m an economist and for me it’s quite obvious that the current mainstream economic thinking cannot solve the global issues. So, we have to change our approach regarding economic thinking. I strongly believe that the bioeconomy may help us find new ways in terms of how to redesign our economic system.”

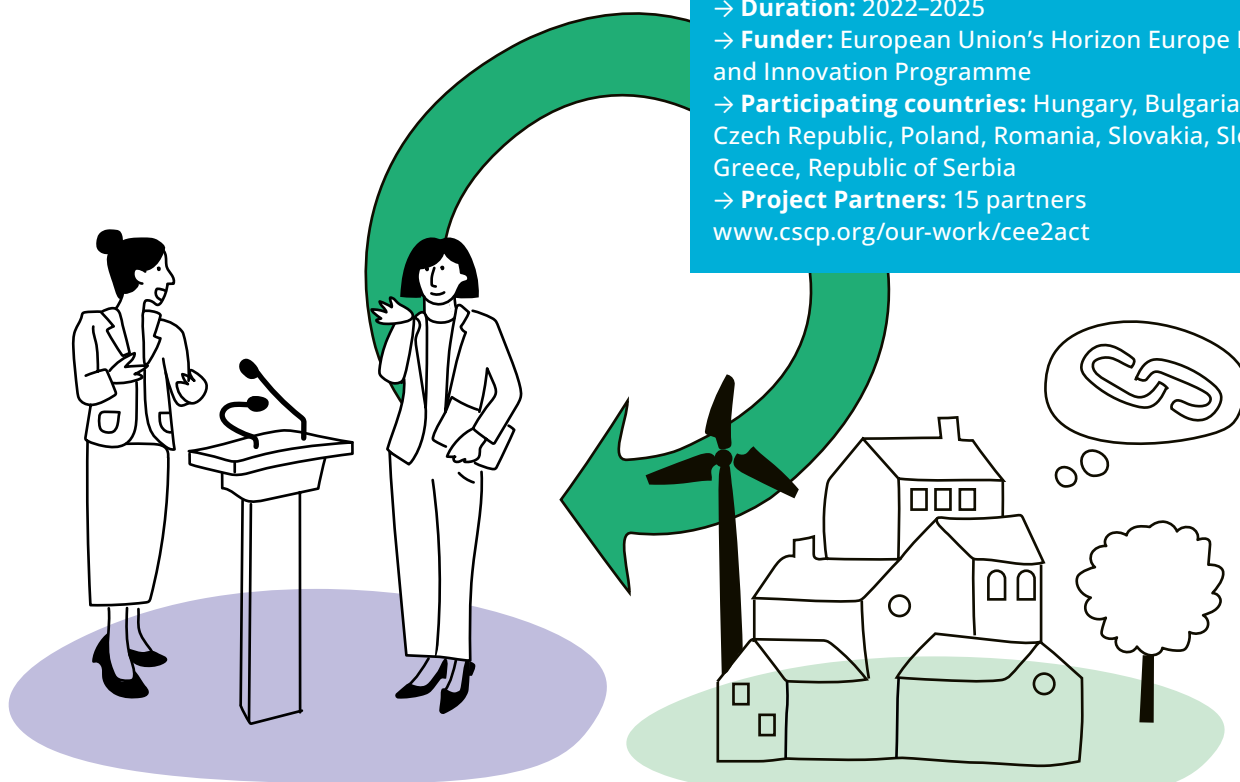
→ Rita Soos, INTERREG BIOECO-UP project leader, Hungary Ministry of Agriculture

“CEE2ACT is about unlocking the untapped bioeconomy potential of the Central and Eastern European region by building bridges between knowledge and policy. We’re empowering countries to shape their own sustainable futures through co-creation, capacity building, and knowledge exchange with a bottom-up approach.”

→ Daniel Ganszky, Project Coordinator, Geonardo

Project factbox

- **Duration:** 2022–2025
- **Funder:** European Union’s Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Programme
- **Participating countries:** Hungary, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Greece, Republic of Serbia
- **Project Partners:** 15 partners
www.cscp.org/our-work/cee2act



Digital Centre WertNetzWerke



Supporting SMEs to Thrive Through Digital
and Sustainable Transformation

Launched as part of the Germany-wide Mittelstand Digital initiative and funded by the German government, our Digital Centre WertNetzWerke supports small and medium-sized enterprises to navigate digitalisation, sustainability and innovation as technologies, markets and rules change. It provides hands-on guidance, trainings and tools that SMEs can use in day-to-day operations and in concrete projects.

What's a “value creation network” as approached in the WertNetzWerke project?

A value creation network is a practical web of partners that turn an idea into a product or service and keep it useful over time—suppliers, manufacturers, logistics, retailers, service/repair, refurbishers, recyclers, and customers (plus the data links between them). In a circular value creation network, those partners also loop products and materials back for reuse, repair, remanufacture, and recycling. In WertNetzWerke, our focus is on enabling companies to work with their value creation networks (the partners who make, deliver, maintain, take back, and recirculate products) to boost efficiency and spot new competitive opportunities. Through workshops, webinars, and live events, we introduce SMEs to digital tools and share best practices for sustainable and circular business practices.

What is WertNetzWerke's main focus?

Our main focus is on fostering digital collaboration in value creation networks. We support SMEs to adopt technologies like Artificial Intelligence and the Digital Product Passport to save resources, develop new business models, and increase their market value. We do so through trainings, hands-on expertise, and innovative tools.

How does WertNetzWerke build on CSCP's past work linking digitalisation and sustainability for SMEs?

The Competence Centre WertNetzWerke is a follow-up of a previous Competence Centre coordinated by the CSCP, the Competence Centre eStandards, which brought digitalisation and standardisation to German SMEs to enable more sustainable business models and production processes. It also draws on our work as part of CSR.digital, the first-ever centre for digital responsibility in North-Rhein Westphalia, Germany. WertNetzWerke goes a step further by focusing on value creation networks, combining digitalisation with sustainability to support SMEs to sharpen their competitive edge and strengthen their resilience.

How is CSCP's holistic approach to circular economy implemented in the WertNetzWerke project?

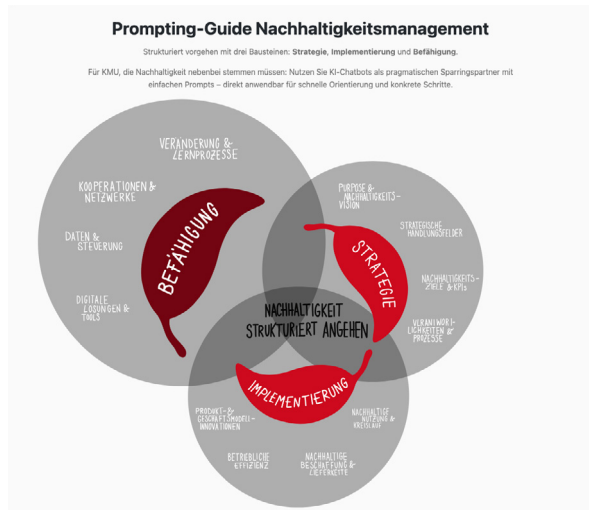
We approach circular economy from technological, business, and interpersonal perspectives and work to inspire and enable companies to use digital tools to integrate circular practices into their operations, assess their business models for circularity, and foster trust and collaboration between companies. This holistic approach is delivered through targeted workshops, events, and direct engagement with SMEs.



→ Janna Prager,
CSCP Project Manager

Janna Prager shares insights on how WertNetzWerke guides SMEs through sustainable innovation and digital transformation.

“WertNetzWerke integrates digitalisation and sustainability into a cohesive support system for SMEs. The project reflects our long-term commitment to enabling SMEs adapt to a rapidly changing business environment by combining cutting-edge digital tools with sustainable practices.”



left: Excerpt from the "Prompting Guide to Sustainability Management": promptingguide-nachhaltigkeit.fit.fraunhofer.de;
right: Event of the Digital Centre WertNetzWerke at Gut Einern in Wuppertal, Germany. Photo © Carsten Deckert



“For many years, we have shared a close and reliable partnership with the CSCP, especially in the field of the circular economy. As part of our collaboration in the Digital Centre WertNetzWerke, we successfully implement projects and demonstrators that support companies put circular solutions into practice.”

→ Dr. Anja Linnemann,
Fraunhofer-Institut FIT

Can you tell us more about the Value Creation Lab in Wuppertal?

The Value Creation Lab in Wuppertal is a central element of WertNetzWerke. It's a space where SMEs can experiment with digital tools to integrate sustainability into their business models and explore circular business practices. The Lab helps companies develop new approaches to sustainability through practical digital solutions.

Can you name one example of such a digital solution?

Yes, Sustainable Steps is an online tool developed in WertNetzWerke, which provides data-driven insights to SMEs, guiding them to identify areas for improvement and guide their decision-making to become more sustainable. ●

Project factbox

- **Duration:** 2023–2026
- **Funder:** Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK)
- **Partners:** GS1 Germany, Federal Association of Materials Management, Purchasing and Logistics, Fraunhofer IMW, Fraunhofer FIT, wisent Innovation Research Institute



Shaping the Future Now!



The Launch of The co-do! lab

Scaling transformations for a better tomorrow—
for businesses, for cities, for society

“To tackle the pressing challenges of our time—ranging from climate change and circular economy to biodiversity loss and widening social inequalities—we should accelerate the adoption of sustainable solutions at scale. That’s the driving idea behind the co-do lab: providing cities, organisations, and individuals with the tools and support needed to turn transformation into action across systems and value networks, starting today.”



