



Delivering the European Green Deal in Unprecedented Times
European Environment Network Conference 2023
 In Brussels and Online, 22 March 2023

Conference Booklet

Online: <https://youtube.com/live/QL81f5-TJdQ?feature=share>

Morning Session

08.45 – 09.15	Registration and Coffee	Venue: SPARKS Address: 60, rue Ravenstein, 1000 Brussels Please remember to bring an ID for entering the Conference
9:15 – 9.30	Opening session	Laura Burke , Director-General, Irish Environmental Protection Agency and Chair of the Management Board, European Environment Agency
9.30 – 10.30	Setting the scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Achim Steiner, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme ❖ Irene Heemskerk, Head of the Climate Change Centre, European Central Bank ❖ Kurt Vandenberghe, Director-General for Climate Action, European Commission ❖ Patrick Child, Deputy Director-General for the Environment, European Commission <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Moderator: Claire Dupont, Research Professor of European Governance, Ghent University, Belgium and Chair of the Scientific Committee, European Environment Agency</i></p>
10.30 - 11.05	Keynote	"Making the sustainability transition happen across the EU" by Hans Bruyninckx , Executive Director, European Environment Agency
11.05 – 11.25	<i>Refreshment break</i>	



11.25 – 12.45	Addressing simultaneous crises: implementing the Green Deal in times of disruption	<p>Keynote by Janez Potočnik, Co-Chair, International Resource Panel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Diane Simiu, Deputy to the Commissioner-General for Sustainable Development, Ministry of the Ecological and Inclusive Transition, France ❖ Ann Mettler, Vice President, Europe, Breakthrough Energy ❖ Marc Lemaître, Director-General for Research and Innovation, European Commission <p><i>Moderator: Riyong Kim, Head of Programme of Sustainability Transitions, European Environment Agency</i></p>
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12.45-14.00 *Lunch offered at the venue to all conference participants*

Afternoon Session

14.00-14.20	Lessons learnt from the European Green Deal	<p>Pascal Canfin, Chair of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, European Parliament, interviewed by Hans Bruyninckx, Executive Director, European Environment Agency</p>
14.20-15.20	Making it happen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Zakia Khattabi, Minister of Climate, the Environment, Sustainable Development and the Green Deal, Belgium ❖ Nuno Lacasta, Executive Board President, Portuguese Environment Agency ❖ Helena Viñes Fiestas, Commissioner of the Spanish Financial Markets Authority, Chair of the EU Platform on Sustainable Finance ❖ Patrick ten Brink, Secretary General, European Environmental Bureau <p><i>Moderator: Luc Bas, External Relations Advisor, European Environment</i></p>



15.20-15.30	Video	Video Message from Teresa Ribera Rodríguez , Third Vice-President of the Government and Minister for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge, Spain
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15.30-16.30	Providing Actionable Knowledge	<p>Introduction and Keynote: Information Systems for the Future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Jock Martin, Head of Coordination, Networks and Strategy, European Environment Agency❖ Chris Steenmans, Head of Data and Information Services, European Environment Agency <p>Reactions from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Florence Rabier, Director-General, European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts❖ Alberto Arribas, Europe Lead for Corporate Environmental Sustainability Science, Microsoft❖ Stephen Quest, Director-General, Joint Research Centre, European Commission <p><i>Moderator: Tanja Suni, Research Director, Ministry of Environment, Finland</i></p>
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16.30-17.00	Closing Remarks	Keynote speech by Frans Timmermans , Executive Vice-President, European Commission
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17.00		<i>Cocktail reception</i>
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Speakers' biographies



Achim Steiner became UNDP Administrator on 19 June 2017 and is also the Vice- Chair of the UN Sustainable Development Group, which unites 40 entities of the UN system that work to support sustainable development. Over nearly three decades, he has been a global leader on sustainable development, climate resilience and international cooperation. He has worked tirelessly to champion sustainability, economic growth and equality for the vulnerable, and has been a vocal advocate for the Sustainable Development Goals.

