CICERONE

Coordination and Support Action (CSA)

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CICERONE

Circular economy platform for European
priorities strategic agenda

Implementation Plan 2021-2022

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Summary

This implementation plan includes the most relevant and overarching aspects for the operationalization of the future platform. It includes three main sections: section II includes thematic priorities and key targets to be achieved in the next two years, section III explains key elements of the platform EU Circular Cooperation Hub such as the different scenarios, the governance model and the main services provided by the Hub, section IV describes concrete aspects and actions in the different stages of the implementation plan, including a MEL framework while section V includes next steps and potential collaborations.

Approval

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NOTE TO THE REVIEWER

In response to the EU needs to align circular economy Research & Innovation across the European territory, CICERONE was born to reduce fragmentation and increase collaboration across circular economy funding bodies in Europe.

Public funding is the key source of financing for Circular Economy Research & Innovation programmes: 70% are financed at national level, 18% at regional and 8% at European level. However, national and regional strategies are partly contradictive throughout Europe, leading to fragmentation and lack of alignment on priorities for the circular economy.

The need for a more systemic and integrative approach to meet this challenge is clear. The new EU Circular Cooperation Hub aims to bring programme owners together to co-design systemic and joint programmes needed for an impactful transition to a circular economy. In doing so, the Hub will aim to integrate circular economy more consistently across funding mechanisms and programmes, propose systemic and holistic approaches to tackling a circular economy transition, and develop generic indicators to evaluate the performance of programmes.

We have worked with over 100 programme owners in Europe to develop the concept of the Hub, ensuring it is demand-driven and can bring a true added value to programming mechanisms, all the while benefitting our economies and societies. The following implementation plan details the next steps in terms of roll-out of the Hub (EU CCH), and we hope to bring even more public authorities on board to cooperate with us in making Europe circular.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This implementation plan includes the most relevant and overarching aspects for the operationalization of the future platform. It includes three main section: section II includes thematic priorities and key targets to be achieved in the next two years, section III explains key elements of the platform EU Circular Cooperation Hub such as the different scenarios, the governance model and the main services provided by the Hub, section IV describes concrete aspects and actions in the different stages of the implementation plan, including a MEL framework while section V includes next steps and potential collaborations.

ACRONYMS

AB: Advisory Board

CE: Circular Economy

CEAP: Circular Economy Action Plan

CE R&I: Circular Economy Research and Innovation

CEPS: Centro de Estudios Políticos y Sociales

CCRI: Circular Cities and Regions Initiative

DG RTD: Directorate General Research and Innovation

DEL: Deliverable

EU CCH: European Circular Cooperation Hub

EESC: European Economic and Social Committee

ECESP: European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform

EU: European Union

GB: Governing Board

IETU: Institute for Ecology of Industrial Areas Poland

IP: Intellectual Property

KIC: Knowledge Innovation Community

KPI: Key Performance Indicator

MB: Management Board

MOOC: Massive Online Open Course

MEL: Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

PO: Program Owner

RVO: Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland

SMEs: Small and Medium Enterprises

SRIA: Strategic and Research Innovation Agenda

UM: University of Maribor

WG: Working Group

WRF: World Resource Forum

I. Introduction

This two-year (2021-2022) implementation plan provides an outline with the main outcomes of the H2020 CICERONE project, the governance and business models for the implementation plan of the EU Circular Cooperation Hub (EU CCH), a platform targeting European programme owners for joint programming activities to support the circular economy transition by following three main objectives:

- EU CCH becomes a mechanism to jointly address the circular economy transition.
- EU CCH services contribute to overcome fragmentation of CE funding, priorities, and initiatives.
- EU CCH develops strategic approach to membership and financial sustainability.

This plan introduces practical aspects for the operationalization of the platform from 2021 to 2022 such as topics and funding models and it includes several stages in which the different structures will be step up as co-designed services that will continue to mature. The implementation plan includes methodological aspects and different stages of the development of the platform which will start to be operational with external funding but which could potentially evolve into a financially sustainable initiative through membership fees. The governance and business models will thus evolve, and many of the elements indicated in this deliverable will be part of a transition period. One of the three High-Level Objectives of the H2020 CICERONE project was to build and test a lasting organisation as well as the pathways to reach the desired impact to support the circular economy transition at territorial level, and part of it was to design this implementation plan.

Figure 1 Content-related deliverables of the H2020 CICERONE project
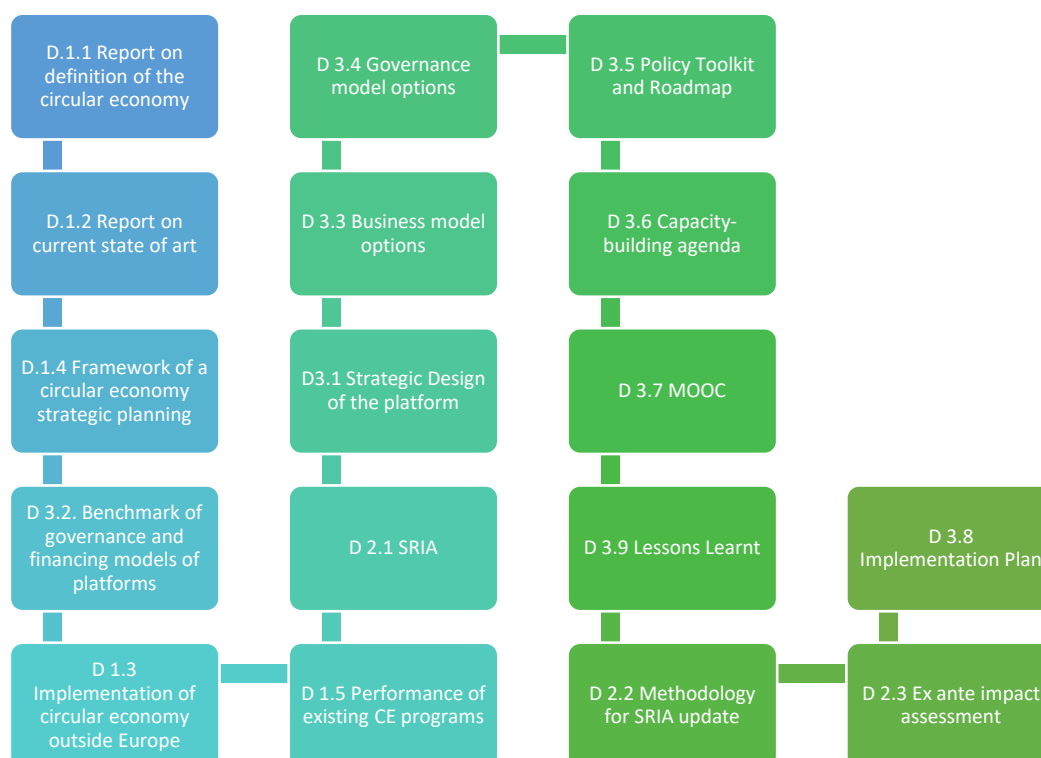
A more detailed approach to many of the decisions and elements included in this document can thus be found in different CICERONE deliverables. Therefore, we recommend reading this document in

combination with the related deliverables as referred in the text. The figure above showcases the deliverables focusing on content development that have been produced as part of the delivery of CICERONE, and which have framed the discussions and the different outcomes. The final conference will provide a space to present this platform and the implementation plan to European Programme Owners, so far 31 declarations of intent to become members of the platform, or to provide support, have been collected.

II.   Thematic priorities and targets of the platform

The implementation plan of the EU CCH platform follows an incremental logic where key services will mature from preliminary stages to prepare programme owners for future calls and joint programming activities on circular economy. A mentoring, technical assistance, and simulation phase will thus prepare European Programme Owners, the platform' teams, the model, and the relations in the circular economy community for jointly applying to circular economy calls for proposals from EU and national governments.

The project CICERONE was designed to bring a systemic approach to the circular economy framework in the European Union by targeting European programme owners and providing support for joint programmes that can boost the circular economy transition. The following figure represents the value proposition of the project CICERONE. By understanding the existing challenges, mapping what already exists on the market and using the expertise and knowledge assets of the CICERONE consortium, the project is evolving into a platform that covers the PO needs and targets those stakeholders that other platforms do not consider.