→ Daniela Chaves,
CSCP Project Manager and
co-do lab Core Team

In 2023, after nearly two decades of collaborating with businesses, policymakers, partner organisations, and civil society to increase impact in areas that are important for the transition to a regenerative future, the CSCP launched its brainchild, the co-do lab. The Wuppertal-based do tank that runs as a social business was born out of the urgency to radically scale up our efforts in transforming businesses, municipalities and cities.

The co-do lab works across different action fields and offers a networking platform for pioneers and doers to inspire, design, and upscale impactful solutions.

Located at Gut Einern, Wuppertal's oldest guesthouse turned into a holistic sustainability quarter, the co-do lab intends to provide a taste of sustainable solutions and will be a space for people to co-develop strategies that make transformation towards sustainability happen now.

The co-do lab brings together a team of CSCP experts, partners from across the board as well as a pioneer network to support organisations along their transformation journeys by looking into the whole spectrum of relevant aspects.

Driving Transformation from Within

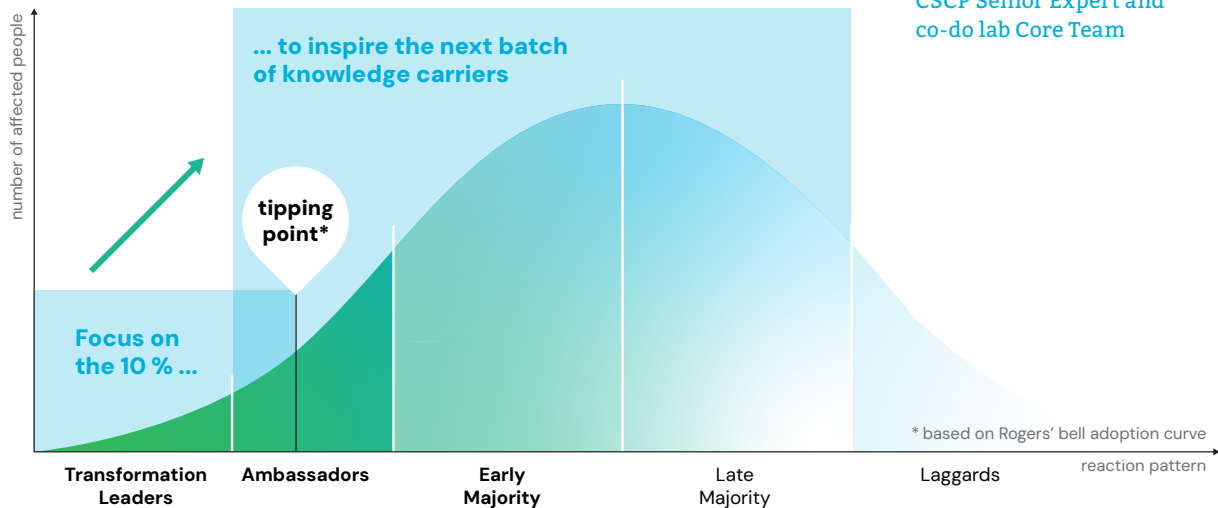
The co-do lab has picked up speed lately and is looking to scale its initiatives further—getting hands-on with projects that support transformation in organisations, cities, and communities. Building on the CSCP expertise, its focus lies on achieving real impact at scale. So, what drives us? Creating spaces where people and ideas come together, acting as a bridge between stakeholders and a spark for collaboration and co-competition. Our goal is to shift from disconnection to reconnection—with ourselves, with nature, and with each other—and to turn intention into action by engaging more people more deeply. ●



“We believe that meaningful transformation within an organisation requires engaging at least 10 % of its people across different levels and functions. That’s why we created the Ten Percent Approach—a method that combines essential sustainability knowledge, targeted capacity building, and practical inspiration. Working alongside an international team of pioneers, we co-create tailored pathways to drive this change from within.”



→ Stephan Schaller,
CSCP Senior Expert and
co-do lab Core Team



“The support of the CSCP and co-do lab has significantly advanced our sustainability transformation. In particular, the strong focus on employees has helped to actively engage and involve them in the transformation. We have managed to put the topic of sustainability on a practical implementation path. We feel well positioned and are looking forward to the next steps together. We will stay on the topic.”

→ Annika Averbek, Sustainability Manager WSW

“I never expected the programme to have such an impact on me personally and that I would take so much from it.”

→ Carsten Voßkühler, Sales Manager, Live Sport Solutions, RIEDEL Communications

“I really enjoyed Hello Transformation. I loved being close to nature, not sitting in a meeting room and using my head in a completely different way – but I also found it great to get my hands and heart involved. Great, great days.”

→ Jessica Siepmann, Sustainability Specialist, Sparkasse Wuppertal

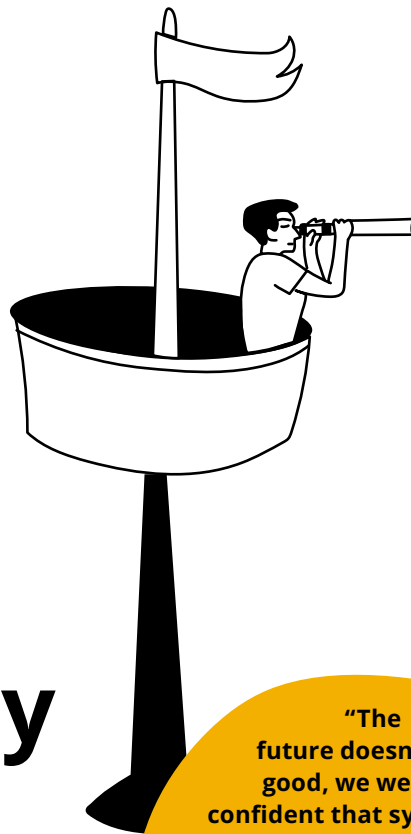
“The co-do lab not only brings interesting people together, but also creates a very special environment —thank you for that!”

→ Dr.-Ing. Sylvia Bach, University Wuppertal

Photos © Juliane Herrmann



Voices on Sustainability



"The future doesn't look good, we were too confident that systems will solve problems. But it boils down to every single person and requires that everyone is conscious of what he or she does, how it impacts the outside world, and how one's own behavior needs to change."

→ Mohamed, 60

Sustainability thrives on bold ideas and diverse perspectives. We invited people from all walks of life to respond to one simple question: What can we do today and in the future to create a world in which sustainability is the new normal?

Here, you can read a selection of 100 voices on sustainability, published on the co-do lab website:



[www.co-do-lab.org/
100-voices-on-the-future](http://www.co-do-lab.org/100-voices-on-the-future)

"For me, making sustainability the new normal means consuming less, choosing regional and seasonal products, avoiding plastic and, whenever possible, air travel. Even if these are only small changes, I believe they can make a difference. And if we all act in this way, it can have a powerful impact.

Clear political measures, investment in sustainable technologies and education are also needed. Young people should learn early on what it means to act responsibly towards the environment. That's why we also need people who can act as role models.

Moreover, companies can also play a central role in this—for example, by not just talking about it, but taking concrete action: through environmentally-friendly production processes or climate-neutral supply chains.

Finally, sustainability also means respect for resources and future generations. I don't have children, but I do have a niece, and sometimes the future scares me. Nevertheless, I hope to leave her with a world in which she can live well."

→ Anonymous

"The more we move from the conceptual and abstract towards the tangible and sensory, sustainability will be normalised. Nobody „gets“ the mobility transition unless they're in a car-free space in a Superblock in Barcelona, in a school-street. Nobody „gets“ corporate sustainability unless they experience working in a humane, caring, inspiring environment where vision and mission can be experienced on a product level, on a relationship level to suppliers. Nobody „gets“ our caring society unless they experience togetherness, in their neighborhood, in their family (however defined), in their life. Nobody „gets“ a new urban paradigm unless they experience a city that just works differently, and even if it's just for one day."

→ **Dr. Martin Herrndorf**

"As an Inner Development Goals Ambassador and mindfulness coach, I also know from my own experience that change does not come easily to most people, especially when it requires letting go of cherished things. Change always has, first of all, to do with ourselves—our "self-awareness," our role, our inner willingness to contribute. Global challenges, including sustainability, require inner development to complement external solutions, because they are not technical but "adaptive challenges."

→ **Klaus Mertens, IDG Köln/Bonn**

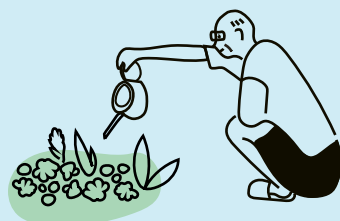
"Change starts small—not by feeling overwhelmed by the long road ahead, but rather by focusing on one step at a time and ensuring we define the path together. If each person does their part in everyday life and reflects on their daily actions, we can make a big difference together."

→ **Anonymous**

"A world in which sustainability is the norm requires education, community, and creative solutions. We should:

- Promote education: Use workshops and courses to raise awareness.
- Support local initiatives: Get involved in community-based projects.
- Practice resource conservation: Embrace circular economy principles by reducing and reusing waste.
- Use technology: Combine innovative solutions with nature's principles to advance sustainable practices."