Prior to joining UNDP, Mr Steiner was Director of the Oxford Martin School and Professorial Fellow of Balliol College, University of Oxford. He has served across the United Nations system, looking at global challenges from both a humanitarian and a development perspective. He led the United Nations Environment Programme (2006-2016), helping governments invest in clean technologies and renewable energy. He was also Director-General of the United Nations Office at Nairobi. Mr Steiner previously held other notable positions including Director General of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and Secretary General of the World Commission on Dams.

Mr Steiner has lived and worked in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Europe, Latin America and the United States. He graduated in Philosophy, Politics and Economics (MA) from Worcester College, Oxford University and holds an MA from the University of London/School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS).



Alberto Arribas is the Europe Lead for sustainability science at Microsoft. Alberto ensures that Microsoft's sustainability strategy and solutions are informed by the best available science and technology. He is a Visiting Professor at the University of Reading Atmospheric Science department and has published widely in the fields of weather and climate modelling and prediction. Prior to Microsoft, he led the development of near-term climate prediction systems and end-user applications at UK Met Office and founded the Informatics Lab, an innovation department where he led award-winning projects with top teams in the technology industry (DeepMind, AWS, Microsoft).

Alberto is a member of the European Environment Agency Scientific Committee and a member of the UK Natural Environment Research Council Digital Research Steering Committee. He has served as expert reviewer for the UK Parliament Office for Science and Technology and the European Commission in the area of Future and Emerging Technologies. He holds a BSc in Physics and PhD in Climate Modelling (UCM, Spain), and a Diploma in Strategy and Innovation (Univ. Oxford, UK).



Ann Mettler has more than two decades of experience in high-level public policy and strategy, operating at the intersection of technology, innovation, foresight and entrepreneurship. At Breakthrough Energy, Ann is working with European partners to accelerate clean tech innovation in the pursuit of climate neutrality and a net-zero emissions future. Previously, she served as Director-General at the European Commission where she ran the internal strategy department, reporting directly to the President. An entrepreneur at heart, Ann set up her own think tank which she ran for more than a decade. Her career started at the World Economic Forum where she led the Europe department.

Ann has lived and worked in Germany, Greece, the United States, Switzerland and Belgium. She holds MA degrees in political science and European law and economics, and graduated with distinction from the University of New Mexico, USA, and the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-University in Bonn, Germany.



Chris Steenmans is Head of Data and Information Services (DIS) at the EEA. He is responsible for managing the information and communication technology, Eionet data flows and the development of environmental thematic information services. He coordinates the EEA activities related to the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS), the European Spatial Data Infrastructure (Inspire), the European Earth observation programme (Copernicus) and the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS). He is actively involved in the coordination of the Copernicus in-situ component and the land monitoring services.

He graduated from the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) in 1981 as M.S. degree in Geosciences and was researcher at the Department of Cartography KUL until 1985 developing satellite based land cover mapping. During the past 30 years, he has been involved in several activities related to the Corine programme for coordinating and providing access to European environmental data and information. Before joining the EEA in 1997, he worked for 12 years in the private sector for delivering remote sensing, data management, Geographic Information System (GIS) and mapping services. From 1985 until 1993 he worked with Eurosense in Belgium as head of the remote sensing and image processing department. Afterwards he worked as a consultant for Unisfere at the University of Besançon in France. From 1995 until 1997, he was project manager for remote sensing and GIS activities with Geographic Information Management in Belgium.



Diane Simiu is a graduate of Ecole Polytechnique and has a Master's degree in Environmental Engineering from the University of California at Berkeley. She began her career in the sustainable development department of PriceWaterhouseCoopers, and in 2007 she joined ICF International in London, where she advised companies in the airline, energy and banking sectors. In 2009, Ms Simiu joined the French Ministry of Ecology's Directorate General for Energy and Climate as a project manager for the European Union Emissions Trading System, and in 2011 she became head of the carbon markets office. She joined WWF France in 2014 as Director of Programs.