Figure 2 CICERONE value proposition
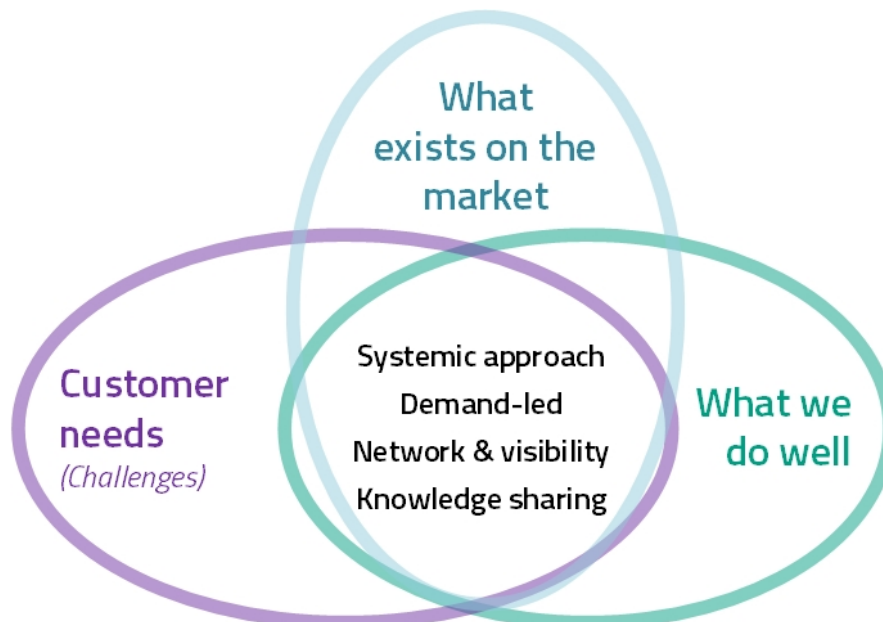
The CICERONE project has delivered the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) on circular economy which closely aligns with major EU strategic documents and policies, such as the European Green Deal and the Circular Economy Action Plan. It has contributed, rather than duplicated, the ambitions and efforts of European strategies and initiatives and it is a central tenant of the four joint programmes: **circular cities, circular industries, closing the loop, resource efficiency in territory and**

sea. However, the SRIA is intended as a living document, to be updated based on possible changes in European needs, European indicators, R&D developments in the circular economy. In particular, key priorities, issues, targets, and strategies are changing on an ongoing basis, the SRIA's elements will thus be updated integrating already existing elements or adding new ones. The update mechanism should be coherent in terms of scientific contents, platform governance and implementation plan, and it is described in the deliverables 3.4: governance model options and 2.2: mechanisms for SRIA update of the CICERONE project. Regarding this two-year implementation plan, two of the four pilot projects have been prioritized based on an analysis of urgency and alignments with the EU policy landscape. Therefore, the EU Circular Cooperation Hub will focus on CIRCULAR CITIES and CLOOSING THE LOOP.

- <u>Circular Cities.</u> It addresses a fundamental area to be covered in the new EU policy framework through the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative as part of the Circular Economy Action Plan. The strategic alignment with this policy stream makes the thematic pilot more suitable to match POs needs and the EU ambition.

- <u>Closing the Loop.</u> The systemic component of this pilot provides the best arena for POs to develop a learning by doing process regarding understanding cross-sectorial, multi-level and cross-regional perspectives on the circular economy.

Synergies with policy developments on circular economy

Throughout the implementation of the CICERONE project, there have been relevant policy developments which obliged different workstreams to adapt. For instance, the new Circular Economy Action Plan was launched in March 2020 resulting in the themes identified in the SRIA to be adapted to the new priorities at EU level. In addition, the covid-19 crisis hit all the levels and sectors of our economies and societies. As a result, new covid-related priorities emerged in relation to the existing SRIA pilots, objectives, and subprogrammes. This implementation plan aims to prepare European programme owners for further policy developments such as the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI) and the CICERONE Roadmap (DEL3.5) which includes milestones and actions with recommended dates regarding the launch of circular economy strategies, and other circular economy policies at different governance levels. The EU CCH will, for example, add value to initiatives such as the CCRI, which aims to support Cities and Regions integrating circularity into their territorial economic development strategies, by supporting programme owners in the co-creation and co-design processes needed to develop circular systemic solutions for implementation and piloting. Moreover, synergies will be built with other key initiatives and platforms such as the EU Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform and Circular Economy Expert Finance Group, to ensure alignment and information sharing with a wide range of circular economy stakeholders. The following table aligns these two pilots, their subprogrammes, the new priorities identified during the Covid-19 crisis, and the CCRI:

Table 1 Alignment between SRIA and other EU circular economy initiatives

SRIA Pilot	Objectives	SRIA subprogrammes	COVID-19	EU landscape
Circular Cities	To enable urban circularity and increasing citizen engagement in circular solutions	Infrastructure to enable circular material and product flows	Specific Covid-19 related topics are indicated in DEL 2.2.	Initial pilot calls can be aligned with the work of the pilots of CCRI.
		Citizen participation in circular material and product flows		
		Enhancing material efficiency and circular flows in the food and food packaging sector		
	To enhance circular economy and natural resource management in urban areas	Circular economy considerations of water and soil in food systems		
		Circular economy in land and soil resources in construction and urban planning		
		Circular economy considerations in water supply and treatment systems		
		Shifting towards circular water systems in buildings		
Closing the loop	To ensure that the manufacturing partnerships in Horizon Europe focus on key priorities in circular economy	Circular complex product design		
		Circular business model strategies for complex products		
	To address toxic / hazardous substances to human and environmental health in the context of circular economy	Circular design and technical development for human and environmental health		
	To elaborate and stimulate the adoption of new policies, standard and protocols for governance resource management systems, fostering inter-stakeholder collaboration and integrated management in the entire value chain	Traceability and management of raw materials to support governance and standardisation		
		Promoting market viable solutions for circular economy		

Below you will find the targets expected by the end of this two-year implementation plan.

Table 2 Key targets of the platform

Action/Activity	Target
Declared interest in services	20 POs
Engaging in stakeholder engagement activities including conferences/events	100 POs
Number registered on the online portal	50 POs
Downloads of SRIA	5000
MOOC	50 participants
Working groups set up	3
Prototype of new processes for joint programming	2
Training and mentoring of European Programme Owners	30 POs

Further details regarding the relations between objectives, activities, outputs, and outcomes are presenting in the Section V where an overall approach on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning for the EU CCH platform is introduced by including a logic model of the EU CCH theory of change.

III. Main operational elements of the EU CCH

The following section provides a summary with different elements extracted from CICERONE deliverables that describe different scenarios, as well as governance and financial considerations (DEL 3.3 and 3.4).

Scenario-based approach

The project CICERONE followed a scenario-based approach in which two main scenarios were defined based the need of creating a legal status for the platform or not (see Figure 3).

Figure 3 EU CCH relationship between business model, financing options and governance model.
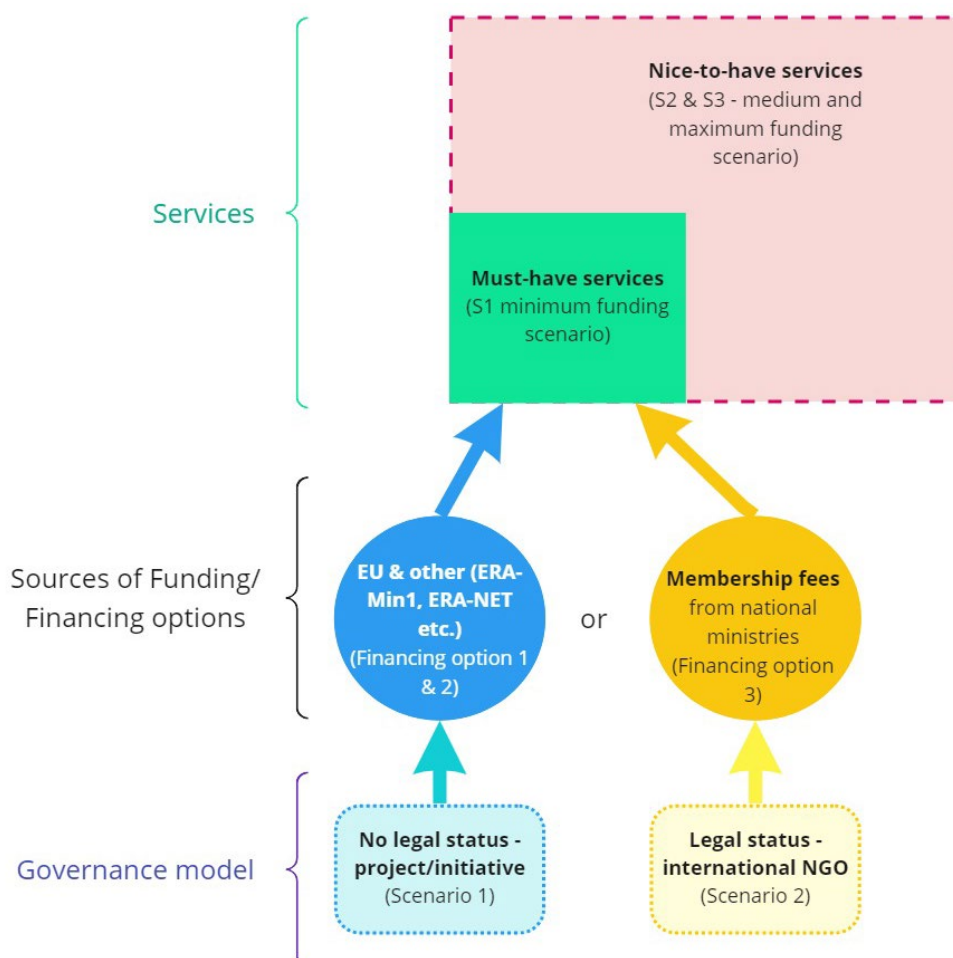
Given the uncertainty surrounding the viable options for funding and operationalizing the EU Circular Cooperation Hub, together with the existing models and experience from other platforms, this implementation plan with focus on receiving external funding from the European Commission in the initial stages as the most viable option of the EU CCH platform for 2021-2022. In addition, the business model deliverable (DEL 3.3) provided additional details regarding the possible funding models and potential services offered by the EU CCH, see tables 3 and 4 below:

