Dear Madam, Sir,

I am writing to inform you of the activities that I have developed in my role as Circular Economy Rapporteur for the standing committee on Infrastructure and the Environment in the Dutch House of Representatives. I began my work two years ago, in the run-up to the publication of the circular economy package *Closing the Loop* on 2 December 2015. The objective of the mandate conferred on me by this committee was to increase the amount of information available to the House of Representatives regarding this dossier. In this regard, I have consulted with Dutch and international experts and stakeholders, with the European Commission and with spokespersons for the European Parliament.

During my time as Rapporteur, I have witnessed many positive developments. In the Netherlands, an integral, cross-ministry programme directorate has been established. During the Dutch Presidency of the European Union, the circular economy was prioritised in the Council. The subject was also brought up for discussion during the interparliamentary conference on energy in The Hague.

As a follow-up to the circular economy action plan, the European Commission has introduced several new proposals, with a few also planned for 2017. I was also pleased to see that a ‘cross-silo’ approach is now also being adopted to this dossier within the European Commission.

Despite these positive developments, many challenges remain – primarily with regard to regulations and financing (method of investment and granting credit; alternative value assessment). There are also still many differences within the European Union regarding the extent to which the fundamentals/points of departure of the circular economy are applied.

I am pleased to inform you of my findings regarding the circular economy

and would also like to share the below recommendations. Some of these recommendations are associated with the Netherlands, but may also be of interest to other member states.

**Recommendations regarding the circular economy**

**General recommendation:**

* An **integral approach** to the circular economy is essential. The circular economy cannot be handled as a separate environmental dossier, it also relates to the economy in general and employment. Food waste is another significant theme. A circular economy also has an unavoidable impact on financial instruments. Collaboration is therefore vital on all fronts and at all levels.

**Recommendations for the Netherlands (ministers and parliament) that could also be of interest to other member states and European institutions.**

* During the last year, an integral programme directorate was launched within the **Dutch government**. This does not alter the fact that more integral working methods can still also be introduced at a range of other levels: in this light, I recommend that committee debates on policy issues in the Dutch parliament are held with not only the minister responsible for the environmental portfolio, but also – dependent on the agenda – with the Ministers of Economic Affairs and Social Affairs and Employment, and potentially the Minister of Finance.
* The **parliament** itself can also adopt more integral working practices, for example, by ensuring greater links between spokespersons within parliamentary groups in the fields of Economic Affairs, the Environment, Social Affairs and Employment (and if required, also with Finance and Education).
* An integral discussion of the circular economy with the inclusion of ministers from other fields is also important in order to ensure effective feedback regarding the developments in Brussels with regard to **funds and financing/innovation**. EU funding for companies now receives plenty of attention, but the question is whether access for small and medium-sized enterprises is sufficient. I recommend that the State Secretary for the Environment and the Minister of Economic Affairs continue to advocate this subject in Brussels, keep track of developments at a European level, and regularly report back to the Dutch parliamentary committees on Economic Affairs and Infrastructure and the Environment.
* In light of the impact that this circular economy has on the means of **investment and granting credit** (or: the need to gear this to a circular economy), it could be useful to invite several financial institutions – such as PGGM, Rabobank and/or the European Investment Bank – to a technical briefing, perhaps together with the Dutch parliamentary committees on Economic Affairs and Finance.

**Recommendation to the European Commission**

* I recommend that the European Commission overcomes its hesitations with regard to the Eco-design expansion, and proceeds to determine requirements for new product groups relating to resource efficiency, reparability and sustainability. After all, a good design is more than half of the battle.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of the Standing Committee on Infrastructure and the Environment,

Yasemin Cegerek

Circular Economy Rapporteur (until 15 March 2017)\*

Member of the House of Representatives of the States General (idem)

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\*as per 15th march Ms Cegerek has left the parliament. The committee on Infrastructure and the Environment has not yet appointed a new rapporteur. For further questions or information you may contact [cie.im@tweedekamer.nl](mailto:cie.im@tweedekamer.nl)