→ **Fabby, Artificial Intelligence and Circular Economy Expert**



"We create a world in which sustainability is a self-evident concept by addressing the topic from childhood on and conveying its significance. It should therefore become a fundamental component of school education. Furthermore, there should be monetary incentives for sustainable behaviour and penalties for unsustainable behaviour."

→ **Sven, 21, student**

"I grew up at a time without abundance. We lived on the vegetables that grew in our garden and the ones we stored or preserved, on the eggs from our hens, and on home-baked bread. These early experiences of a simple life help me today to make my everyday life more sustainable—I buy seasonal and regional produce without packaging at the market, eat much less meat than I did in my midlife, and walk more or ride a bicycle. Self-comparisons spur me on: how could I save more water and electricity, reduce waste, cover longer distances on foot instead of by car. We compare our energy consumption and potential savings within our circle of friends and with neighbors, share seldom-used equipment (lawnmower, machines), and exchange experiences to increase sustainability (passing along garden plants that do not need artificial watering). In our association of senior students, I work to ensure that our age group also engages with the topic of sustainability, for example by taking part in Stadtradeln (a city cycling campaign) and organising lectures on sustainability. The special contribution we older people can make lies in reflecting on and carrying forward what was tried and tested in earlier times, recognising our responsibility for shaping the world, and bringing our voices into the public discourse."

→ **Angela Mahnkopf, 73, Retired Psychologist and Senior Student**

"I think the most important thing is to create a vision that sustainability is not a losing project where every one has less in the end. It is about win-wins, also for the people who think that their lives depend on driving to work with a huge and heavy four-wheeler in a city like Berlin."

→ **Verena, 59**

Looking Ahead: Democracy as the Backbone of Sustainability



"In our work, we bring business, policy, science, and civil society together so that different perspectives do not cancel each other out in debate, but combine into a shared vision of a good life for all. In a time of polarisation, we see dialogue as a deeply democratic practice: it asks each of us to move beyond self-centred interests, listen for what we hold in common, and co-create solutions that are fair, future-proof, and grounded in mutual respect."

→ Alexander Mannweiler,
Head of Sustainable Business
and Entrepreneurship

Some argue that democracies can be slow to align interests and act, while more centralised systems seem able to move faster once a direction is set. China is often referenced for how quickly a state-led model can scale electrification and renewable energy.

But speed comes with trade-offs. Centralised decision-making can accelerate processes, but it can also limit public oversight and make policies less durable. When direction changes, it can change fast and without the stabilising effect of broad societal buy-in.

Why democracy matters for sustainability

Even with its challenges and imperfections, democracy provides stronger foundations for sustainability. Policies shaped through open processes are more likely to withstand leadership changes. Institutions that support participation and accountability can change course without crisis. Business and investors can rely on predictability. And most importantly, inclusive design helps ensure that the costs and benefits of change are fairly shared, so communities stay engaged rather than sidelined.

This is especially relevant now. After COP30 in Belém, Brazil and amid a rapidly shifting geopolitical, economic, and climate landscape, the question is no longer whether we can move fast. The question is how we move fast and keep trust, legitimacy, *and* fairness at the top of the agenda.

The building blocks of a fair transition

At the CSCP, we believe democracy is key to a fair and inclusive sustainable transition. It determines whether change is announced to people or rather built with them. For us, a fair transition is based on:

Participation: people having a real say in decisions that shape their lives—not just being asked for input when everything is already decided.

Transparency: rules and goals that are clear enough to understand, and decisions that are explained, not hidden behind jargon or closed doors.

Accountability: institutions that can be questioned and improved, so trust is earned over time, not assumed.

Inclusion: making sure the people most affected by change are not the last to be heard—or the first to carry the cost.

Shared responsibility: public institutions, businesses, civil society, and communities working as partners, not passing the burden back and forth.

This is the point where sustainability stops being just a technical roadmap and becomes something stronger: a shared effort that people can recognise, trust, and commit to for the long run.



CSCP Team Day 2025 in Wuppertal, Germany, Photo © CSCP

What our work looks like in practice

For twenty years, we've worked to mainstream sustainable consumption and production, not as a goal in itself, but as a way to move closer to our vision of *a good life for all*.

Along the way, we've learned that how we pursue this mission matters as much as what we aim to achieve. Lasting change doesn't come only from ideas. It comes from building trust, sharing ownership, and making sure the transition works for people in real life, not just on paper.

This belief has shaped our way of working. If sustainability is meant to serve everyone, it can't be designed in a small circle and delivered top-down. It has to be built in the open—across disciplines, sectors, and lived realities:

- **Bringing diverse actors together** for difficult choices and making space for tension instead of pretending complexity isn't there
- **Co-designing with citizens** from the start with room to test, learn, and iterate as realities change
- **Staying committed to inclusion**, even if it sometimes slows things down, while recognising the value of lasting and fair outcomes over quick fixes.
- **Supporting civil society** as a long-term anchor of accountability
- **Learning across countries and cultures** and shaping solutions around local context, history, and lived realities rather than assuming one model fits all

The hard part: living with tension

We also want to be honest about the difficulty. Strengthening democratic processes while trying to

accelerate sustainability involves real friction: competing priorities, uneven power dynamics, disinformation, regulatory uncertainty, and the difficulty of change.

Our view is that the answer isn't to bypass democracy, but to *practice it better*. Lean into complexity with integrity. Protect fairness. Make participation real. And stay committed even when progress is slow or uneven.

Shaping the future together

We believe that the next phase of sustainability will be judged not only by emissions curves and circularity targets, but by whether transitions are socially durable, *whether people can recognise themselves in the solutions being built*.

That's why it is more important than ever to:

- Treat democratic governance as an enabler of sustainable systems, not a side debate.
- Invest in methods that move beyond consultation to meaningful co-creation.
- Build stronger bridges between policy ambition, business realities, and community needs.
- Document what works, where trust was built, and how fairness was improved
- Share tools and learnings openly so others can adapt them to their contexts.

This is an open invitation to shape an agenda together—one that recognises that if we want transitions that are not only fast but fair and not only ambitious but stable then *strengthening democratic foundations* is not optional. It is a core part of the work. ●

Resilience: Not Just Another Buzzword

"Community
is key!"



→ Dr. Esther Heidbüchel,
CSCP Senior Project Manager

Recent years have shown how quickly assumptions can be overturned: from the return of global pandemics to war on European soil, as well as sudden shifts in geopolitical alliances and energy shortages linked to conflicts in oil-producing regions. In parallel, the impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly visible, with extreme weather events intensifying, sea levels rising, and ecosystems facing unprecedented stress.

These challenges and uncertainties impact people, businesses, and institutions. So, how are we supposed to navigate through this maze of a crisis? One of the answers is through strengthening our resilience.

Resilience takes many forms, from individual mental strength and business continuity to the ability of supply chains to withstand disruptions and overall security. It's about acknowledging and understanding challenges and the confidence and ability to act effectively when needed.

Circular economy to mitigate geopolitical limbo

Resilience does not operate in isolation—it is deeply intertwined with sustainability, biodiversity, and how we organise our economies.

The circular economy illustrates this well. By keeping valuable materials in circulation, businesses—particularly those reliant on critical minerals, rare earths, or metals—can achieve a meaningful degree of self-sufficiency, reducing dependence on fragile global supply chains. Likewise, the transition to renewable energy strengthens independence from geopolitical uncertainty.

Where biodiversity meets resilience

Sustainability and biodiversity agendas also increasingly overlap with this risk logic, not only because ecosystems and their services shape exposure and vulnerability, but also since “working with nature” can deliver measurable co-benefits for natural disaster risk reduction and adaptation. This is not merely an environmental argument: biodiversity has found its way into National Security and Defence Strategies, where it is categorised as a systemic risk capable of triggering a whole web of threats—from the loss of raw materials to outright conflict over resources.

The close link between urban resilience, societal stability, and business continuity

On the business side, continuity planning institutionalises resilience by turning disruption into a managed operating condition, which is why ISO 22301 is framed as a security and resilience standard for business continuity management systems. Companies rely on public infrastructure and public services, while governments and communities rely on private operators for critical functions, requiring coordination and cooperation of public services, military, emergency service organisations and communities.

Business continuity also depends on societal stability—if employees are not able to fulfil their tasks because they are caught between unrest on the streets and the necessity to make ends meet for their families, companies will falter. This again can lead to further instability and the system enters a vicious circle.



Issues such as renewable energy, local circular economy initiatives, and safe spaces for citizens are all important. However, the key component for resilient cities and regions is building strong communities. In times of crisis, having food and supplies in the pantry helps, but it is resilient, well-prepared communities that determine how we weather the storm. Circular innovation through start-ups, sharing models, and local value chains can be a great lever to address unemployment and poverty risks, lessen dependencies, and enhance the adaptive capacity to climate and resource shocks—provided that decent labour conditions and social safeguards are integrated into circular policies.

Resilience requires systems thinking

When resilience is treated as a system property (not as the mandate of a single agent), investments that improve the continuity of essential functions—whether through infrastructure design, governance arrangements, or ecosystem restoration—can simultaneously strengthen security, civil protection, and societal resilience and preparedness. In times of crises, it is crucial to work hand-in-hand—this requires trust and trained routines.

We're in it together, and that's how we become resilient

While we agree that resilience is essential, the specific pathways to achieving it across different domains require further exploration. At the same time, pragmatic solutions that can be implemented swiftly are urgently needed.