Table 3 Funding scenarios from EU CCH Business Model analysis

Scenario	Funding type	Origin	Description	Amount range
Scenario 1 (S1)	External funding	ERA-MIN 2	Implement a European-wide coordination of research and innovation programs on raw materials to strengthen the shift to a circular economy	200 – 1M€
		ERA-NET funded by CE-NMBP-41-2020	ERA-NET on materials, supporting the circular economy and Sustainable Development Goals	200 – 1M€
Scenario 2 (S2)		DG ENV / DG GROW / DG RTD / CLIMA / REGIO	Direct tender to support the platform on circular economy	300K€ - 1M€ over 2-3 years
Scenario 3 (S3)	Own funding	Membership fees	This model concerns Option 3 presented in section **Error! Reference source not found.**	Max amount depends on the number of EU CCH members.

Sources: DEL 3.3 (LGI)

Regarding external funding, a distinction was made based on the funding coming from other circular economy platforms or the European Commission itself. The numbers described in the amount range should be updated according to the final design of the platform, overhead costs, and other variable costs. In addition, three must-have services were identified: common R&I programming, joint funding, and the secretarial support, as well as nice to have services that would be prioritized depending on the funding scenario. More details about the services can be found in pages 18-21.

Table 4 Services per scenario

Sub-services	S1	S2	S3
Must-have services			
Common R&I programming	++	++	+++
Joint funding	++	++	+++
Secretariat Support	+	++	+++
Nice-to-have services			
EU Support Toolkit (Capacity Building)		+	+
Training courses (Capacity Building)		+	+++
Workshops (Capacity Building)		+	+++
Online CE repository (Knowledge Sharing)		+	+
Yearly conference on CE research (Capacity Building)			++
Issuing Position papers (Policy)		+	++
Policy Roadmap (Policy)			++

Sources: own elaboration based in DEL 3.3 (LGI)

Governance model

Different governance options based on the different scenarios for the future platform were included in the deliverable 3.4 on governance model options. The implementation plan focuses on an externally funded scenario for the EU Circular Cooperation Hub which envisions the platform to be a consortium-driven initiative, with no legal status needed for its operation.

The incipient stage of the EU Circular Cooperation Hub could function as an initiative or a collaborative partnership (network) of national programme owners from EU member states in circular economy. The Hub governance structure is thus designed to facilitate its objectives: to enable the interface between users' needs and existing resources and knowledge to help national and regional programme owners deliver research and innovation activities for promoting circular economy transition with the support of tailor-made services. The structures and procedures have been designed to ensure a collective responsibility for the overall governance of EU CCH and a clear division of work between the involved stakeholders.

This governance model supports the views of most stakeholders consulted during the consultation phase who indicated their preference for a simple two-layered structure: a decision-making or executive level body with a fixed-term to ensure ownership, commitment, and stability (the Governance or Governing Board) and an operational level (Management Board). In addition, an Advisory Board will represent by associations, industry representatives, EU Commission, policymakers, experienced people, academia, SME associations and wider stakeholder circle including RTOs, academia, private organizations, banks, private financing, enterprises with a relevant experience in circular economy actions implementation, innovative SMEs, NGOs. See more details about the governance model in Figure 4.

Figure 4 Governance model under an externally funded scenario
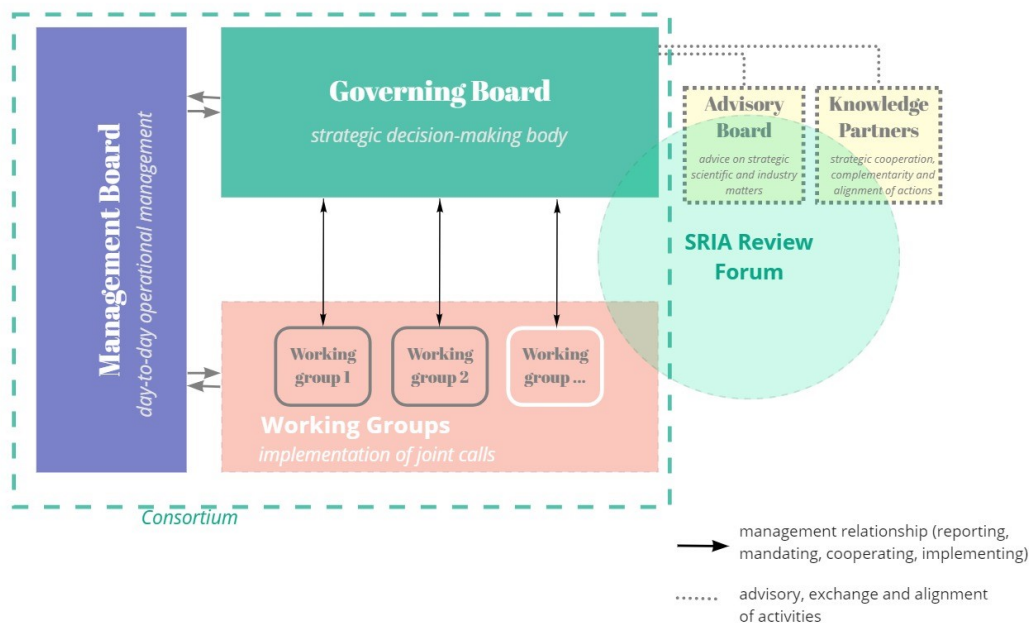
A detailed description of the roles, mechanisms, and a description of each of these structures is included in the deliverable 3.4. However, this document includes a summary of the different bodies.

Governing Board

The Governing Board (GB) is assigned with strategic responsibilities and will be the ultimate decision-making authority for the EU Circular Cooperation Hub. The Governing Board will meet twice a year, it will be advised by the Advisory Board, and by the Knowledge Partners Group and will receive operational support from the Management Board. It will have a role in the implementation, monitoring, and update of the SRIA, as well in the overall strategic decisions over working groups and other governance structures. Consensus will be sought in its decision-making processes.

Management Board

The Management Board (MB) represents the operational level of the EU CCH, functioning as a decentralised secretariat that advises the Governing Board, implements its strategy, coordinates all EU CCH members and partners, and supports the Working Groups in joint programming. Additionally, the MB monitors the implementation of EU CCH activities, has main responsibility in stakeholder engagement and relationship with the Advisory Board and the Knowledge Partners. The Management Team could consist of one staff member from each consortium partner as it is the forum for joint consideration of the implementation, management, and monitoring of the EU CCH research programmes and activities. EIT Climate KIC, current coordinator of the CICERONE project and owner of the Intellectual Property (IP) rights of the EU CCH portal will play an important role in the first stages of implementation to facilitate strategic and coordination decisions, as well as decisions in areas such as communication and dissemination, creation of working groups and stakeholder engagement.

