

SUSTRACK's Journey Reaches Its Destination: Paving the Way for Europe's Circular Bio-based Future

Rome, 23/10/2025 - After three years of research, collaboration, and stakeholder engagement, the [SUSTRACK project](#) – funded by the European Commission under Horizon Europe and coordinated by [UnitelmaSapienza University of Rome](#) – concludes its mission to identify barriers, design tools, and guide policy for Europe's transition toward a circular bio-based economy (CBBE).

Throughout its lifetime, SUSTRACK has brought together more than **700 stakeholders**, organised over **15 events** and **5 capacity-building activities**, and collected insights through **three surveys** focusing on four high-impact sectors: **chemical, construction, plastics, and textiles**. *“Our ambition was not only to analyse the transition but to design pathways that make it achievable,”* says **Prof. Piergiuseppe Morone**, SUSTRACK project coordinator. *“By combining evidence-based analysis, modelling, and policy dialogue, we have developed actionable tools and knowledge that can support the next generation of sustainable policies.”*

Among SUSTRACK's major outcomes is the **mapping of the most critical barriers** hindering the transition to a circular bio-based economy – barriers that must be addressed through targeted and enabling policy action. A central achievement of the project is the [SUSTRACK Monitoring Tool](#), an interactive online platform that enables benchmarking across EU countries in three critical areas: **environmental performance, economic competitiveness and jobs, and sustainable resource use**. The tool allows cross-country comparisons, supports **policy targeting**, and maps contributions to the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** – providing a valuable instrument for **EU and national policymakers**.

In parallel, SUSTRACK employed the **Green Economy Model (GEM)** to simulate two long-term transition scenarios – *BioTransition* and *BioRevolution* – each representing different levels of policy ambition. The simulations captured the **economic, environmental, and social impacts** of the circular bio-based transition, revealing that **bio-based products generate higher value addition and fewer negative externalities**, provided that land use and environmental safeguards are properly balanced. Beyond SUSTRACK, the GEM stands as a **systems-based decision-support tool**, helping policymakers and planners design strategies that are both effective and resilient for long-term sustainability.

11 case studies conducted across Europe supported the development and validation of these key outputs, while also helping to identify **policy priorities and recommendations**. Building on this evidence, the project designed **sectoral policy roadmaps** and **tailored policy pathways** for the sectors of interest.

These roadmaps highlight the need to **combine regulatory clarity with innovation support, use market-based tools** to prevent rebound effects, and **reinvest revenues** to strengthen business and consumer acceptance of the circular bio-based transition.

All findings and tools have been summarised in [comprehensive toolkit](#), available on the project website. This resource offers a clear and accessible entry point to explore SUSTRACK's results, tools, scenarios, and policy recommendations.

“The knowledge and tools developed by SUSTRACK are meant to live beyond the project,” concludes **Gülşah Yılan**, SUSTRACK project manager. *“They provide policymakers, industry, and researchers with a solid foundation to accelerate Europe's sustainable transition.”*