After the 2017 presidential election, she became technical advisor for ecology in the offices of the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister. In September 2019, she was appointed Deputy Commissioner General for Sustainable Development at the Ministry of Ecological Transition.



Florence Rabier has been Director-General of the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) since 2016. ECMWF is a world-leading organisation delivering weather forecasts from days to months ahead to its Member States and users around the world. Through its engagement with the European Union, ECMWF is delivering major environmental services such as the Copernicus Climate Change Service, the Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service and the Destination Earth flagship initiative.

Dr. Rabier is an internationally recognised scientist, whose leadership has contributed to delivering major scientific advances and operational improvements at both ECMWF and Météo-France. She is especially well known for her key role in implementing an innovative method making optimal use of satellite observations in weather forecasting and climate monitoring. She chairs the Advisory Committee for Earth Observations of the European Space Agency and is a member of the International Scientific Board of the International Foundation Big Data and Artificial Intelligence for human development. She has been awarded the title of "Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur" and is an Honorary Member of the American Meteorological Society.



Frans Timmermans began his career with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1987. After taking part in the Junior Diplomat Training Programme, he worked at the European Integration Department of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and at the Embassy of the Netherlands in Moscow. He later worked for Hans van den Broek, European Commissioner for External Relations, and Max van der Stoep, High Commissioner on National Minorities for the OSCE. In 1998, Frans Timmermans was elected as a member of the House of Representatives for the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA), where he dealt principally with foreign affairs. In the fourth Balkenende government, from February 2007 to February 2010, Mr Timmermans was Minister for European Affairs.

In 2010, Mr Timmermans returned to Parliament as the Labour Party's spokesperson on foreign policy. On 5 November 2012, Mr Timmermans became Minister of Foreign Affairs in the second Rutte government. Two years later, on 1 November 2014, he became First Vice-President of the European Commission, Responsible for Better Regulation, Interinstitutional Relations, Sustainable Development, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Since 1 December 2019, he is the Executive Vice-President of the European Commission, responsible for the Green Deal.



Hans Bruyninckx has been the Executive Director of the European Environment Agency since 1 June, 2013. In 1996, Dr Bruyninckx completed a PhD in international environmental politics at Colorado State University. Until his appointment at the EEA, he was a professor of environmental politics and director of the HIVA Research Institute in Belgium, a policy-oriented research institute associated with the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven.

Over the last 20 years, Dr Bruyninckx has conducted research in areas including environmental politics, climate change and sustainable development. He has taught global and EU environmental politics, publishing extensively on EU environmental policies and the Union's role as an actor in global environmental governance. Throughout his career, Dr Bruyninckx has worked with governmental agencies, civil society and businesses, often in an advisory role.



Helena Viñes Fiestas is commissioner of the Spanish Financial Markets Authority (CNMV) and Chair of the EU Platform on Sustainable Finance. She is also a member of the UN Secretary-General High-Level Expert Group on Net Zero Pledges and of the EIB's Climate and Environment Advisory Council.

Helena was co-rapporteur of the EU Platform on Sustainable Finance (2020-2022) and had previously been a member of the Technical Expert Group on Sustainable Finance whose role was to assist the European Commission in the development of EU taxonomy and the implementation of the EC Action Plan (2018-2020).

Prior to the CNMV, Helena was Senior Policy Adviser on Sustainable Finance for BNP Paribas and Global Head of Stewardship and Policy for BNP Paribas Asset Management. She led on BNPP AM'S policy and stewardship activities (engagement with companies, proxy voting) on Sustainability. She was a board member of the Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change (IIGCC), a member of the AMF Comité de Climat et Finance Durable and represented BNPP AM in the EFAMA committee on Stewardship and ESG. She sat on a number of additional committees, including the Sustainable Stock Exchanges Green Finance Advisory Group, PRI Policy Reference Group and the Technical Advisory Group of the LSE-led Transition Pathway Initiative.