Working Groups

The Governing Board could set up thematic Working Groups (WGs) for a limited time to implement operational and joint-programming activities of EU CCH. Each Working Group could be under the coordination of at least two Governing Board members who commit the necessary resources (financial, in-kind and human) for joint programming, and a minimum of two additional countries that are interested in participating in the thematic Working Group with their respective resources to support joint-programming actions. Each thematic Working Group could be created with a specific mandate and timeframe of operation to work independently, but to regularly report to the Governing Board on their progress. The central task of a Working Group will be to prepare joint calls (by national funding agencies).

In an initial stage, the working groups launched by the Governing Board will be related to the activation of the process for co-design of joint programming processes (see Section V). They will operate as a main governance mechanism to implement the process of co-design and prototyping of joint programming in two thematic areas: Circular Cities and Closing the loop. In this first stage, the coordination of the WGs might be reduced to 1 GB member and 1 additional country to facilitate the functioning of the platform in the transition period. As part of the evolving development of the platform and the consolidation of the community of POs, additional working groups will be set up to introduce more specific areas such as Joint funding, future finding for the platform or more technical areas related to the cross-cutting areas suggested by the Strategic capacity building agenda (DEL3.6). Those new groups will be launched by considering the maturity of the services provided by the

platform and the matching of POs interests and needs overtime as well as new scenarios where funding and opportunities might be better identified.

The SRIA Review Forum oversees the review process of the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) in the EU Circular Cooperation Hub. It is thus a process that facilitates the update of relevant content for the co-creation and co-management of Joint Programming processes run under EU CCH, bringing together the members of the Governing Board (national policy-makers, programme owners), members of the Management Board, the Working Group members (programme owners, government representatives), the Advisory Board, a High-level Technical Body and the Knowledge Partners. As suggested on the Guidance on methodology for SRIA update (DEL 2.2), a High-level Technical Body is suggested as an instrumental mechanism to support to process for the SRIA update from a technical and expertise point of view. Within the SRIA review Forum, the role and composition of a High-Level Technical Body, that will assure SRIA periodical updating and that will be represented in the Governance Board, will be defined. This review process will take place at least every two years, also whenever major technical developments in the field of the circular economy occur. A detailed description of the SRIA update mechanism can be found in deliverable 3.4 on the governance model.

Advisory Board

The Advisory Board (AB) will be composed of renown academic experts in circular economy, leading thinkers, representatives of SMEs, industries, and civil societal actors. Collaboration with these crucial actors is aimed at identifying key challenges and circular economy research and innovation priorities, industry, scientific and research needs, sharing best practices and capacity development. Most of these stakeholders (e.g. SMEs, industrial clusters, universities etc.) are also possible beneficiaries of joint-programming calls to be launched by EU CCH programme owners, and therefore it will be essential for such actors to perform their advisory role in an objective and neutral manner, avoiding situations of conflict of interest.

The Advisory Board, part of the collaborative level of governance, will be involved in the SRIA Review Forum, in the joint-programming activities of the Working Groups, in the development of strategic documents and in capacity-building activities delivered by the EU CCH. In addition, the Advisory Board could further contribute to mobilising stakeholders, disseminating the results of the EU CCH, taking part in consultation and stakeholder dialogues.

Knowledge Partners

The EU Circular Cooperation Hub will not be a stand-alone initiative - it is created to be in synergy, relationship and complementarity with other initiatives, networks, platforms and international organisations as a vital part of reaching complementarity with already existing activities. These synergies are open for international participation and this exchange beyond the EU will be important in considering global policies, best practices or potential partnerships on circular economy research and innovation. This level of cooperation will be achieved by having such related initiatives as Knowledge Partners of the EU CCH. The Knowledge Partners are part of the collaborative level of governance of the EU Circular Cooperation Hub and could contribute to the SRIA Review Forum and to the activities of the Working Groups.

Platform services

The EU CCH will potentially provide 4 main services: Joint programming, capacity building, knowledge sharing and policy influence (see Figure 5). Joint programming will focus on tackling the circular economy transition in a systemic way in collaboration with different sectors and regions. Orchestration and multi-level and cross regional collaboration are key for a successful implementation of this service. Therefore, new tools and competence development, including the definition and prioritizing of tools for common initiatives, and potential tools for a strategic cluster cooperation will be developed for European Programme owners. Knowledge sharing and policy influence could be additional services offered by the platform in more mature stages. Regarding the former, this may include benchmarking, follow-up and tracking systems for the impact of activities in the platform. Finally, policy recommendations and advocacy through the community management can also be key to support the implementation of the new EU circular economy policy framework.

Figure 5 Platform main services and sub-services
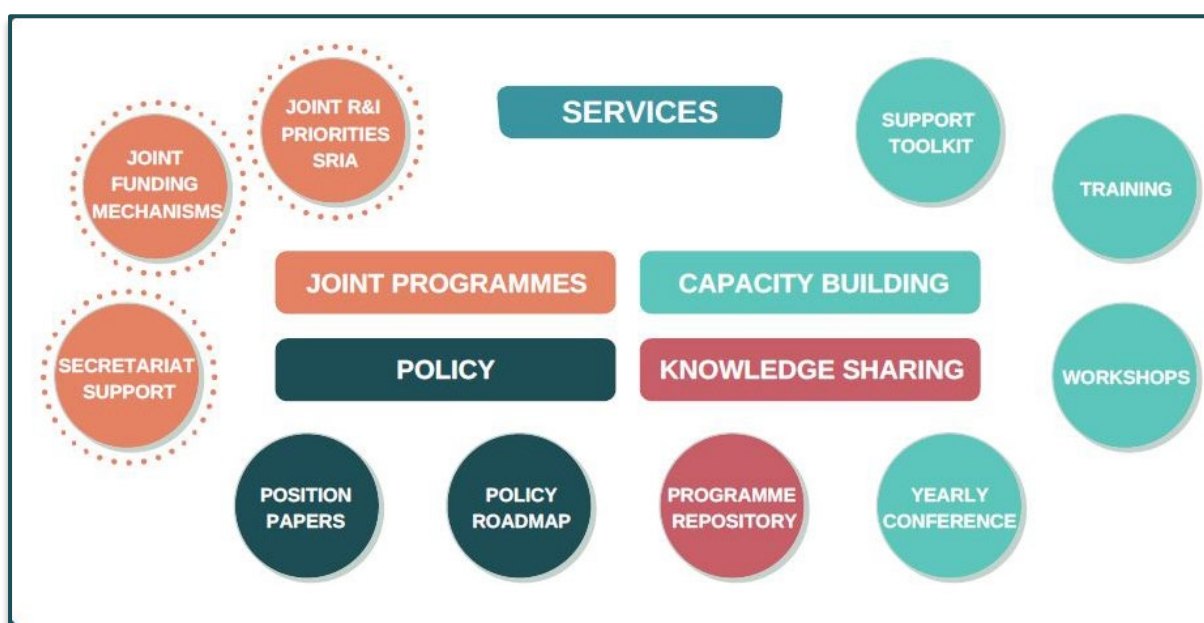
Must-have services

The following table describes in detail each of the different services and sub-services as described in the DEL3.3 on business models, including key activities and level of difficulty in a 0 to 5 scale.

Table 5 EU CCH three main must-have services

#	Sub-service: title & function	Key success factors	Key activities	Implementation difficulty

				(0: lowest ; 5: highest)
1	**Common R&I programming** This sub-service refers to the joint prioritisation and programming of R&I activities as identified by stakeholders and POs EU-wide. It builds on the state-of-the-art in CE R&I programmes as assessed in WP1 and defines next steps ahead.	• A critical mass of EU POs contributing to the document achieved • Regular and substantial collaboration between contributors achieved • Sufficient representativity of POs achieved • Key contributors onboard • Regular update of SRIA according to recent R&I progress	• Write and update the SRIA • Establish drafting plan • Appoint key people in charge for the various SRIA sections • Organise writing sessions • Organise peer review with external experts • Establish a work-programme of several years with priorities & funding envisaged	**3** • No cost apart from designing the document (1) • Effort: Requires substantial human effort (4) • PO contribution: Requires important commitment from POs (4)
2	**Joint funding (joint calls)** This sub-service refers to the launch of joint calls within EU CCH's community (co-funded by EU and EU CCH POs). It would enable to structure EU CE research and strengthen synergies between different EU funding schemes	• Appropriate funding secured for joint calls • Significant commitment from POs • Significant number of applications	• Definition of joint calls mechanism (funding amount, monitoring, review, contract, etc.) • Launch calls • Rank/rate proposals • Monitor advancement	5 • Cost: Requires funding to finance the calls (5) • Effort: Human effort needed to launch the call, rank & monitor (4) • PO contribution: Requires significant PO contribution (5)

3	**Managerial/secretariat support**	• **Administration & financial management**
		   o Securing the bookkeeping and yearly closing
		   o Managing Accounts Payable
		   o Maintaining the budget
		   o Maintaining legal documentation
		• **General Secretariat activities**
		   o First line treatment of incoming emails, post, telephone calls		

	- o Managing membership applications and the introduction of the new members to the community - o Maintaining EU CCH documentation in the online members area - o Supporting interactions with its members and other stakeholders - o Providing inputs to the Annual Activity report and to the preparation of the annual budget **• Support and participation in meetings** - o Planning and organisation of meetings, preparation of the agenda - o Participation in meetings - o Preparation of the meeting minutes and list of actions **• Communication** - o EU CCH basic communication (website, newsletters, etc.) **• IT maintenance** - o Technical maintenance of the EU CCH website, email addresses, online members area - o Corrective maintenance

Other services

Deliverable 3.3 also included other services that would be prioritized and offered depending on the financial scenario.