Well-organised crisis communication between administrations, businesses, first and second responders, the military, and civil society remains on a bumpy road—particularly when it comes to understanding each other's structures and tasks. Structured support for individual and community preparedness is emerging, but is not yet sufficiently widespread.

Addressing these challenges requires investing in the structures and processes needed to prepare for and respond to different scenarios, and creating clarity among actors about who needs to act, when, and in what ways. It also means developing strategies to restore trust in the power of communities and overcome polarisation. The central question is how to build trust among diverse—even unlikely—partners such as religious communities, city administrations, emergency services, civil society, and the military.

Working with stakeholders who start from very different positions has become one of our unique strengths at CSCP. This setting is essential for resilience: building bridges that enable people, regardless of perspective, to come together and find solutions that benefit all. ●

The CSCP Team

over the years



2014



2019



2023





2015



2021



2022



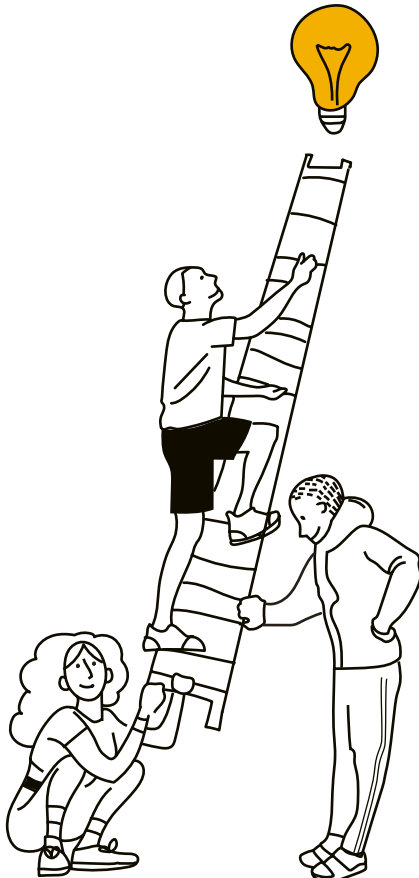
2024





Unique About The CSCP

Read how our team and alumni reflect on what has become our distinctive strength over the years. Their insights show not only what we do well, but also why it matters to the people and communities we work with.



"Being part of the CSCP has taught me that work can be so much more than just work. It can be a place where you are surrounded by people who inspire and support you, and where collective growth happens powered by teamwork."

→ Relana Lutz, Student Assistant

"We are very purpose driven and creative. We don't have fixed solutions or follow any (green) dogmas."

→ Nikola Berger, Head of Creative and Communication

"We put wishful thinking into action for a sustainable future, where everyone can be part of the transformation."

→ Annika Stein, Assistant to the Executive Director

"We are driven from within ourselves to contribute to meaningful change. We are not satisfied with the "normal" and the "okay"—we want to achieve impact and well-being for the world and for ourselves."

→ Lea Leimann, Junior Project Manager

"Our USP is our team! We are diverse: have different backgrounds, different stories and experiences, but share similar values and surely the mission of mainstreaming sustainability towards the vision of a good life for all."

→ Daniela Chaves, Project Manager

"What makes the CSCP truly unique is its diversity: in people, expertise, and perspectives. From biodiversity to circular economy and digitalisation to food waste, we approach sustainability from many angles, yet always with one shared vision: enabling a good life for all!"

→ Marianne Isabel Magnus Melgar, Project Coordinator

"We may not always realise it in our daily project work, but what the CSCP does makes a huge difference and fills one of — if not the most — important role: connecting and enabling people to solve some of the greatest challenges of our time."

→ Marc Böker, Senior Expert

"For me, this is about enabling a good life for all within planetary boundaries, as this allows for each and every person to see themselves in the picture with their own needs and desires. And seeing the human and emotionally addressing people gives us the key to change."

→ Rosa Strube, Head of Sustainable Lifestyles

"To me, the unique selling point of the CSCP lies in the people working here. A committed, diverse team whose motivation and collaborative spirit bring unique perspectives and unite others to challenge the status quo."

→ Carla Schmid, Project Coordinator

"The multicultural team at the CSCP, along with its participatory and co-creation approach, ensures that every voice is heard and contributes to the transition towards sustainability and a good life."

→ Joshua Aseto, Project Manager

"CSCP's unique strength is combining conceptual sustainability strategies and real-world application."

→ Dr. Johannes Klement, Project Expert

"The CSCP is truly a collaborator, building bridges between diverse, sometimes opposing actors and developing a respectful and inspiring space for constructive collective actions to shape the sustainability transformation."

→ Alexandra Kessler-an der Brügge,
Project Manager

"The CSCP is all about collaboration, supporting people and organisations to understand each other while acknowledging different viewpoints. We see ourselves as contributors with our collective expertise and as enablers of transformation."

→ Alexander Mannweiler,
Head of Sustainable Business
and Entrepreneurship

"Being diverse, flexible and open minded for the overall goal of pushing sustainability forward is one of our key features."

→ Ramon Külpmann, IT &
Events Manager

"What makes the CSCP unique is the wide range of topics we cover and the diverse expertise of our colleagues. This diversity sparks outside-the-box thinking, which is a real advantage for our projects."

→ Ingmar Thomas, Project
Coordinator

"For me, the unique value of the CSCP lies in our ability to bridge worlds—combining scientific insights with hands-on engagement tools, and turning abstract sustainability goals into concrete actions that resonate with people's daily lives. What sets us apart is not just what we do, but how we do it: collaboratively, inclusively, and with an eye on long-term change."

→ Dr. Francesca Grossi, Head of Acquisition and
Senior Project Manager

"In my view, CSCP's unique selling point lies in our people-centered approach and our holistic perspective on sustainability. We don't treat sustainability as a standalone goal—we connect the dots across systems, sectors, and stakeholders. By weaving strong networks and facilitating collaboration, we bring diverse actors together to work toward a shared desirable future. This ability to co-create vision and translate it into collective action, and to align everyone around purpose-driven, future-oriented solutions, is what truly sets CSCP apart and enables us to make a meaningful difference."

→ Zhao Cheng, Project Coordinator

"What makes the CSCP unique is the mindset of the people, the creativity, the collaborative and supportive spirit externally and internally as well as the diversity of views, backgrounds, and cultures."

→ Stephanie Reyer-Naujokat, Acquisition Manager,
2015 to 2024

"Its diverse, multicultural work environment and visionary approach across all its fields of work."

→ Silvia Sartori, Networking and Communications
Expert, 2013 to 2017

"The implementation of scientific projects involving international organisations, which enables the CSCP to use valuable insights in projects with companies of different sizes and from various sectors."

→ Kristina Modee, Team Lead Sustainable Lifestyles,
2016 to 2019

Right from the beginning we introduced an "art of hosting". We wanted every guest to feel warmly welcomed and valued and I know that this helped us set the scene and build bridges also for more difficult meetings and talks. We also used this to create different, more meaningful event formats that engaged participants more actively.

→ Gabriele Eigen, Personal Assistant to the Director
2005 to 2022

"The collaborative working dynamics and the experience of each individual makes the CSCP a unique powerhouse to design innovative solutions for complex sustainability challenges."

→ Luis Esquivel, Project Coordinator,
2017 to 2022

"The CSCP keeps changing all the time while maintaining its organisational identity."

→ Sebastian Philipps, Project Manager,
2008 to 2013

"During my time at the CSCP, I experienced firsthand the remarkable uniqueness of the organisation. From being one of the first in the region dedicated to circular economy to pioneering groundbreaking initiatives such as SWITCH-Asia (a development cooperation program on sustainable consumption and production), and Pro-Planet (the largest voluntary corporate label on product chain sustainability), the CSCP has continually set benchmarks in sustainability innovation. These transformative projects not only underscored the CSCP's commitment to driving global change but also shaped my perspective on impactful program management and collaborative solutions."

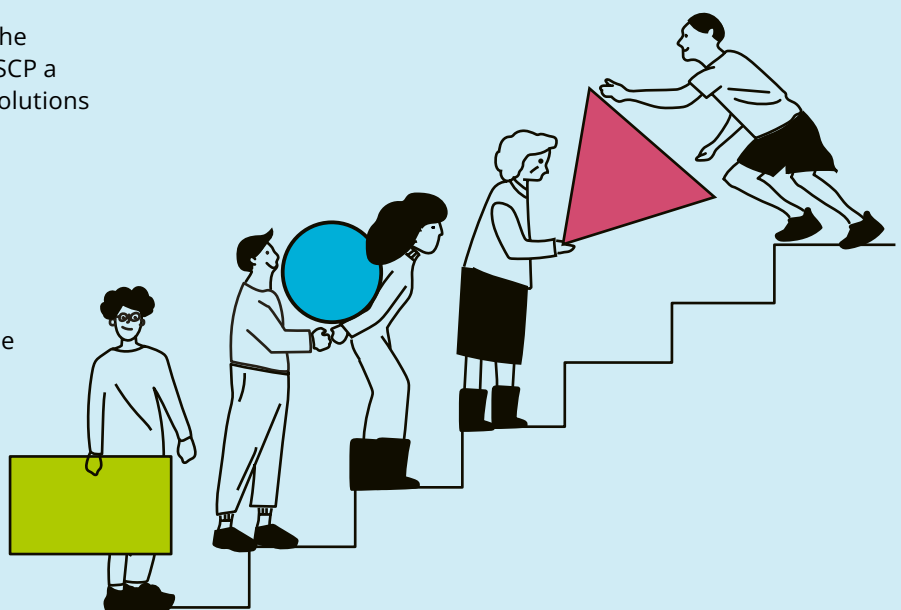
→ Burcu Tuncer, Project Manager,
2006 to 2013

"The CSCP tackles critical sustainability challenges by starting from the perspective of consumers and society. Industry should focus on producing the goods and services that a truly sustainable society requires. At the CSCP, sustainable consumption is viewed as a key driver of sustainable production—whereas in many other organisations, the relationship between consumption and production is approached the other way around."

