

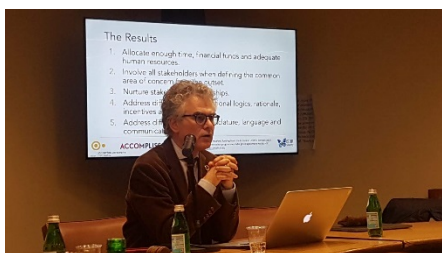
ISDRS Team visits USA April 2019 to deliver thought provoking discussions on the Circular Economy and the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Pauline Deutz and Peter Dobers

Representatives of ISDRS travelled to New York and Washington D.C. to be part of expert panels providing thought provoking discussions on how the Circular Economy might contribute to meeting the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The visit (31 March to 5 April) helped to establish connections with researchers and policy makers interested in the circular economy.



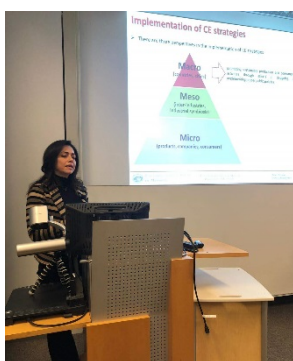
The team presented to a specially convened event at the United Nations, hosted and introduced by Ms. Wenyan Yang, Chief, Global Dialogue for Social Development Branch, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs Division for Inclusive Social Development (second from right in above picture). Prof Chris Dickey, Director of Global Health, NYU College of Global Public Health, also spoke (second from left in above picture). The focus of this session was on social aspects of circular economy research. Tomás Ramos (far left) presented work arising from Track 1c, Assessing Sustainability. He considered the significant role of indicators within the SGD process and the current research challenges around designing and implementing indicators.



A further example of a social focus was provided by Peter Dobers' (left) presentation of the EU H2020 '[Accomplishh](#)' project, which relates to topic group 9b (Scale of governance). However, social research is typically understated in ISDRS research compared to economic and environmental aspects of sustainability. This event, hosted by a specifically social branch of the UN, comprises a valuable opportunity to both take stock of what we do and consider how we might better engage with social researchers.



A second policy-focused event was held at EU Parliament Liaison Office in Washington DC (left). Here the team presented approaches to CE research including life cycle analysis, public sector/sustainability indicators, and geographic/social approaches. The audience comprised representatives of several member states' EU delegations. Prof Victoria Kiechel, architect in the American University Global Environmental Politics Programme, moderated the session. For this, ISDRS drew on the expertise in the EU H2020 '[Cresting](#)' project (Pauline Deutz, Roberta Salomone and Tomás Ramos from left to right), relating to the



topic group [5c Circular Economy, Zero Waste and Innovation](#). As at the UN, information on the Nanjing conference (ISDRS 2019) was presented on behalf of Zengwei Yuan who was unable to attend.

At the New York University the team presented to students, primary from the Stern Center for Sustainable Business and the College of Global Public Health. The panel was introduced by Prof Tensie

Whelan Director, Center for Sustainable Business and Prof Chris Dickey. Roberta Salomone's (left) presentation concerned the potential to use life cycle analysis as a tool for assessing the benefits of circular approaches to resource management. There were some enthusiastic points of debate from the audience in response to Peter Dobers' encouragement to look forwards 20 years – following the presentation of his research from 1999 that successfully envisioned steps to dematerialisation that have since been taken. Discussion with staff leading the research, teaching and administration of sustainability was held at George Washington University, Washington DC.

These events were all organised by the European Union Association in cooperation with the International Sustainable Development Research Society (ISDRS), New York University, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) and the ASEM-UN NGOs group. The support of the European Union Association in particular is gratefully acknowledged.



The panel comprised (from left to right in the picture to the left) [Dr Pauline Deutz](#), ISDRS president and Reader in the Department of Geography, Geology and Environment, and president of ISDRS; [Professor Roberta Salomone](#), host of ISDRS 2018 in Messina and ISDRS board member; Department of Economics, University of Messina; [Dr Tomás Ramos](#), board member of ISDRS, Centre for Environmental and Sustainability Research, School of Science and Technology (CENSE), NOVA University; [Prof Peter Dobers](#), vice president of ISDRS, from Södertörn University in Sweden. In addition, Prof Zengwei Yuan, Nanjing University (host of ISDRS conference 2019) had intended to join the group, but did not receive a visa to visit the US. His research and the

Nanjing conference were briefly introduced by the other panel members.

For more on ISDRS: www.isdrs.org

For further information from the panel, please contact any one of the following:

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