Table 6 Complementary potential services of the EU CCH

#	Sub-service title & function	Key success factors (partners, resources, funding)	Key Activities	Rate implementation difficulty
4	**EU Support toolkit** The policy toolkit is a central tool for delivering guidelines and information directed at Program owners	• Policy toolkit used by platform members • Policy toolkit disseminated outside the platform	• Provide basic guidelines & information on all programmes related to CE • Incorporation of SRIA (Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda) elements	3 • Cost: no cost unless there is some development envisaged • Important human effort to deliver the toolkit (4) • Low PO contribution required (2)

#	Sub-service title & function	Key success factors (partners, resources, funding)	Key Activities	Rate implementation difficulty
5	**Training courses** This service refers to the production and upload of courses on an online platform managed (or not) by EU CCH This service would enable to share mutually the expertise capitalised within EU CCH members (POs & Governing institutions) to reinforce individual, intra organizational capacities, in order to integrate CE in a systemic approach for example.	• Critical mass of courses online • High quality & comprehensive courses • High outreach • Partnerships with certified MOOC platforms • Budget to cover costs • Mechanism to identify skills development needs (how can you know which skills are needed?)	• Definition of the scope of the courses • Identification of the teachers • Standardising the format of the courses • Benchmark of existing courses on CE	4 • Average cost to put the courses online but probably using the platform of a member to do it (3) • Human effort significant to create, record, format and upload the courses (5) • Important PO contribution to create the course (4)
6	**Workshops** Workshop should include all what is needed to establish a knowledge base for SRIA implementation, joint programming, understanding of CE etc. EU CCH members as well as stakeholders. The focus will be put on interorganisational capacities.	• High quality & comprehensive workshops • Significant participation from trainees • Budget to cover training costs Identification and update of documents/ materials • Mechanism for supply of documents, materials, projects, cases, etc • Well organised repository to store the materials and enable their search (database+ search engine) • Mechanism to identify training needs to update the	• Identification of the teachers • Definition of the scope of the workshops • Benchmark of existing trainings • Administration of documents etc	4 • Eventual travel costs required for teachers but apart from that, no significant cost (3) • Human effort important to prepare the content of the training and participate in the training + Administration and updates costs (5) PO contribution required to provide trainings (5)

#	Sub-service title & function	Key success factors (partners, resources, funding)	Key Activities	Rate implementation difficulty
		training offer/programme		
7	**Database of CE experts** This service refers to the creation of database of CE experts. This will support Joint Programming, as it is usually difficult to find evaluators.	• PO involvement • Collaboration with technical platforms on CE	• Identify experts in CE • Store their contacts in a secured & GDPR compliant database • Update regularly the database	2 • Cost to develop the database of experts (3) • Low human effort to update the page (2) PO contribution required to identify the contacts (2)
8	**Online CE repository** This service refers to the creation of an online private website to store all CE-related deliverables, reports, data, etc. and accessible to all EU CCH members. This service should be restricted to EU CCH members. This service would enable EU CCH community to share and benefit from existing reports in one location	• Get access to a critical mass of relevant reports / deliverables • Report database used by the EU CCH members • Develop a user-friendly platform	• Create an online repository accessible for all EU CCH members • Recover & upload reports on the database • Manage access rights when relevant	4 • Cost to develop the platform (4) • Human effort to centralize all reports, negotiate access rights, upload on the platform (5) PO contributions may be required to negotiate access to reports/data (3)
9	**Issuing Position papers** This service refers to the publication of position papers on given topics related to circular economy funding, research and innovation, legislation development and implementation, etc. This service aims at addressing policymakers (at national and EU-level) by means of a formal document	• Clear and well-written papers • Position papers published at the strategic moment (before the issuance of work-programmes or framework programmes) • Reflect a diversity of stakeholders' opinions and cross-sectoral approach	• Appoint drafting team • Coordination of stakeholder engagement to co-create the drafting process • Write position and research papers • Associate many of EU CCH's members • Get signatures on the letter/memorandums	3 • No non-human cost (1) • Important human effort to draft position papers but position papers are not so frequent per year (5) Relative amount of PO contribution needed to get

#	Sub-service title & function	Key success factors (partners, resources, funding)	Key Activities	Rate implementation difficulty
		• Several media outlets talking about the paper • Paper quoted in EU legislation or texts		signatures and to draft (3)

V. Activation plan

This section presents a two-stage activation plan for the operation of the EU CCH and the related services by focusing on the co-design of joint programming processes as the backbone for orchestrating the overall activities. The EU CCH platform logic will be oriented to activate different functional processes in the first stage that will support the co-creation capacity to drive joint programming processes in a transition period where strategic decisions and resource allocation (i.e., multilevel funding for R&I Joint Programmes) still need to take place. In this context, this plan suggests addressing the first two years of the EU CCH by following the logic of a lab as a flexible platform that enables new practices, processes, and relations to introduce change at community levels [1] to foster the specific collaboration of space on joint programming processes.

Table 7 presents 4 functional processes key in the first stage of the platform: 1) Community management, 2) Co-design of joint programmes, 3) Participatory capacity development and 4) Learning and insights. These processes are inspired by the must-have services suggested in DEL 3.3 by looking at the activation of the fundamental processes to support POs to engage in joint programming. These processes will be implemented by combining in-kind contribution from European POs and the support from different governance structures. Overhead costs and other variable costs for the overall functioning of the platform are yet to be budgeted. The process for the co-design of Joint programmes is suggested as the backbone of the proposal by integrating inputs and assets from different services.

Table 7 Four Functional processes and relations with platform services (Scenario 2)

	Functional process	Description	Relation with Services (Scenario 2)
1	**Community management**	Set working groups and manage relation among platform	▪ Governance: Management and Governing Boards, Working groups ▪ Services: joint funding, and management support
2	*Co-design of Joint programming processes*	Technical assistance and mentoring on co-design processes – *prototyping new pilots -*	▪ Governance: Management and Governing Boards, Working Groups, Advisory Board and Knowledge Partners ▪ Services: common R&I programming, joint funding, and management support
3	**Participatory capacity development**	Training and demand-led workshops	▪ Governance: Working Groups and Management Board ▪ Services: management support, toolkit, training, and workshops.
4	**Learning & insights**	Initial Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning component integrating knowledge management, communication and SRIA update	▪ Governance: Management Board, Knowledge Partners, SRIA High-Level Technical Body ▪ Services: management, toolkit, repository and expert database, position papers, SRIA update

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[1] Change Lab approach based on Transitions Hub policy lab experience and broad frameworks on design of platform for policy (Bason, 2016)

This proposal combines the recommendations from the <u>Guidance for Programme Owners to use the SRIA</u> included in DEL 2.2. It thus suggests two main pathways for using the SRIA: 1) <u>Co-implementation of joint programmes</u> where the SRIA serves as a framework for cooperation by matching different POs, their needs, and experiences with different types of cooperation and 2) <u>Use of the SRIA frame for future joint programming</u> for which cross-cutting and transdisciplinary aspects can facilitate bringing a systemic approach by considering evolving priorities, targets, and strategies. The combination of both pathways of use of the SRIA take the form of a simulation process for co-design and prototyping by taking as starting point two thematic areas - out of for four pilots suggested by the SRIA[2] - selected by members of the CICERONE consortium: Circular Cities and Closing the Loop.

The EU CCH platform thus brings together a set of technical assistance/cooperation services for supporting the co-design of actions (i.e., joint programming), calls for proposals and any other related R&I actions. In this context, the community management and the working groups have an instrumental role as they facilitate the design and implementation of all activities by bringing together the knowledge and relational resources (network) of the PO community.