→ Dick van Beers, Senior Expert,
2010 to 2014

"The CSCP is unique because of its passion and energy for sustainable development."

→ Thomas Haberland, Project Manager,
2010 to 2012





CSCP Team Day 2025, Photo © CSCP

"What makes the CSCP unique is the courage to do things very differently. What I mean is not only the innovative projects the CSCP engages in, but above all, the creative ways of interacting with various stakeholders to enable transformation."

→ Jadwiga Zurad, Project Manager,
2009 to 2014



"The CSCP is a creative and inspiring place where people have the courage to break new ground. But it is the people who work there that truly make it unique. They embody these qualities every day, demonstrating motivation and commitment."
→ Imke Schmidt,
Project Manager,
2017 to 2023

"A team mix of different backgrounds, cultures, expertise but with the same passion for transformation and sustainability!"

→ Nicolas Barthelmè, Project Manager,
2021 to 2024

"The heartfelt and colourful crowd of people."

→ Annette Jacobs, Designer,
2014 to 2015

"Great professionals with intrinsic motivation to push the sustainability agenda and a good life for everyone as well as the collaborative spirit and intercultural working experiences make the CSCP unique."

→ Johannes Schön, Sustainability Consultant &
Project Assistant, 2020 to 2022

"The spirit and the people."

→ Patrik Eisenhauer, Project Manager,
2014 to 2022

"At the CSCP, innovation and imagination meet practice and pragmatism."

→ Martin Herrndorf, Researcher,
2005 to 2008



"The CSCP stands out for its truly collaborative spirit and international team culture. It's a place where innovation and sustainability go hand-in-hand, and where everyone's voice is heard and valued—no matter their role."

→ Mohammed Mustafa
Student Assistant, IT Support,
2023 to 2024

"For me, the CSCP stands out because it operates right at the sweet spot between science, business, policymaking, and civil society. This unique position allows it to foster mutual understanding and facilitate the creation of widely accepted solutions to increasingly complex challenges we face today."

→ Victoria Funk, Senior Project Manager,
2023 to 2025

"Its radical focus on collaboration. And a philosophy grounded in possibility: if you can imagine it, the CSCP will empower you—with the tools and the people to make it a reality. And the people: their stories, their values, their ideas, their drive. Their belief in creating impact. And the CSCP as the space where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

→ Thomas Wagner, Project Manager,
2011 to 2023

"The people—inside and outside CSCP! To me the strong international multi-stakeholder approach which allows for a holistic perspective and creativity as well as future orientation in its approaches is what makes the CSCP unique."

→ Nadine Pratt, Team Lead Sustainable Business
and Entrepreneurship, 2005 to 2013

"The mixture of forward thinking, all sentences that start with "what if..." and the entrepreneurial spirit paired with an international view."

→ Patrick Bottermann, Head of Sustainable Business &
Entrepreneurship, 2013 to 2023

"The CSCP stands out as a truly innovative think and do tank by combining cutting-edge research on sustainable consumption and lifestyles with practical action to test and scale new ideas. What makes it unique is its willingness to explore uncharted territory. The team is great too: diverse and dynamic with a genuine can-do spirit!"

→ Patrick Schröder, SCP Expert at SWITCH-Asia Facility, 2008 to 2016

"The CSCP has a fantastic position between business, government and civil society organisations. This way it can serve as a bridge builder to enhance sustainability. What I learned during my time at the CSCP is that green initiatives thrive with black digits: financial pay-off is what enables long-term impact!"

→ Philipp Ober, Project Manager, 2021 to 2023

"Think-and-Do: very hands-on, concretely implementing sustainability in a variety of contexts and of course the people, all sharing the same vision and ambition."

→ Alexis Figeac, Head of Sustainable Business & Entrepreneurship, 2015 to 2020



CSCP Convention 2015, Photos © CSCP

Funny Stories & Anecdotes from Our Team and Alumni

The everyday moments that show who we are—our people, our culture, our way of working.

"First impressions last. I still vividly remember the day of my job interview at the CSCP. A colleague passed me in the office barefoot—and in that moment, I knew I had found the right place."

→ Jennifer Wiegard,
Project Manager

"I will always remember that one time on a Team Day, after the event in Essen. We headed out onto the lake in little boats, three or four people to a crew. We all started off paddling our own way—but by the end, we'd tied ourselves together (literally, with our arms linked in the back!) and floated back as one giant, wobbly super-boat. Now that's CSCP team spirit in action!"

→ Annika Stein, Assistant to the Executive Director

"If you have ever tried to explain what we do at the CSCP in one sentence at a family dinner, and ended up drawing a systems map on a napkin, you know you belong here. That blend of passion, complexity, and creativity is what makes the CSCP so special :)"

→ Dr. Francesca Grossi, Head of Acquisition and Senior Project Manager



"The team-building events at the CSCP, always full of energy and good vibes, have been my favorite part."

→ Joshua Aseto,
Project Manager

CSCP flashmob dance to the song "Happy" at the Unconference 2016 in Wuppertal, Germany, the 10th anniversary of the CSCP.
Photo © Laura Schleder



"Being part of the CSCP for a long time I have many fond memories: the incredible team effort in hosting and organising "The Future of Sustainable Products and Services" and "The Future of Sustainable Lifestyles" conferences—it was challenging at times, but we pulled it off amazingly! Also, all the nice overnight retreats at the Wupper reservoir: poetry, singing and storytelling about our work. And our flashmob dance to the song 'Happy'!"

→ Nora Brüggemann,
Senior Project Manager

"To me a really special thing at the CSCP is the openness of testing all sorts of interactive team building methods and hands-on workshop formats. At my first CSCP winter party, I arrived at the restaurant looking forward to dinner, admittedly quite hungry. What I had not anticipated was the true CSCP spirit in action. Instead of being served a meal, colleagues gathered around tables filled with fresh vegetables, chopping boards, and knives. To my surprise, the evening was not a dinner, but a hands-on fermenting workshop. This is how I learned not only how to ferment, but also never to attend a CSCP dinner party on an empty stomach!"

→ Eva Rudolf, Senior Designer

"I recently met two people crushing on the CSCP. They approached me to collaborate in a consortium and shared with me that they are big fans of us and having an 'organisation crush'."

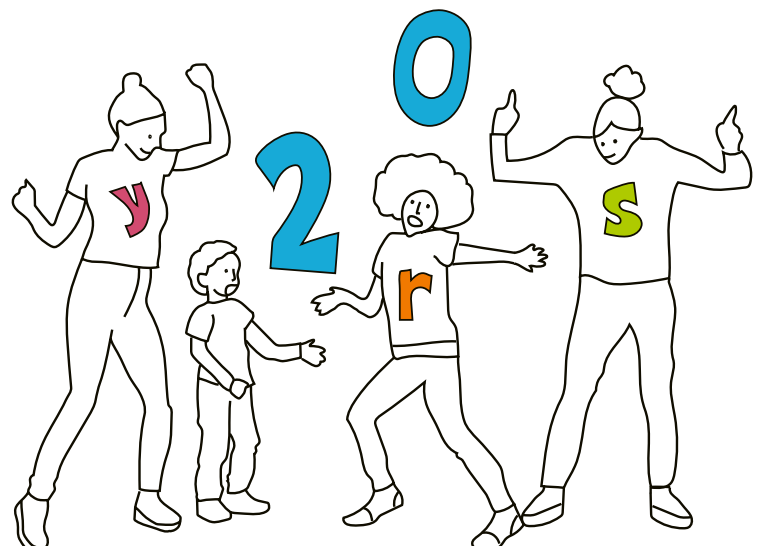
→ Lea Leimann,
Junior Project Manager

"In March 2026, I met in person the SMEs we had supported for two years through the Green Codes project in Costa Rica. Hearing how the project strengthened their businesses and confidence was a powerful reminder of the impact of our work at CSCP."

→ Aileen Estrada Sánchez, Research Assistant

"Sometimes we work as firefighters. Just a few hours before a public press conference of our project (a national multi-stakeholder-dialogue) the global headquarters of one member published a press release indirectly criticising other members of the project on a global level. With this adrenaline kick, I spent quite some time in negotiations with both involved partners, and in the end, we were able to hold a successful press conference. This experience showed how interlinked global and national actions are and that it's possible and important to collaborate wherever it's feasible!"

→ Alexandra Kessler-an der Brügge,
Project Manager





Participatory infographic at the CSCP Team Day 2023 in Essen, Germany. Photo © Marc Wessendarp

"During a transformation workshop focused on trust, a colleague guided me, blindfolded, straight into a beam at the height of my head—but luckily, it didn't hurt!"

→ Michael Mühlenbein,
Project Manager

"On my very first team day at CSCP, we had an activity where we used physical threads to connect different aspects of our work—projects from various teams, ideas, and impact areas. As a new colleague, I was impressed by how everyone jumped in with such energy and joy. Watching my teammates weave those threads together felt like witnessing a living metaphor: a group of committed people co-creating a shared story about how our diverse projects connect and how, together, we create meaningful impact. It was playful, memorable, and for me, the perfect snapshot of the CSCP spirit."

