



PRESS RELEASE

ACEA PRESENTS NEW SUSTAINABILITY MODELS AT ECOMONDO: FROM ON-SITE MINI COMPOST PLANTS TO THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

In its 2019-2022 Sustainability Plan ACEA has included investments for 1.7 billion in the Energy, Water and Environment sector, as well as in circular economy

Rome, 4 November 2019 - At the 23rd edition of Ecomondo, the largest *green* and *circular economy* exhibition in the Euro-Mediterranean area, which opens tomorrow in Rimini, ACEA will present its plans for a more sustainable country. This edition's focus will be on *waste management*, including the **SmartComp** and **Sludge Mining** projects and the sustainable management of water resources, of which the **Water Houses** are a perfect example. The common denominator of these proposals is a model based on circular economy and sustainability. In its **2019-2022 Sustainability Plan ACEA has included investments for 1.7 billion euros**. This will be one of the topics the President of ACEA **Michaela Castelli** will talk about in the International Plenary Session of the States General of the Green Economy, "Governments and Businesses for Climate and a Green New Deal", scheduled for 6 November.

SmartComp: on-site composting

With the aim of developing and popularizing composting, **SmartComp** is a project in collaboration with ENEA and the University of Tuscia, dedicated to high volume business users (shopping centers, canteens, airports, train stations), who have to manage great quantities of organic waste. Thanks to mini composting plants, provided by ACEA and equipped with revolutionary sensor technology, businesses will be able to transform their organic waste in **compost** using an aerobic process that produces ready-to-use **quality fertilizers** in approximately 90 days. **ACEA's objective is to install 250 SmartComp plants by 2022 to create a diffused system with a 25,000 ton capacity per year** – the equivalent of a plant that manages organic waste produced by a town with 250,000 people – saving 30% on management costs and cutting sensibly gas emissions by avoiding waste transport by road. With this project ACEA places itself on the forefront of the **waste transition**, a new diffused and participated waste management model.

Fertilizers and biofuels from sewage sludge: 7.4 million for the research project

"**Sludge Mining**" (i.e. sludge extraction) is a research and development project – aimed at building an **innovative treatment plant** in Chiusi, in the province of Siena – for which the Company has planned to invest 7.4 million euros, supported by the Ministry of Economic Development and Regione Toscana, whose contribution will be approximately 2.3 million euros. The research project has the objective of developing a stable laboratory for products recovered from the carbonization processes for the production of biopolymers, biomethane and the extraction of phosphorus from sludge, as well as the creation of a hydroponic greenhouse. Participants in the project include Ingelia and the Universities of Florence, Pisa, Siena, Parma and the Polytechnic University of Milan. The new hydrothermal carbonization (HTC) technology patented by Ingelia is at the base of the project. ACEA has already triggered the authorization process with Regione Toscana to build a plant to treat sewage sludge with a 80,000 ton

capacity per year, in Chieti (Siena). It will be the first plant in Italy and the largest in Europe, much larger than the plants in Spain, Belgium and the United Kingdom. The hydrothermal carbonization process, which takes place in closed reactors, and the use of innovative technologies will guarantee zero odors and emissions. The plant will produce approximately **8,000 tons of biolignite per year**. This organic and renewable fuel with a reduced sulfur content allows to avoid 16,280 tons CO2 emissions per year and could provide sustainable heating to 4,000 families. The plant will also produce approximately **6,000 tons of organic fertilizer per year**, an amount that can fertilize 20,000 hectares of land, equivalent to approximately 25,000 football pitches. At this plant and the plant in Monterotondo Marittimo, in the province of Grosseto, with a capacity of 25,000 tons per year, ACEA will process a total of 105,000 tons of sludge, almost equivalent to the entire amount produced by Tuscany.

Aires contract presentation

Wednesday 6 November at 15:00 h, the President of ACEA Ambiente **Giovanni Vivarelli** together with other colleagues will present the **AIRES** network contract, with which the multiutility provider joins a network of companies, institutions and tech consortia involved in the development of circular economy and environmental sustainability.

Sustainable Management of Water Resources: Water Houses

The leading water management service provider in Italy, with approximately 9 million customers, ACEA has always considered the protection of water resources a priority and has implemented strategies aimed at addressing critical issues caused by climate change. At its stand at this edition of Ecomondo, ACEA presents *educational* material on the sustainable management of water resources addressed to students, focusing in particular on the water cycle and saving water and the **Water Houses** installed across its territories are a perfect example. Located across Lazio, Tuscany, Umbria and Campania, the 549 ACEA Water Houses have provided over 696 million liters of water – based on ACEA data – equivalent to approximately 300 Olympic-size swimming pools. First launched in Rome and then rolled out to the other territories in which ACEA operates, Water Houses have allowed to **reduce the use of 1.5-liter plastic bottles by 464 million** and **contributed to avoiding 135,594 tons of CO2 emissions, equivalent to the amount produced by a town of 22,500 people** (data includes both the production of bottles and their transport by road).

Ecomondo Stand Activities

At this edition of Ecomondo, ACEA has a 200 sqm stand in Pavillon D3, where it has set up a media lounge that will host meetings and interviews on issues and projects linked to *circular* and *green economy*. Visitors will be able to take part in multiple activities, including *social activation*, focusing on the importance of reusing, to give a second life to objects with creative restyling. **Marco Bianchi**, *food mentor* and science popularizer, will provide kitchen sustainability advice; **Lisa Casali**, environment scientist and the first woman to be in charge of the Italian Environmental Pool, will explain how to help improve the quality of the environment in everyday life, recycling and reducing the use of plastic.

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