Co-designing joint programming processes

The EU CCH aims to support European programme owners to face the challenge of joint programming for R&I action on circular economy as part of an evolving multilevel policy context where resource allocation and decision needs to be taken at different levels. In the context of a new EU policy framework, the EU CCH proposes to launch a set of functional processes for supporting POs to engage in the co-design and implementation of joint programmes.

During the initial stages, co-design and prototyping processes need to happen while cross-functional teams are created to follow a common approach before jumping into the implementation of joint programmes that still need to be designed. The co-design process also works as a simulation and preparation process for the POs to get equipped with the knowledge, cross-level and cross-regional relations, and preliminary frameworks for the moment when funding allocation and political decisions - that still needs to take place at the national and regional level - start activating R&I circular economy policies and programmes such as the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative. In this context, the SRIA plays a fundamental role by providing cross-cutting and transdisciplinary aspects as part of a systemic approach.

The co-design process thus enables setting up the context for joint programming while nurturing the environment in which programme owners operate in terms of fundamental knowledge and relations before moving forward to implementation. It follows the lessons learnt from the elaboration of the capacity building strategic agenda (DEL 3.3.2) by introducing an iterative process in terms of the continuous cycle of learning and adaptation or "knowing cycle" (Choo, 1998) which integrates three strategic information processes: sensemaking, knowledge creation and decision making (see Figure 6).

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[2] the SRIA guidance propose for thematic pilots: 1) Circular Cities, 2) Circular Industries, 3) Closing the Loop and 4) Resource Efficiency on Territory and sea

Sensemaking. A series of co-design conversations are proposed with a cross-functional team of experts and POs to work towards two directions. On the one side, the sensemaking sessions will facilitate the use of the SRIA to identify common elements amongst different POs experience, needs and ambition with the purpose of setting the working groups and, by doing so, identifying thematic priorities, and developing a shared meaning on the challenge for joint programming driven by key EU policy frameworks such as Smart Specialization and broad approaches as systemic innovation. Additionally, the sessions will bring the results of the consultation mechanisms with multiple stakeholders as key inputs for the systemic design of any stage of joint programming process. On the other side, sensemaking facilitates the process for endogenous knowledge co-creation around co-design processes as well as the related decision-making processes on collaboration for joint programming including joint funding as part of the broad EU multilevel framework.

Knowledge creation. The co-design process requires the combination of different knowledge and the development of new capacities to cover different aspects of the policy process[3]. More specifically, it focuses on prototyping as an important aspect of co-design which operates as a quick, low-cost mechanism to test an idea (or aspect of it) by creating an early sample or model and enabling rapid feedback on it. That immediate feedback from existing or potential use allows to refine or discard the idea as part of a dynamic portfolio of policy instruments envisioned for implementation. The policy co-design component of the participatory process enables the co-development of community collective narratives which will be integrated as part of a broad set of narratives anchored under regional strategies such as Smart Specialization or mission-oriented programmes. By doing so, the policy co-design process helps to build up complementary competences for POs by consolidating the acquisition of new knowledge and competences from a learning by doing perspective.

Supporting decision-making. To facilitate the process of assimilation and consolidation of inputs and the knowledge produced by the working groups. The identified synergies and the series of prototypes are analysed and reviewed to facilitate the decision-making process on potential collaboration actions suggested by the SRIA: 1) Developing new subprogrammes and activities, 2) Developing new joint programmes using the pre-identified areas and 3) Identifying new themes, challenges and priority research and innovation areas. To do so, a narrative will be developed by bringing together knowledge generated with the support of technical assistance services - as part of the pilot programmes- and expert advice from the SRIA review forum and a High-Level Technical Body (DEL 3.2) as part of a cooperation setting implemented through the working groups. This narrative aims to facilitate the dialogue by bringing more operational aspects related to financial schemes by anchoring those opportunities in the multi-level EU policy framework.

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[3] A list of cross-cutting areas has been already identified in the institutional capacity building agenda with the purpose to address a capacity development process in terms of the different phases of the policy process.

Figure 6 Knowing Cycle around Co-design of joint programming processes
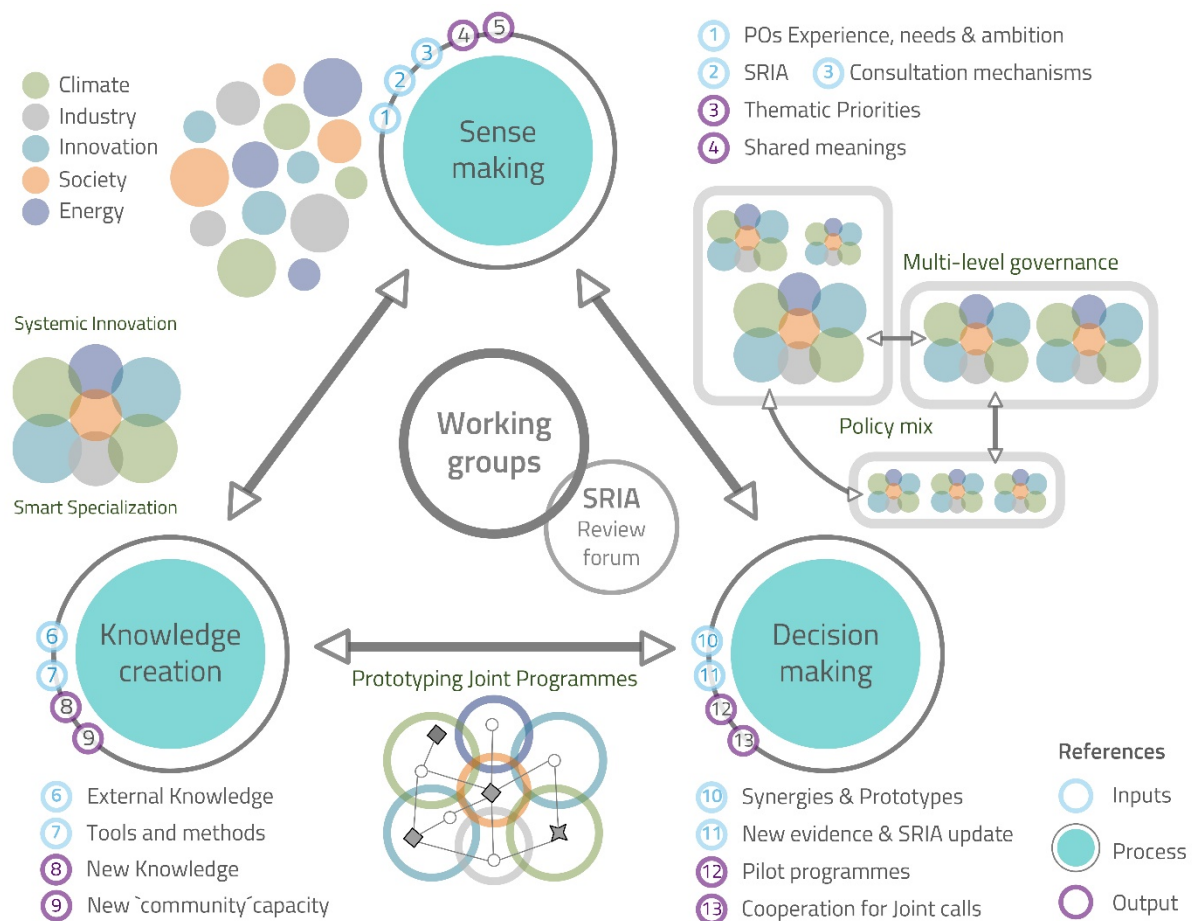
The iterative process described above can be implemented through the relation between inputs and outputs as part of each learning cycle. In the context of the EU CCH, this represents an early stage of the formation of a community of practice and the emergence of new activities as part of a two-year workplan.

As a result, preliminary working groups will be related to the activation of the process for co-design of joint programming processes by engaging POs in the understanding of how programme owners can use the SRIA, the need for cross-functional teams, and the design of the architecture for Joint Programming call as a preliminary stage that allows POs to prepared for the moment when funding allocation and political decisions (that still needs to take place at the national and regional level) will activate central policies on R&I. The first working groups will then help setting up the context for JP on R&I in CE and nurture the environment in terms of fundamental knowledge and relations before starting to implement joint programmes.

