

## **THIRD CIRCULAR CHANGE CONFERENCE** **11<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2018, MARIBOR**

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*it is a pleasure to participate again in Maribor in the Circular Change Conference.*

*A circular economy encourages sustainability and competitiveness by minimising the waste and resource use and by maintaining the materials and products value for as long as possible. The European Commission is supporting the EU's transition to a circular economy with the EU Circular Economy Package and its Action plan, setting common EU targets for recycling, waste collection and re-use of materials by 2030, and giving economic incentives for greener productions.*

*In this context, I would like to draw your kind attention to the fact that in the last ten years in Italy the separate urban waste collection has doubled from 28.5% in 2006 to 52.5% in 2016 reaching in total almost 16 million tonnes (261 kg/person per year) and reaching above average results in North Italy (64.2%). The separate collection service is activated in 97.7% of Italian municipalities and the population served reaches 99.5%.*

*Italy is one of the leading waste recycling countries in the world and the first in Europe. Based on Eurostat data, Italy recycles 76.9% of its waste, more than France 54%, Germany 43%, UK 44% and almost twice above the European average 37%. Italy recycles mostly traditional recyclables (paper, plastic, glass, metals, wood, textiles): 26 million tons, followed by mixed waste sent for selection (14 million), organic and green waste (6 million) and chemical waste (1.7 million).*

*The annual report of the Foundation for Sustainable Development and by the association representing waste recovery companies (FISE Unire - "Italia del Riciclo 2017") shows that the waste management companies in Italy are over 6.000, with over 107,000 employed. The Italian recycling industry total turnover reaches EUR 23 billion a year, 1% of GDP. In 2016, recycling has increased in all sectors, in particular aluminium, steel and wood. The packaging recycling arrived at 67%, the organic waste recycling at 41.2%.*

*Specific fairs and exhibition are devoted to sustainability, ecology and material reuse. Relevant technologies, best practices and main operators can be met at "Ecomondo" in Rimini (Emilia-Romagna, [www.ecomondo.com](http://www.ecomondo.com)), at the International Fair "Progetto Comfort" in Catania (Sicily, [www.progettocomfort.it](http://www.progettocomfort.it)) and at "BioEnergy and Watec Fair" in Cremona (Lombardia, [www.watecitaly.com](http://www.watecitaly.com)).*

*With the Italian Trade Agency, trade promotion section of the Italian Embassy in Ljubljana, we could not have missed the opportunity to support this two day initiative and are pleased to host Italian testimonials and participants such as Mr. Dario Sciunnach, Responsible for EIA, IPPC permitting and Major Accident Risk management at Region Lombardy as well as Interreg Europe project CircE on circular economy, and Rudi Bressa, freelance journalist and naturalist, who will follow the event for the online international magazine *Materia Rinnovabile-Renewable Matter*.*