

Regional Science Dialogues for Peace  
and Sustainable Development  
Terceira Island, Azores, Portugal & Virtual Event  
26-30 August 2024



## Special Session Proposal

### **The spatial, regional and urban dimensions of circular economy**

Sébastien Bourdin, Professor, Normandy Business School, France.

Email: [sbourdin@em-normandie.fr](mailto:sbourdin@em-normandie.fr)\* corresponding convener

André Torre, Professor, INRAE, University Paris-Saclay; President of ERSA, France.

#### **Abstract**

The modern era, marked by rapid urbanization and increasing environmental consciousness, provides a fertile ground to reimagine the paradigms of production, consumption, and disposal through the lens of spatial dynamics. As our societies grapple with the realities of finite resources and environmental degradation, the circular economy emerges as not just an alternative, but a necessity. This transition away from linear processes towards sustainable circular ones advocates for innovative product design, transformative energy solutions, strategic waste management, and the rethinking of labor value and taxation systems.

For such a profound systemic transition to take root, holistic collaboration is imperative. This means bridging the urban-rural divide, fostering public-private partnerships, and leveraging knowledge across regions and stakeholders. The promise of a circular economy is not just sustainability, but the vision of a regenerative economic ecosystem that actively revitalizes the resources it consumes, thereby nurturing sustainable growth and development.

As we navigate these challenges, the urban context emerges as both a focal point and a proving ground. With the majority of the global population now residing in cities, the onus of pioneering circular systems heavily rests upon urban planning and policies. These efforts must be comprehensive, breaking away from siloed, sector-specific approaches, to create harmonized strategies that maximize the potential of every territorial resource.

In this special session, we aim at understanding and identifying the spatial, urban, geographical, regional dimensions of circular economy. Our aim is to gather papers that are studying the circular economy in both urban and regional landscapes. This discourse will highlight the importance of a diverse, multi-scalar, and multi-dimensional approach to territories.

**Key questions to explore:**

Can the circular economy truly thrive without a hyper-localized foundation?

What multifaceted strategies can elevate the adoption of circular economy?

How might we develop nuanced metrics to capture the territorial implications of the circular economy, exploring methodologies from econometrics, social network analysis, and complexity theory?

In evaluating economic models, how do we construct a balanced assessment that effectively contrasts the tangible and intangible benefits of circular and linear paradigms?

How do we discern the spatial consequences of its varied facets, such as recycling, reuse, and shared functionality?