In next stages, additional working groups will be introduced related to <u>funding and JP collaboration</u> as part of an evolved context where the maturity of the platform and the relations between POs as well as the better understanding on availability of resources can allow that type of group. These new working groups will engage in other activities including 1) assessing and reviewing the implementation plans of national research programmes in circular economy, 2) assessing and creating evaluation procedures and facilitating independent assessments of the EU CCH joint calls, supervising consortia to launch transnational (or national) supporting instruments, 3) aligning joint-programming activities

with initiatives at the national and transnational level, 4) assessing joint initiatives and joint calls, 5) creating communication strategies and structures for disseminating results of EU CCH joint-programming activities as well as 6) playing a bridging role with the SRIA Review Forum on monitoring, evaluation and learning activities which will finally contribute with inputs for the SRIA update.

A staged process

The two-year implementation plan consists of two main stages with a focus on co-designing pilot joint programmes as a backbone functional process. Figure 7 presents the two stages for the first two years of the EU CCH (2021-2022) through a sequential logic for activating the different functional processes. The workplan is organised in four functional "areas" by following the logic of the services provided by the EU CCH: 1) Platform operation, 2) Joint programming, 3) Capacity development and 4) Knowledge and learning. With this overall frame, the functional processes presented in the last section are introduced in two stages.

Figure 7 Two stages & four functional areas. Work plan for first two years of EU CCH
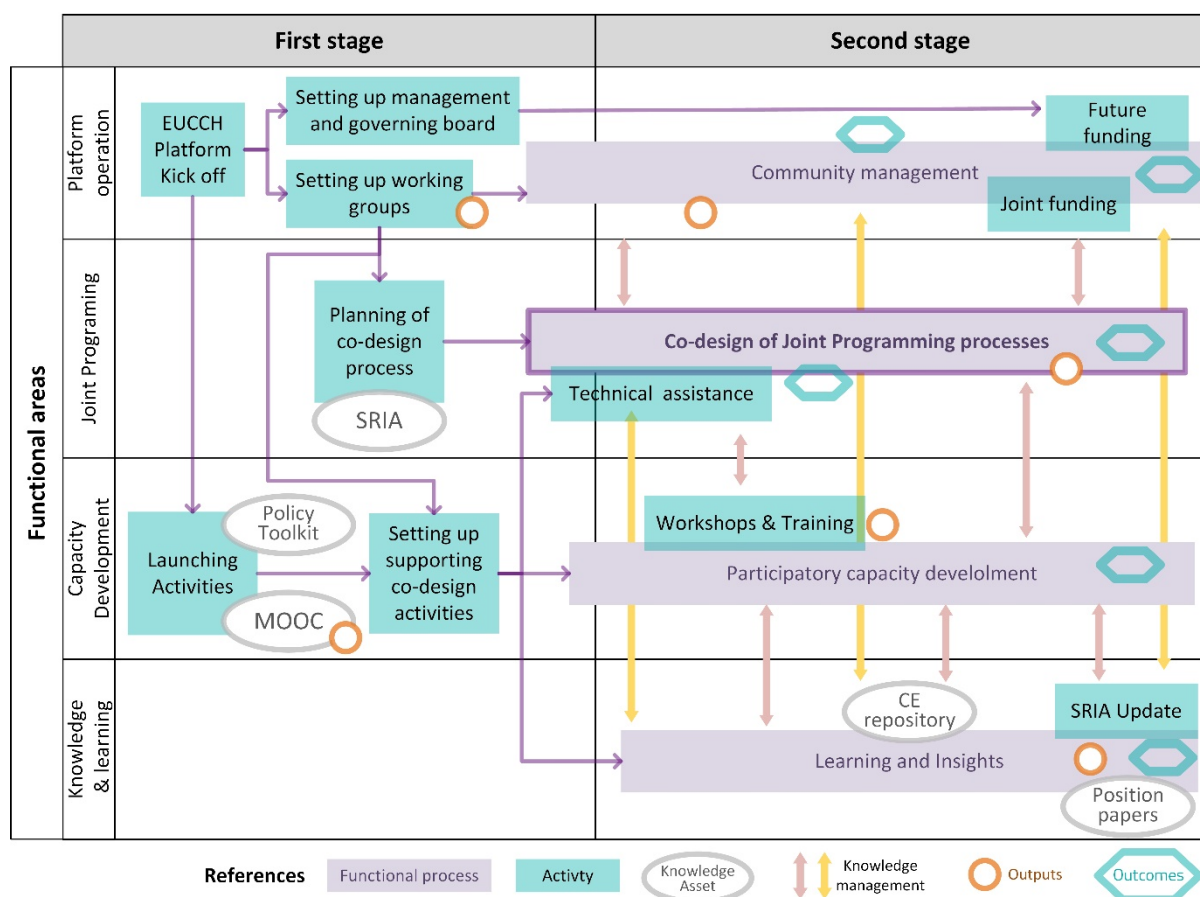
First stage. Kick-off of the platform. The main goal of this stage is to set the conditions for the operationalization process of the EU CCH platform by introducing fundamental elements for the design and implementation of cross-cutting R&I programmes. For doing so, the activities will focus on

the POs at organisational level first regarding the overall platform operation and individual level next by putting emphasis on the collaboration arrangements as part of the working groups. By following the overall logic of the services suggested for the EU CCH platform, three main functional areas are considered for this stage:

- o Platform operation: 1) Setting up management and governing board and 2) Setting up the working groups.
- o Joint Programming: Planning the pilot programmes.
- o Capacity development: 1) Launching capacity development activities (i.e., the MOOC and the dissemination of the policy toolkit) and 4) setting up co-design activities.

Main **outputs** in this stage are related to the setup of working works and the initial number of POs engaged in the EU CCH activities.

Second stage. Co-design, learning and community engagement activities. These activities aim to support the pilot programmes by combining capacity development actions with technical assistance and knowledge management. The co-design of pilot programmes will work as a backbone functional process that integrates inputs from other processes where POs at individual and organizational level take part of a collaborative setting. The following four functional areas will be operational at this stage:

- o Platform operation: The Community management functional process will be activated by leveraging the relations developed throughout the CICERONE project and highlighting the expertise and knowledge of the variety of organisations in the consortium (RTOS, Programme Owners, consultancies, policy think tanks and intermediary bodies – See Section III). The process will facilitate the design and operation of working groups and will enable discussions on future funding and joint funding opportunities.
    - – Related outputs: POs engagement

- o Joint Programming: The main functional process "Co-design of joint programmes" will be activated through technical assistance as a tailor- made service driven by the two selected pilot initiatives: Circular Cities and Closing the Loop.
    - – Related outputs Number of Prototyped Joint Programming processes

- o Capacity development: A participatory approach will be activated for the design of tailor- made workshops and training activities by following the guidelines of the cross-cutting areas identified in the capacity building strategic agenda (DEL 3.3.2)
    - – Related outputs: Number of MOOC participants and POs trained through tailored workshops and trainings.

- o Knowledge and learning: Knowledge management services will be activated through the functional process "Learning and Insights" lessons learnt will be reshaped into actionable and practitioner-oriented knowledge to be integrated into the CE repository, while contributing to the process for the SRIA update and providing critical evidence for the development of position papers.

– Related outputs: Key messages developed and transferred to multiples levels and sectors, number of publications (Positions papers) and events.

Community building through learning by doing

The participatory process for policy co-design follows systemic design principles by starting from the co-design of an action or pledge and then moving to an organisational transformation (strategy) and social transformation (social system, policy making, etc). We propose to facilitate the replication through a community of practice under a peer-to-peer mechanism while also combining knowledge exchange through consultation mechanism with multiple stakeholders. Tools and methods used in the co-design process are based on a science-practice interface and adapted for POs' needs. Mentoring and practice-based policy models are introduced to enable rapid experiments as well as capacity building through learning by doing. Emphasis is put in fostering dynamic conversations coming from a cross-functional team integrated by POs, Innovation and knowledge managers, academics as well as business and experts.

Capacity development elements are introduced as a set of coordinated activities by enabling a more progressive and horizontal process where individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen, and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time. In doing so, learning goals are defined as an evolving learning process:

- Build transfer(procedural) skills/capacity building, for example system mapping.
- Build transfer (problem-solving) technical assistance, for example policy co-design.
- Inform & motivate (case based) awareness, in terms of lessons learnt and exchange.

The learning process includes a structural component of technical assistance where specific elements on knowledge and innovation management facilitate the understanding of innovation systems and, by doing so, guide communities to create their own linkages with the broad system (including with the policy landscape) and co-produce new required knowledge while "recycling what is already known".

The community building process is based on the interrelation of learning and commitment to action by which the actions co-designed should be tested in practice as part of an iterative process, repeated several times and leading to the creation of robust proposals for implementation. Resources should be allocated to settle a collaborative arena guided by the cross-cutting areas introduced in the Institutional capacity building strategic agenda.