As Deputy Global Head of Sustainability, Helena played a critical role in the design, development and implementation of BNPP AM's Global Sustainability Strategy. Helena had previously led the Sustainability Research team. She has twenty years' experience of working in responsible business and sustainable investment.

Previously, Helena led Oxfam's advocacy work on responsible investment and engagement with institutional investors in support of poverty reduction. She is the author of numerous papers and articles, book chapters and a book. She earned a BA in Economics and a postgraduate in Latin American Economics from the University of Barcelona (Spain), followed by an MSc in Development Studies from the London School of Economics and Political Science.



Irene Heemskerck joined the European Central Bank in June 2021 to head the Climate Change Centre. She is responsible for shaping and steering the ECB's climate agenda internally and externally. Irene also represents the ECB in the Central Banks and Supervisors' Network for Greening the Financial System (NGFS), is an Observer to the EFRAG Sustainability Board and is member of the TIME magazine 2030 Committee Advising on Solutions for the Future.

Prior to joining the ECB, Irene was involved as a Sustainability Fellow in the work of the IFRS Foundation on setting up a Sustainability Standards Board. From 2005 until 2020, Irene held various positions at De Nederlandsche Bank. As advisor to the Chair, she was involved in the work of the NGFS from its launch in 2017 and led the work of the first publication of the NGFS on supervisory practices addressing climate-related and environmental risks. Irene holds a master's degree in international and European law from Leiden University.



Janez Potočnik graduated with a PhD from the Faculty of Economics at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia in 1993. He started as a researcher at the Institute of Economic Research in 1989 and was nominated as Director of the Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development in 1994. In 1998, he was appointed Head of the Negotiating Team for the Accession of Slovenia to the EU.

Dr Potočnik was also Director of Government Office for European Affairs (2000), Minister Councilor at the Office of the Prime Minister (2001) and Minister responsible for European Affairs (2002). In 2004, he joined the European Commission, first as 'shadow' Commissioner for Enlargement, and then as Commissioner for Science and Research. In 2010 he became the European Commissioner for Environment. After the end of his mandate in November 2014, Dr Potočnik was appointed as a Co-Chair of the UN Environment International Resource Panel. Since April 2016 he has also been a Partner of SYSTEMIQ.



Jock Martin is Head of Coordination, Networks and Strategy (CNS) at the EEA.

He has a BA honours degree in pure mathematics, economics and statistics from Queens University Belfast (1985). From 1986 to 1991, he worked for the UK Government on statistics for industrial production, GDP and overseas trade. He has been involved in environmental statistics, indicators and assessments since 1991 initially for six years at the Department for the Environment in the UK where he was an author of the first national indicator report on sustainable development.

He was EEA National Focal Point (NFP) for the UK from 1991-1997. Since joining the EEA in 1997 he has been strongly involved in building capacities in the Eionet, has designed EEA priority data flows and core indicators and has authored several integrated assessment reports.



Kurt Vandenberghe has been Director General of DG CLIMA since January 2023. Before that, he was the European Green Deal and Health advisor to Commission President Ursula von der Leyen from 2019 to 2023, and worked in DG Research and Innovation, where he was Director for 'Climate action and resource efficiency' from 2013 to 2016, and Director for Policy & Programming from 2016 to 2019.

From 1999-2003, Mr Vandenberghe served in the Cabinet of Research Commissioner Philippe Busquin, and from 2004-2009 as Head of the Cabinet of Janez Potočnik, who was Commissioner for Research and Innovation. Mr Vandenberghe joined the European Commission in 1996 as coordinator of the Commission's Intermodal Transport Task Force and of the Transport Research Programme.

After studying French and Italian literature at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KUL) and obtaining a degree in Public and International Affairs at the Université catholique de Louvain-la-Neuve (UCL), Kurt gained a Master of Arts degree in International Relations at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (S.A.I.S.) in Bologna, Italy and Washington D.C., US.



