CIRCULAR GAIA
SYMPOSIUM

Circular Gaia at COP31

Programme

Antalya, Türkiye · 9–13 November 2026

Circular Gaia Symposium takes part in seven sessions across three pavilions at the UN Climate Change Conference.

- **9–11 November:** Green Transition Forum and Circular Gaia at COP31, co-organised with the European Public Law Organization (EPLO) and DIR.BG.
- **13 November:** partner event at the Mediterranean Pavilion, led by UNEP/MAP with the EPLO Institute of Circular Economy, Environment, Energy and Climate (CECCI) and partners.

9 NOVEMBER 2026 Bulgarian Pavilion

10:30–11:30
Sustainability and Competitiveness in the EU Transition: The CEE Perspective

- **George Kremlis**, Member of the Board of Directors of the European Public Law Organization (EPLO) and Director of the Institute for Circular Economy, Environment, Energy and Climate
- **Dr. Marina Stefanova**, Vice-Dean for Sustainable Development, Support and Engagement, Sofia University
- **Linda Kalcher**, Founder of Strategic Perspectives (tbc)
- **Suzana Carp**, Co-Founder, Cleantech for CEE & CleantechSouthEast Europe

Moderator: Monika Stanisheva, Founder of Green Transition Forum, Chair of the Board of Directors, DIR.BG

13:30–14:30
Blue Economy as a Driver for the Green Transition and Climate Neutrality in the Black Sea

- **Prof. Hristo Pimpirev**, DSc, Director of the Bulgarian Antarctic Institute and the National Centre for Polar Research
- **Monika Stanisheva**, Founder of Green Transition Forum, Chair of the Board of Directors, DIR.BG
- **Julian Popov**, former Minister of Environment and Water of the Republic of Bulgaria
- **Linda Kalcher**, Founder of Strategic Perspectives
- **Ermis Panagiotopoulos**, Head of Sustainability Advocacy EMEA, Indorama Ventures PCL; Board Member of EUROPEN and RECOUP; Chair of PETCORE Europe's Advocacy Working Group
- **Dr. Senda Zarrouk**, PhD Engineer, Environmental Scientist and Expert in Soil and Climate Adaptation, Natural Capital, Carbon Farming and EU Climate Policy, AgroParisTech, France

Moderator: George Kremlis, Member of the Board of Directors of the European Public Law Organization (EPLO) and Director of the Institute for Circular Economy, Environment, Energy and Climate

10 NOVEMBER 2026 Bulgarian Pavilion

15:30–16:30
Energy Independence as a Driver of EU Competitiveness

In partnership with the University of Geneva and Solar Academy Bulgaria

- **Dr. Lyubomira Gancheva**, Deputy Minister of Energy, Republic of Bulgaria
- **George Kremlis**, Member of the EPLO Board of Directors and Director of the Institute for Circular Economy, Environment, Energy and Climate
- **Suzana Carp**, Co-Founder, Cleantech for CEE & CleantechSouthEast Europe
- **Dr. Eng. Veselin Todorov**, Chair and Co-Founder of Solar Academy Bulgaria
- A representative of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center (NGIC), Azerbaijan (tbc)

Moderator: Sergei Stanishev, Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria (2005–2009) and Member of the Strategic Foresight Committee of Green Transition Forum

16:30–17:30
Youth Energy Innovations Competition

Fireside chat with visual presentation, in partnership with Solar Academy Bulgaria

- **Dr. Lyubomira Gancheva**, Deputy Minister of Energy, Republic of Bulgaria
- **Andrey Zhivkov**, Executive Member of the Board of Directors, Bulgarian Energy Holding EAD
- **Dr. Eng. Veselin Todorov**, Chair and Co-Founder of Solar Academy Bulgaria
- **Dr. Marina Stefanova**, Vice-Dean for Sustainable Development, Support and Engagement, Sofia University

Moderator: Monika Stanisheva, Founder of Green Transition Forum, Chair of the Board of Directors, DIR.BG

17:30–18:00
The Energy Debrief: Key Takeaways & Next Steps

Fireside chat

- **Nikola Gazdov**, Chairman, Association for Production, Storage and Trading of Electricity (APSTE)
- **Sergei Stanishev**, Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria (2005–2009) and Member of the Strategic Foresight Committee of Green Transition Forum

11 NOVEMBER 2026 Hellenic Republic Pavilion

17:30–18:30
The Energy Sector and Circular Economy as a Driver for Green Transition and Climate Neutrality

- **Stavros Papastavrou**, Minister of Environment and Energy of the Hellenic Republic
- **Iva Petrova**, Minister of Energy of the Republic of Bulgaria
- **Céline Gauer**, Director-General for Energy, European Commission
- **Rza Aliyev**, Secretary-General, Nizami Ganjavi International Center (NGIC), Azerbaijan (tbc)
- **Sergei Stanishev**, Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria (2005–2009) and Member of the Strategic Foresight Committee of Green Transition Forum
- **Andrey Zhivkov**, Executive Member of the Board of Directors, Bulgarian Energy Holding EAD
- **Kalin Peshov**, Chairman of the Management Board, Glavbolgarstroy Holding
- Business representatives

Moderator: George Kremlis, Member of the Board of Directors of the European Public Law Organization (EPLO) and Director of the Institute for Circular Economy, Environment, Energy and Climate

13 NOVEMBER 2026 Mediterranean Pavilion

11:30–12:30

One Sea, Shared Action: Civil Society Driving Climate Resilience in the Mediterranean

Partner event led by the UNEP/MAP Coordinating Unit: a 60-minute moderated panel on climate action, marine pollution prevention and coastal ecosystem protection

Opening: Tatjana Hema, UNEP/MAP Coordinator (tbc)

- **Garyfallia (Fay) Selimi**, Co-Director, Circular Economy, Environment, Energy and Climate Institute, EPLO – circular economy and the links between climate change and marine pollution
- **Jérémie Fosse**, Co-founder and President, eco-union – sustainable blue tourism and the MSSD Blue Tourism Flagship Initiative
- **Ayman Cherkaoui**, Director of the Hassan II International Center for Environmental Training, Morocco – ocean literacy and integrated beach management on Morocco's Mediterranean coast
- A speaker from the Marevivo Foundation (tbc) – marine protected areas, including the MPA in Capri

Moderator: Arthur Pasquale, Deputy Director, INFO/RAC

Participating organisations: UNEP/MAP, EPLO Institute of Circular Economy, Environment, Energy and Climate (CECCI), eco-union, Mohammed VI Foundation for Environmental Protection, Marevivo Foundation, Permanent Secretariat of the Pelagos Agreement