Monitoring, evaluation, and learning: the MEL framework

The EU CCH is aimed to enable a space for design and implementation of cross-cutting R&I policies and programmes on circular economy as part of a common collaboration setting. The activation plan relates to <u>functional processes</u> for the development of new capacities, practices and methods that enable innovation in joint programming. These processes have been presented in Section V and they are presented in the following chart as outcomes that facilitate a better understanding of the logic

change between inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes as part as a preliminary approach to address monitoring, evaluation and learning activities.

Outcomes in this context are understood as mid-term results for specific beneficiaries that are the consequences of achieving specific outputs. The outcomes are an application of the transformative outcomes (Schot et al., 2019) developed by the Transformative Policy Consortium[4]. By using this approach, the monitoring, evaluation and learning approach of the EU CCH addresses fundamental elements for systemic innovation and pathways for the circular economy transition.

Figure 8 presents a simplified Theory of Change for the activation plan by including functional processes, main activities, the outputs proposed (based on targets included in Section II) and the outcomes expected as part of the implementation of the portfolio of activities. The co-design of the joint programming process works as a backbone of the overall activation plan while knowledge assets contribute to different stages of the activities and the outputs by following the systemic approach proposed by EU CCH.

An overall list of 10 outcomes is suggested for the activation plan where 5 of them are considered intermediate outcomes that enable initial change and transformation through the contextualisation of the new systemic perspective while anchoring fundamental ideas for the cooperation among POs on joint programming activities. Mid-term outcomes indicate the consolidation of new practices and the mobilizations of resources to explore opportunities for the cooperation among POs and for the overall future of the EUCCH platform. The outcomes are briefly described below.

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[4] Transformative outcomes are adapted for monitoring and learning purpose as part of the current collaboration of EIT Climate KIC on the project Building a Methodology and Community of Practice for Catalyzing Transformative Change through System Innovation (MOTION 2019-2021).

Figure 8 logic model for a simplified Theory of Change for the EU CCH Activation Plan
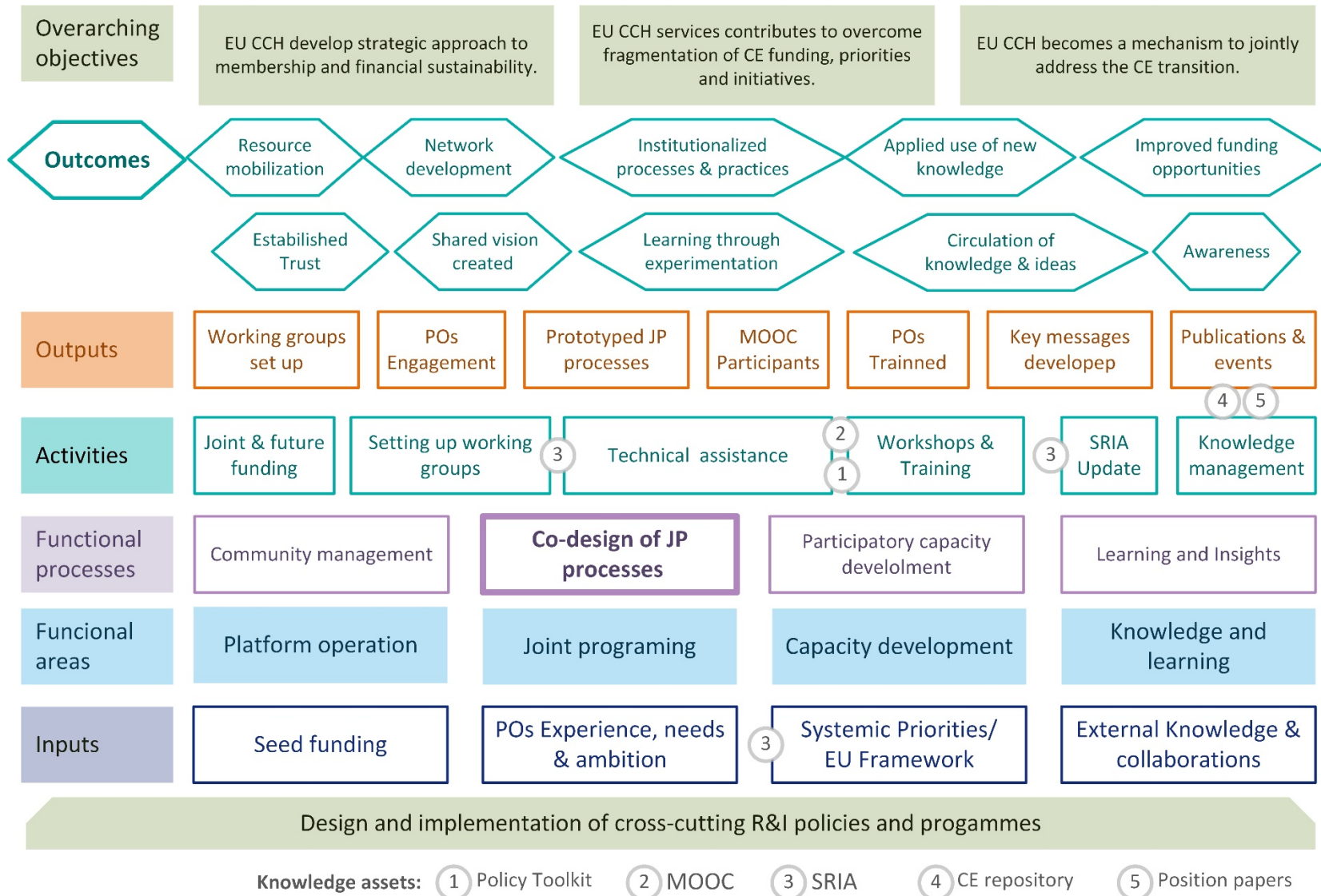
Intermediate outcomes

1. **Establish trust** by increasing mutual understanding of needs as pre-condition for cooperation and engagement in Joint Programming.
2. **Create shared vision** among POs and the broad community of stakeholders on the potential of introducing crosscutting and systemic R&I policies and programmes.
3. Sustain **circulation of knowledge & ideas** between similar experiments and actions while enabling feedback and knowledge transfer with other networks/initiatives such as ECESP and the future set of Pilots for Circular Economy Action Plans.
4. Increase **learning though experimentation** as part of the reflexive exercise of alternative mechanisms for Joint programming while setting experimental spaces as enabling condition for joint programming.
5. Increase **awareness** of the need and the potential for applying a systems innovation approach to address the circular economy transition.

Mid-term outcomes

6. Enable **resource mobilisation** including funding, knowledge, and human resources from a multi-level perspective.
7. Foster **network development** by sustaining the collaboration through working groups and with external factors including relevant EU level organisations while creating a broader network of specialised actors involved in transformative policy processes.
8. Orchestrate **institutionalized processes & practices** as common approaches to design and implement cross-cutting R&I policies and programmes.
9. Increase **applied use of new knowledge** as part of POs efforts to the place-based and cross-regional portfolio of actions and develop regional ownership of practical use of EU CCH services in Joint programming calls for actions.
10. **Improve funding opportunities** by reaching out to other forms of collaboration for research and funding in the environmental area and, thereby, increasing levels of cooperation and collaboration while influencing and enabling alignment with EU policy frameworks.

The logic model is aimed to facilitate the pathways for transformation during the first two years of the EU CCH as part of the activation plan. The further review of the proposed targets and objectives together with Insights and lesson learnt harvested from the implementation of the different functional processes and the internal development of the working groups as well as the process for the SRIA update will be used to develop an updated version at the end of the second stage of the activation plan.

VI.   Next steps and further collaborations

The proposed consortium for the implementation of the Hub includes a mix of actors including RTOS, Programme Owners, consultancies, policy think tanks and intermediary bodies. In order to ensure continuity between the build-up of the Hub and its operational implementation, we propose an initial consortium coordinated by EIT Climate-KIC and including partners from the CICERONE project, as well as PO stakeholders involved throughout the project, to ensure knowledge transfer. Collaboration with other platforms such as the European financial platform and the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform are yet to be defined.

Potential next steps are:

- Official launch of the policy toolkit and roadmap in 2021.
- Kick-off of the EU CCH platform by the end of 2021.
- Official launch of the MOOC by the end of 2021.
- Set up a Governing Board and Management Board by the beginning of 2022.
- First meeting of the biennial meetings of the Governing Board in 2022.