Laura Burke has been the Director General of the Irish Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) since 2011, having previously served as a Director within the EPA since 2004. As Director General, she has the responsibility to lead and strategically manage the EPA. Laura is the Chair of the European Environment Agency (EEA) Management Board. Prior to joining the EPA, she worked in the private sector. Laura is a graduate of University College Dublin (UCD), where she studied chemical engineering. She also holds an MSc from Trinity College Dublin (TCD), is a Fellow and Vice-President of Engineers Ireland, and is a Chartered Director. In 2016 Laura was awarded the UCD Engineering Graduates Association (EGA) Distinguished Graduate Award.



Marc Lemaître studied at Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) and Bruges (College of Europe) and holds a Master in European Economics. He brings 25 years of profound experience in European Affairs, both in the European Commission and in the diplomatic service of Luxembourg.

Between 1996 and 2006, he worked in the Permanent Representation of Luxembourg to the European Union, dealing with budgetary, trade and general affairs issues.

He joined the Commission in 2007 as Head of the private office of Regional Policy Commissioner, Danuta Hübner, and then her successor, Paweł Samecki. Between 2010 and 2013, he led the private office of Budget Commissioner Janusz Lewandowski. Between 2013 and 2016, he managed, as Director, the Office for Administration and Payment of individual entitlements (PMO). Between 2016 and January 2023, he was Director-General for Regional and Urban Policy (REGIO).

Since February 2023 he is Director-General for Research and Innovation (RTD).



Nuno Lacasta has been working on environment and sustainable development for over 20 years in Europe and in the United States. Since 2012 he has been serving as CEO of APA - the Portuguese Environment Agency. Previously, he worked in academia and NGOs, and as a consultant for international organizations such as the OECD, the UN and the European Commission.

Mr Lacasta has been in public service since 2003, having led the Portuguese Environment Ministry's International Department, coordinated Portugal's climate policy and directed the Portuguese Carbon Fund. In his capacity at APA, he has served as Bureau member of the European Environment Agency, and as the OECD Environmental Policy Committee's Chair.

Mr Lacasta holds a Law degree from Lisbon University Law School, a post-graduate degree (LLM) from the Washington College of Law/American University, as well as the Advanced Management Program (AMP) from Kellogg Business School/Católica Business School.



Pascal Canfin is a French MEP for the Liste Renaissance, part of the Renew Europe group. He was elected to the European Parliament in 2009 and again in 2019, and has been appointed chair of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI). Prior to that position, Mr Canfin was director general of WWF France from 2016 to 2019, where he contributed to the safeguarding of ecosystems and their species, the fight against global warming and advocated for a more respectful energy transition.

From 2014 to 2015, he was senior advisor for climate at the World Resources Institute (WRI) and co-chaired the Commission for Innovative Financing for Climate. In 2012, Mr Canfin was appointed by French President Hollande Minister Delegate for Development at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Mr Canfin studied political science from the Bordeaux Institute of Political Studies (Sciences Po) and Newcastle University.



Patrick Child is the Deputy Director General of DG Environment at the European Commission. He has previously been the Deputy Director-General in DG Research and Innovation (R&I) at the European Commission. With a background in the UK Finance Ministry, he joined the European Commission in 1994, where he started in the Economic and Monetary affairs Directorate General before becoming Commission press spokesman for economic and monetary union from 1995-2004. Mr Child studied mathematics at Cambridge University.



Patrick ten Brink is the Secretary General of the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), the umbrella NGO representing 180 civil society organisations from across 38 countries, including all EU Member States. Patrick provides political leadership across the organisation's policy areas, in particular on the European Green Deal and the engagement with the EU Council Presidencies. He represents the EEB and its member organisations vis-à-vis the EU institutions and in other relevant fora. He is currently a member of a range of high-level groups, including the Fit for Future Platform, Zero Pollution Stakeholder Platform, the European Clean Hydrogen Alliance, the Industrial Forum, the Chemicals Sustainability roundtable and the EU Biodiversity Platform. Patrick ten Brink joined the EEB as EU Policy Director in 2018.