→ Zhao Cheng, Project Coordinator

"I'll always remember an after-work hallway conversation with Lena Mai from the Acquisition team that somehow lasted two hours without either of us noticing."

→ Rami Hammash, Research Assistant

"When time allowed there were occasional physical competitions at the office. Depending on the mood either a plank session took place or an office chair race in the corridor."

→ Ramon Külpmann,
IT & Events Manager

"One of my favourite memories of the last years is designing a behaviour change intervention to reduce the need for heating in the office during the gas crisis. Planning all intervention elements—including smart heating meters, nudges on how to open the window, hot water bottles and warm up frisbee sessions—was just as much fun as studying our team's reactions to them: Just as in the real world, ranging from full support to rejection."

→ Rosa Strube, Head of Sustainable Lifestyles

"On my very first day at the CSCP, a snowy day turned into a spontaneous walk and snowball challenge with colleagues—an early reminder that taking a break together can be just as energising as the work we do."

→ Marietta Müller, Project Manager

"I still remember the decorations on the reception tables, made by Gabriele Eigen (former assistant to the Executive Director) with chestnuts fallen in the autumn of Wuppertal."

→ Chuanrong (Rena) Wang, Consultant,
2009 to 2013

"Twenty years ago, as we kicked off the CSCP in Wuppertal, sustainability was all about that dramatic image: the lonely polar bear on a shrinking ice floe. We'd show it in workshops, and eyes would glaze over: "Nice photo, but what does it mean for my business or daily life?"

One day, in a packed session with sceptical industry representatives, I held up the slide and said, "Forget the bear. Imagine your supply chain as that ice: melting profits, vanishing resources. Now, let's loop it into a cycle—production feeding back into consumption, waste becoming input." The room went silent... then exploded with questions. That 'aha' moment sparked our breakthrough: framing sustainability as a relatable cycle long before 'circular economy' went viral. From that Wuppertal room, we built trust across 30+ countries, co-creating tools adopted by governments and companies worldwide. The polar bear? It retired happily—we traded it for real impact.

And today, where is society? We're no longer debating if we need circular systems; we're implementing them amid crises—Digital Product Passports rolling out, EU regulations pushing producers to loop back, businesses redesigning for reuse. Democracy fuels this: multi-stakeholder dialogues ensuring producers, citizens, and policymakers co-shape resilient rules that withstand shocks like supply disruptions or climate swings. Yet challenges persist: greenwashing, policy gaps, and inertia. The good news? We've moved from polar bear posters to practical, democratic cycles that build resilience. The next 20 years? Scaling what works, together."

→ Michael Kuhndt, Executive Director

"I still fondly remember the international, exciting vibe of the early days of the CSCP. We had to write research papers, but also carry the first office chairs."

→ Martin Herrndorf, Researcher,
2005 to 2008

"We were honoured to work for the UNEP but had to deliver results with very limited resources (finance and people), based on which policymakers and stakeholders around the world were engaged in the 10YFP process (now SDG 12). This experience brought me confidence and consulting skills in finding solutions to whatever requests we get."

→ Tomoo Machiba, Senior Consultant,
2005 to 2008

"One core memory: the ten-year anniversary 2016, almost no resources, one great vision, 500 people from all walks of life in Wuppertal and a million things that could have gone wrong—almost none did thanks to a super dedicated team!"

→ Patrick Bottermann, Head of Sustainable
Business & Entrepreneurship, 2013 to 2023

"Some of the most valuable experiences were the work we did in China on sustainable consumption and production policy. Also, the many site visits across different Asian countries that have helped me not only to understand challenges that SMEs face on the ground, but also the innovations and opportunities that SCP as a framework for transformation offers."

→ Patrick Schröder, SCP Expert,
2008 to 2016

"On a more personal note, I'll never forget being in Wuppertal during Carnival season. Going to Köln with the entire CSCP team to celebrate Carnival is a memory I'll always cherish."

→ Martina Müller, Intern,
2010

"A fond memory for me is how we developed and piloted Hello Transformation as part of the co-do lab: a truly inspiring and out-of-the-box experience! And not to forget, an honourable mention to the time spent in RE7 & RB48 trains of the Deutsche Bahn and all the train-car chats."

→ Philipp Ober, Project Manager,
2021 to 2023

"During my time at the CSCP, I introduced the Cameroon Sun Ovens project. The leadership encouraged me to apply for funding, and I was able to secure 27,000 Euros. With this, we established the project in Southwest Cameroon, where rural women were trained to bake bread using the renewable energy of the sun—an important staple for Cameroonians. The project had a tangible impact: it improved the living conditions of rural women, reduced deforestation and greenhouse gas emissions, and also improved health by reducing women's reliance on firewood, which had previously caused smoke-related illnesses."

→ Samuel Ndingi, Consultant,
2006 to 2008

CSCP Team

The CSCP is shaped by a multidisciplinary team united by purpose. Discover the people behind the work and what drives them to be part of the CSCP.



→ Dr. Adriana Ballón Ossio,
Project Manager



→ Adriana Cabrera Galindez,
Project Manager



→ Ahmad ur Rehman Hafiz,
Project Management



→ Aileen Estrada,
Student Assistant



→ Alexandra Kessler-an der
Brügge, Project Manager



→ Alexander Mannweiler,
Head of Sustainable Business
and Entrepreneurship



→ Annika Stein, Assistant
to the Executive Director



→ Arne von Hofe,
Senior Expert



→ Arlind Xhelili,
Project Manager

"Working with Mongolian herders and processors on fair trade in the cashmere sector was a powerful reminder of how meaningful change can start through collaboration—even when the path is challenging."



→ Dr. Britta Holzberg,
Senior Expert

"Designing for projects that seek to solve today's most challenging problems makes creation worthwhile."



→ Camila Lustosa,
Design Assistant



→ Carla Schmid,
Project Coordinator



→ Cristina Fedato,
Head of Sustainable
Infrastructure, Products
and Services



→ Daniela Chaves,
Project Manager

"CSCP's collaborative spirit nurtures continuous learning for our impressively creative and innovative team."



→ Dorothy Muthuri,
Human Resources Manager



→ Elliana Jensen-Abieva,
Senior Expert



→ Dr. Esther Heidbüchel,
Senior Project Manager



→ Eva Rudolf, Senior Designer

"I am impressed and inspired by the dedicated people working at the CSCP with a great deal of energy to create meaningful change worldwide."



→ Dr. Flandra Sylva-Beqiri,
Senior Communication Manager

"At the CSCP, I value the time we invest in listening to the people impacted by our work. When we start from a place of genuine listening, we may not arrive at 'ideal' solutions quickly—but we create ones that work on the ground, for the people, and ultimately move us closer to the bigger goal."



→ Dr. Francesca Grossi,
Head of Acquisition and
Senior Project Manager

"Working at the CSCP has shown me how powerful collaboration can be: when people from very different backgrounds work together, real change becomes possible."

"I find it amazing that on the one hand the expertise, background and experience of the CSCP team members is very diverse and that on the other hand we all share a common vision of a sustainable future."



→ Janna Prager,
Project Manager



→ Ingmar Thomas,
Project Coordinator



→ Isabel Vieth,
External Funding Manager



→ Dr. Johannes Klement,
Project Expert



→ Kartika Anggraeni,
Project Manager



→ Kilian Braun,
Project Coordinator

"Joining the CSCP in its 20th anniversary year has been incredibly inspiring. Even in my short time here, I've witnessed real, collaborative progress—especially in shaping more sustainable nutrition habits across society. It's exciting to be part of a team that turns vision into tangible impact."



→ Jannik Schüürmann,
Project Manager

"Seeing students discover how fun and delicious sustainable cooking can be through the KochCup project was incredibly rewarding. It showed me how powerful hands-on experiences can be in shaping healthier and more conscious food choices."



→ Jennifer Wiegard,
Project Manager

"Working at the CSCP transformed my perspective on life, what once felt distant has become personal. Today, sustainability shapes how I live, work, and engage with the world."



→ Joshua Aseto,
Project Manager

"To me, communication is like lighting a candle: it doesn't shout, but once it's lit, it changes everything. At the CSCP, I've witnessed the transformative power of the right words at the right moment, sparking connection, bringing clarity, and supporting collective action."



→ Kuldeep Kumar,
Research Assistant



→ Katrin Hüttepohl,
Communication Manager



→ Lea Leimann,
Junior Project Manager

"Working for the CSCP as an acquisition manager over the past 7 years has shown me how strongly sustainability resonates with people, partners, and different funders. Even as political priorities shift and funding landscapes become more challenging, the CSCP commitment remains steady. It's incredibly rewarding to see that through strong partnerships built in previous projects and great teamwork, the CSCP continues to launch meaningful projects and drive impact."



→ Livia El-Khawad,
Project Manager



→ Luca Sander,
Junior Project Manager



→ Lena Mai Lietz,
Acquisition Manager



→ Marianne Magnus Melgar,
Project Coordinator



→ Marietta Müller,
Project Manager



→ Marc Böker,
Senior Expert

"When I started at the CSCP I was amazed by the sheer diversity of projects—from biodiversity to circular economy to infrastructure."



