

On 1 June, the Commissioner met with the Executive Committee of the US Chamber of Commerce in Europe (AmCham EU). AmCham EU had requested the meeting to discuss and indicated that they would like to talk about the state of play and future plans for work on Circular Economy and the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability. This short report provides feedback from that meeting.

In opening the meeting AmCham CEO, Susan Danger introduced AmCham EU as representing 160 US companies operating in the EU that are strongly committed to a successful EU single market. She underlined 3 messages. US businesses are strongly committed to powering the recovery from covid and AmCham EU supports the EU recovery plan and the green transition. They would like to see a reboot of the transatlantic relationship that addresses some of the ongoing trade disputes and supports green tech. AmCham EU underlines the importance of global trade and multilateralism and understands the need to better explain its benefits to citizens.

The Commissioner expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to address US business and then made an opening intervention covering the latest developments under the European Green Deal and its role in the recovery (with a focus on Circular Economy/Chemicals).

In the question and answer session that followed a number of interventions were made by various participants. They consisted of explanations of the work carried out by the companies and questions which varied in their scope and technical content.

Many of the questions related to chemicals and in particular reopening of REACH and concerns about potential limitations on the use of PFAS (many arguing “essential use”). A representative of [REDACTED] gave a very specific question on F-gases and was asked to send it to us after the meeting as it was too technical for this kind of encounter.

Various positive examples from industry were given such as decarbonising chemical processes ([REDACTED]) or IT hardware take back and re-use ([REDACTED]). There were questions on how we intended to scale up the CEAP and one intervention [REDACTED] positive about the Global Alliance for Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency (GACERE).

In his responses the Commissioner underlined a number of points:

- We intend a surgical re-opening of REACH not a blanket exercise, we are looking to build on what has been achieved, filling gaps and not starting again from scratch.
- When chemical alternatives do not exist and essential use is proven then those substances can still be used but must be controlled.
- Businesses are CE pioneers who can show that innovations and changes can really work - he encouraged them to advertise these successes more.

- On the international front he said that GACERE would be complemented by the resumption of Circular Economy missions.
- He also highlighted a number of areas touched upon by the CEAP that had not been covered in the interventions of the participants (textiles, ICT, buildings).

In closing the meeting the AmCham CEO suggested further contacts (they put forward 6 monthly meetings) and offered:

- To support the Commission(er) at CoP 26
- To share further examples and success stories (they will send us a brochure on CE that they have produced).
- To help the Commissioner put out messages on policy developments using the AmCham EU platform.

They said that they would also forward the technical question that had been posed. The Commissioner asked that if future meetings take place then the specific questions should be sent in advance to ensure that a detailed answer can be prepared with the technical services.