→ Michael Mühlenbein,
Project Manager



→ Michael Kuhndt,
Executive Director



→ Mike Tabel,
Project Manager

"It is amazing to see how many people choose to work on something meaningful and to make a positive impact and contribution to the world. The CSCP and the partner organisations we work with always strive to contribute to a brighter future for all."



→ Nikola Berger, Head of Creative and Communication



→ Nora Brüggemann, Senior Project Manager



→ Nils Kreft, Communication Coordinator



→ Olga Korjagowa, Accountant



→ Pawel Zylka, Project Manager



→ Rami Hammash, Research Assistant



→ Ramon Külpmann, IT & Events Manager

"Seeing ideas grow from first spark to real-world impact, and being part of a team that brings them to life, has been one of the most rewarding moments of my time at the CSCP. Proof that great things happen when great people work together."

"My first working day began at a General Assembly in Bologna, where I was still learning everyone's names. Six months after that meeting, we delivered a successful Capacity Building Programme with over 100 participants. A total success!"



→ Regina Fernández, Project Manager



→ Relana Lutz, Student Assistant

"Seeing the CSCP evolve from a small think and do tank, which in its first years covered topics that were seen as exotic and niche, to an organisation that actively shapes the sustainability discussions in NRW, Germany and Europe makes me proud."



→ Rosa Strube, Head of Sustainable Lifestyles

"A meaningful moment for me is when diverse stakeholders, from local administrations to European partners, realize they are not alone in driving circular change. Seeing that shared momentum emerge is incredibly powerful."



→ Dr. Shirin Betzler, Project Manager

"Working at the CSCP has shown me that design is more than a tool: empowered by collaboration, it transforms complex sustainability challenges into tangible impact for a world worth living in."



→ Stephan H. Multhaupt, Senior Project Manager



→ Sophie-Anne Val, Junior Designer

"At the CSCP, I always have the freedom to focus on impact first—and colleagues who inspire me with the right ideas."



→ Stephan Schaller, Senior Expert



→ Ole Wittig, Research Assistant



→ Zhao Cheng, Project Coordinator

CSCP Alumni

The CSCP wouldn't be what it is without our alumni. Their work continues to leave a lasting mark today and into the future. This space is to celebrate their contributions and share some of their voices.



→ Marius Mertens,
Project Manager

"The CSCP had a great impact on me and I am proud to have worked for the CSCP. I still look back fondly at the time I was part of the team, my colleagues, and the can-do spirit in diverse projects."



→ Meike Jungnickel,
Project Assistant,
2021 to 2023

"At the CSCP the strengths and uniqueness of each team member are taken into account. I felt that the CSCP provided a basis for growth and a positive attitude, which still influences me in how I approach tasks."



→ Gabriele Eigen, Personal
Assistant to the Director
2005 to 2022

"As the director's assistant for 17 years, I helped build the CSCP into a leading centre for sustainable consumption and production, attracting a growing global team."



→ Silvia Sartori
Networking and
Communications Expert,
2013 to 2017

"From my time at the CSCP, I have learned a lot about the capacity to operate across different cultures and skill sets, with sensitivity, flexibility and a shared commitment towards sustainability."



→ Susanne Salz,
Project Manager,
2013 to 2016

"It's expertise, focus areas, history and role as a think-and-do-tank make the CSCP unique. What stands out most in my memory are committed, motivated, and nice colleagues."



→ Dr. Uwe Weber, Team Leader
SWITCH-Asia Network Facility,
2013 to 2017

"At the CSCP, we did not dwell much on what could eventually be done, we took action."



→ Burcu Tuncer
Project Manager,
2006 to 2013

"Our initial weeks after moving and starting work at the CSCP office in the Schnürsenkelfabrik in Wuppertal were energising. We were highly motivated to collaborate with UNEP on the Marrakech Process and 10YFP projects to collect and evaluate global efforts promoting sustainable lifestyles and environmentally friendly supply chains, with the goal of inspiring governments around the world. I am confident that the team still continues to show unwavering enthusiasm for promoting sustainable living and production like the first days of the CSCP."



→ Kristina Modee
Team Lead Sustainable
Lifestyles Team,
2016 to 2019

"Where there is a will, there is a way. By this I mean the determination of everyone at the CSCP to make a positive contribution to society through their work. Therefore, I believe you can come a long way by listening to what others have to say and by communicating as openly as possible."



→ Sebastian Philipps
Project Manager,
2008 to 2013

"The need for change is often fact-based. Change itself is often driven by perception. At the CSCP, I learned to keep an eye on both sides of the coin."



→ Thomas Haberland
Project Manager,
2010 to 2012

"The most valuable lesson I learned from my time at the CSCP is that sustainable development works only with shared engagement."



→ Dick van Beers
Senior Expert,
2010 to 2014

"The CSCP uses highly interactive and innovative approaches in multi-stakeholder workshops to explore potential sustainability solutions. The CSCP team is always eager to experiment with new methods in projects and workshops, including role plays, actors, games, and more. This innovative mindset and hands-on experience continue to support me today in developing and facilitating interactive trainings in my current work."



→ Luis Esquivel
Project Coordinator,
2017 to 2022

"An important takeaway from my time at the CSCP is that success in projects depends on genuine relationships, teamwork, good planning and ability to collaborate effectively with partners, while also adapting quickly to trends and unexpected challenges."



→ Tomoo Machiba,
Senior Consultant,
2005 to 2008

"Its flexibility in the sense of what it can deliver, but with a clear sense of mission—the CSCP can work with anyone, including the UN, businesses, governments, research and civil society."



→ Stephanie Reyer-Naujokat
Acquisition Manager,
2015 to 2024

"The most valuable lesson from my time at the CSCP is that teamwork is key also in difficult situations. What I have taken with me is the many (sustainability) learnings seeped into various aspects of my everyday life and behaviour."



→ Jadwiga Zurad,
Project Manager,
2009 to 2014

"The most valuable lesson that I have gained from my time at the CSCP is the importance of the intangible impact that cannot be measured in conventional ways. I loved exploring the kind of out-of-the-box approaches that make people experience sustainability and empower them to transform their lives and their organisations from within. It has been a valuable work experience that made me more courageous in the way I go about sustainability transformation in projects, processes and individuals."



→ Mira Kinn,
Intern,
2017

"What stands out most in my memory from my time at the CSCP is the incredibly motivated, multicultural, and skilled team. Despite being there only for a short period as an intern, I felt truly integrated and valued."



→ Alexis Figeac, Head
of Sustainable Business &
Entrepreneurship,
2015 to 2020

"If I have to choose, what stands out in my memory is the lighthouse project R2Pi on circular business models, where we established a great consortium, including top corporate case studies and visionary recommendations for the European Commission. In addition, two projects we implemented in Mauritius (one in agriculture, the other in tourism) that made me develop a love for the country, and the incredible creativity and didactic aspects of the 'Unconference 2016 – Taste the Jeans' and 'Arbeitswelten der Zukunft' project."



→ Patrik Eisenhauer,
Project Manager,
2014 to 2022

"Three memories that stick: our conventions (team retreats) at Haus Hammerstein, the REFRESH project to reduce food waste, the private time together with colleagues."



→ Dr. Imke Schmidt,
Project Manager,
2017 to 2023

"I experienced an incredible sense of team spirit at the CSCP. I learnt that any hurdle or challenge can be overcome if you work together and support each other. The CSCP demonstrates how you can achieve great things as an individual and how you can surpass yourself as part of a team."



→ Johannes Schön,
Sustainability Consultant &
Project Assistant,
2020 to 2022

"The people at the CSCP have guided me and shown me the many pathways of a sustainability professional. They have greatly influenced my life decision to move abroad to further deepen my knowledge and understanding of wicked problems, the circular economy, and climate change."



→ Nicolas Barthelmè,
Project Manager,
2021 to 2024

"What stands out in my memory? Great people, important pioneering projects, nice memories. I learnt a lot and took a lot with me. The CSCP period has shaped me and definitely helped me move forward."



→ Samuel Ndingi,
Consultant,
2006 to 2008

"Working at the CSCP was a great and valuable experience. Besides regular research and project implementation work, brainstorming during meetings and the teamwork without distinction of hierarchy were exciting and left a mark on me. This approach shaped me in excelling in my job with UNDP Liberia as County Coordinator."



→ Nadine Pratt,
Team Leader Sustainable
Business and
Entrepreneurship,
2005 to 2013

"What sticks with me until today is the 'positive' and 'proactive' stance on sustainability. Seeing the potentials that go along with sustainability is something that is still a key focus when I work on sustainability topics with my students today. I believe this is key, especially at a time, where some may have the perception of sustainability as a merely a bureaucratic burden or cost factor. Identifying and harnessing the potential from sustainable consumption and production is key for the future."



→ Martina Müller,
Intern, 2010

"The CSCP was my first professional internship. [...] I keep the memories of this experience very close to my heart—it reaffirmed my interest in working in the environmental sustainability field and launched a career that's taken me across sectors and, ultimately, to the United Nations."



→ Annette Jacobs,
Designer,
2014 to 2015

"At the CSCP, I've learned to truly value the unique strengths each person brings to the table and to create space for everyone and empower them to contribute their talents."

The friendships I've built, the joyful events we've celebrated together, and of course, the meaningful projects I had the chance to support as a designer, illustrator, and animator stick with me to the day."



→ Chuanrong (Rena)
Wang, Consultant,
2009 to 2013

"I began my career in circular economy and sustainable consumption and production at the CSCP—it's where my passion for a better planet was first inspired."



→ Christoph Hermann,
Consultant at SIPS,
2014 to 2018

"The CSCP showed me that working in the field of sustainability is an opportunity to match my personal passion and interests with my professional life. I am incredibly thankful for that because it was a life-changing experience and opened an unknown path for me."



→ Patrick Bottermann,
Head of Sustainable Business &
Entrepreneurship,
2013 to 2023

"What I learnt at the CSCP is that you do not deal with organisations, hierarchies or businesses. You always deal with people first—people who have wishes, fears, and hopes."



→ Mohammed Mustafa
Student Assistant, IT Support,
2023 to 2024

"Working at the CSCP taught me the importance of purpose-driven work. Supporting an organisation with such a strong mission for sustainability deepened my appreciation for the impact of IT in achieving global goals. It shaped how I approach problem-solving and teamwork in all my professional endeavours."

What stands out most from my time at the CSCP is the genuine warmth, support, and inclusiveness of the team. Every day felt meaningful—not just because of the work, but because of the people I had the privilege to work with. From team lunches and shared laughter to tackling challenges together, that strong sense of belonging and shared purpose is something I'll always carry with me."



→ Lara Carbonaro,
Design Assistant,
2023 to 2024

"My time at the CSCP made me realise the huge positive impact people can have when they feel empowered."



→ Eva Greischel

"I have always valued and learned from the international team at the CSCP!"



→ Mo Hassan,
Visual Communication
Designer,
2015 to 2016

"At the CSCP, I learned that determination and taking the lead on new initiatives truly pays off. That mindset has stayed with me and continues to shape how I work today."



→ Victoria Funk,
Senior Project Manager,
2023 to 2025

"A memory that stands out to me is actually from my very first week, when I traveled to Hamburg for my first project. Meeting so many highly motivated and bright minds, and feeling the boundless energy in the room was incredibly inspiring. It gave me hope that there are many more people than we might think who dedicate their time and energy every day toward building a more sustainable future for all of us."



→ Oliver Adria,
Consultant,
2006 to 2013

"The CSCP taught me to push my limits against real-world challenges. The most valuable lesson was realising that any big challenge—especially in sustainability—is rarely simple. Finding a real solution means stepping back to see things from many different viewpoints. That skill—navigating complexity and seeing the whole picture—is what I rely on in my current work."



In Memory of
→ Yang Deng,
known as Sunny,
Project Manager
from 2013 to 2019

Sunny was an incredibly passionate colleague and friend. She approached all her work with such curiosity, dedication, and sincerity that it was impossible not to be inspired and uplifted by her. We still miss you, Sunny!



In Memory of
→ Karin Uhlenbrock,
Operations Team
from 2011 to 2017

Karin held various positions in our operations team. She gave her valuable contribution in finance and supported the team on human resource topics.

"You work for a kind of factory where you can help people and protect the climate."

→ Arne von Hofe's children

What Our Families Think We Do

Our family and friends offer a unique perspective on our work at the CSCP.



Drawing by Annika Stein's daughter

A little interview with my
13 year old son:

Eva: Do you know what I'm doing at work?

Son: Designing.

Eva: And what for?

Son: For projects and for vegan treelovers.

Flandra:

What do you think I do at my job?

8 year old son: You work for a company that produces feedback.

Flandra: Why do you think so?

Son: Because I hear you say that word in all your meetings.



Image by Nora's daughter,
9 years old

Nora's daughter,
9 years old:

**"What I think
my mom does at
the CSCP: Saving
food! Oh, that's
yummy!"**

**"You
do something
with sustainability and
food. At an institute that
works on food and
agriculture. You do academies.
But actually I never know how
to explain if someone asks me
what you do."**

→ Lea Leimann's family
member

**"Make the
world a better
place by lowering
the barrier to
doing good."**

→ Lea Leimann's
partner

**What Kathrin von Hofe
thinks her husband, Arne von
Hofe, does in his job:**

(translated from German): "As I
understand it, the CSCP translates the big
idea of sustainability into practice. You
provide companies with concrete tools, bring
the right people together, and show how it can
truly work in real life. To me, the CSCP feels like
a place where people genuinely believe that
business can be done differently—and
better. I also see this contagious
motivation in Arne, who is involved
with visible joy and full
commitment".

Luca E. Sander

Here's what **Daria** says when
she's asked what her husband
does: "Well, he works for a kind of
think tank in sustainability."
And when people ask further questions,
she says: "They collaborate with the EU on
multiple projects to scale sustainability."
And when asked about her husband's
mission at the CSCP? "Good
communication to engage and
motivate stakeholders to increase
their sustainability efforts."

Joshua's son,
6 years old:

**"My daddy's name
is Joshua, he works
for the environment
and he works with his
colleagues."**



Drawing by Ahmad ur Rehman Hafiz's son

Nikola's
daughter,
12 years old, on what
she thinks her mother
does at work:

**"Designing things for the
environment or
something like
that."**

Joshua's
son, 9 years old:

**"My dad works for the
climate to make the world
a better place. He works at
the CSCP. And he does that
because it is important so
that the world does not
turn into a desert."**

Marcelle, 88 years old,
Sophie-Anne de Val's grandmother:

**"You are preparing the future, so everyone
can be more respectful of the environment.
You are going to an office to have cultural
exchange with other people and other
countries to enhance and protect the
environment. Sustainability is about
knowing how to live, by respecting fauna
and flora and living with them."**



Marcelle, Sophie-Anne Val's grandmother

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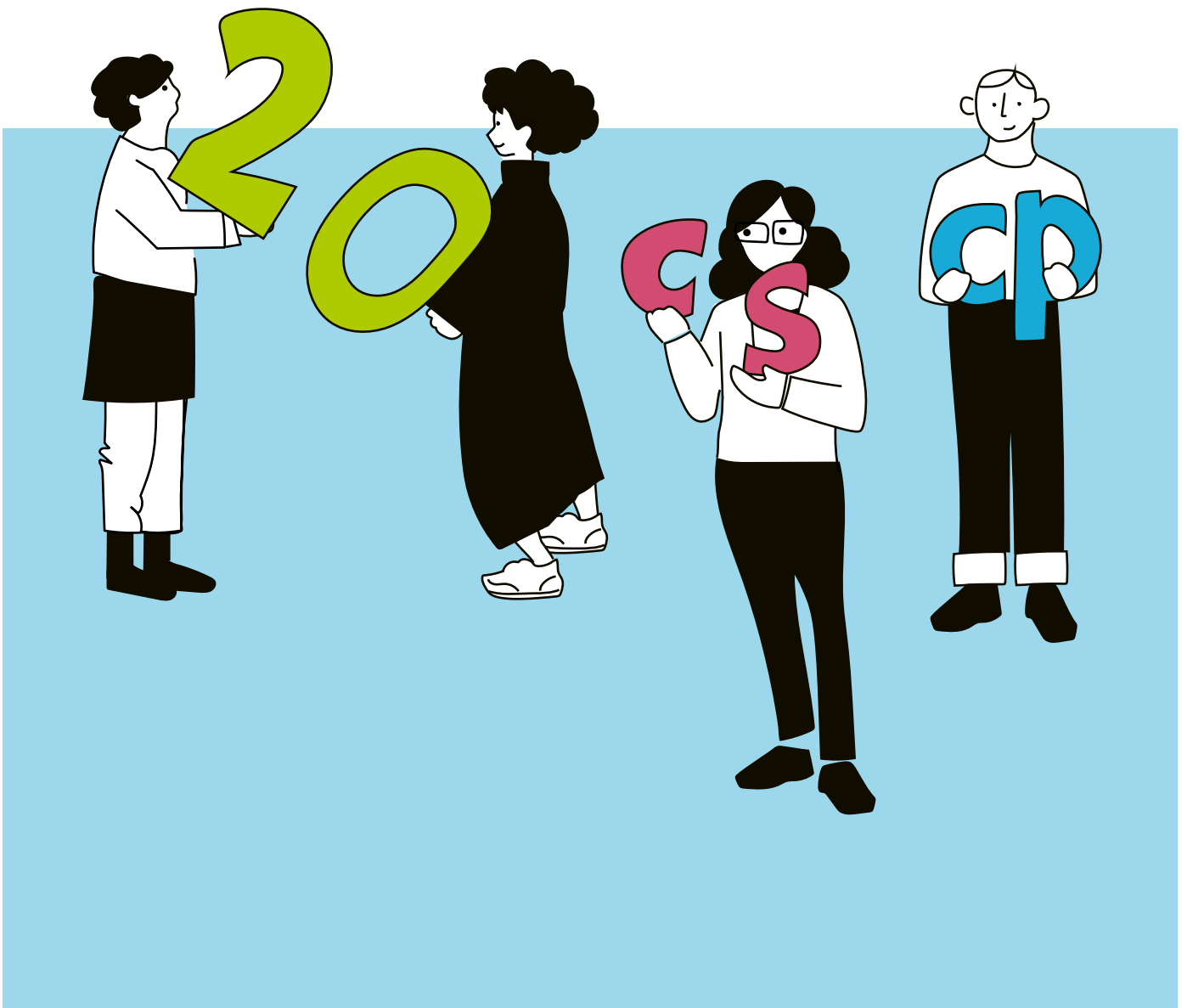
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Check out our 20 Years CSCP
landing page:
cscp.org/20cscp



**Let's shape the next chapter
together—towards a good life
for all!**