Before joining the EEB, Patrick was the Director of IEEP-Brussels and head of its Green Economy Programme, and has worked on European environmental policies for over thirty years. He has a master's degree in Environmental and Natural Resource Economics and a Joint honours degree in Physics and Philosophy.



Stephen Quest has been the Director-General of the Joint Research Centre (JRC) since 1 May 2020. Prior to this, he was the Director-General for the Taxation and Customs Union (TAXUD) and the Director-General for Informatics (DIGIT), driving the digital transformation of the Commission. Stephen joined the European Commission in 1993. Prior to joining the European Commission, he worked for the UK Department of Employment and the UK Permanent Representation to the European Union. He graduated in 1986 from the University of York, obtaining a degree in History.



Teresa Ribera is Vice President of the Government of Spain and Minister for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge.

Prior to that, Ms Ribera was Director of the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI) from 2014 to 2018, and enabled the Institute to play a key role in the negotiation of the Paris Climate Agreement and the transition towards sustainable development. She served as the Spanish Secretary of State for Climate Change and Biodiversity from 2008 to 2011, responsible for environmental and climate policies, as well as the National Meteorological Agency. A public official from the Senior Corps of State Civil Administrators, she has also taught at the Autonomous University of Madrid



Zakia Khattabi is the Belgian federal Minister of Climate, Environment, Sustainable Development and Green Deal. Starting as a militant with a passion for social phenomena, she became a politician for the Belgian Green Party Ecolo in 2009, first as leader of the Senate faction, and later as a Member of Parliament. She was co-chair of her party for five years, before becoming a minister in the federal government in 2020.

As minister, she attaches great importance to ensuring that the ecological transition is also a socially just transition. Being aware of the important links between the ecological challenges on climate, biodiversity and resources, she acted as an EU negotiator on the mitigation work programme at the Climate COP27 as well as an EU negotiator on targets and goals at the Biodiversity COP 15.



Moderator's biographies



Claire Dupont is a Special Research Fund Research Professor, with a focus on European and International Governance of Sustainability, Department of Public Governance and Management at Ghent University. Her research examines the policy, politics and governance of the transformation to sustainability and climate neutrality in Europe. She investigates the extent to which climate change and sustainability are integrated across policies and sectors to respond effectively to the scale and scope of the sustainability challenge.

Prof. Dr. Dupont successfully defended her PhD on 'Climate policy integration into the EU's energy policy' at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel in 2013. In 2017, she joined the Department of Public Governance at Ghent University.

Prof. Dr. Dupont is also the Chair of the Scientific Committee of the European Environment Agency.



Luc Bas is the External Relations Advisor of the European Environment Agency. In his previous role as Head of Coordination, Networks and Strategy he strengthened the International and institutional engagement, led the modernization of the country network, the collaboration with the Western Balkan and the EU Neighborhood and the implementation of the 2030 Strategy.

He was the European Regional Director for the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), heading the Brussels Office and managing the largest membership-region of IUCN with over 360 governments and NGO's and providing leadership on the EU Policy Interventions of IUCN.

Early in his career, Luc has worked as an Adviser on international sustainable development policies in both the Belgium Federal and Flemish Governments. As a special adviser to the Federal State Secretary on Sustainable Development, he had a lead in the introduction of a Sustainable Development Impact Assessment for all federal government decisions and prepared the cabinet's positions on EU energy policy.

From 2008 to 2013, he represented The Climate Group (TCG) working on different business initiatives for more ambitious EU-climate policy and coordinated the European Clean Revolution campaign. As International Director for "State and Regions" he recruited some of the most significant subnational governments leading on climate change to The Climate Group's Alliance working directly with their Premiers and Ministers.

Luc holds a Master's degree in industrial engineering, a postgraduate degree in environmental science and has an education in international politics.



Riyong Kim is Head of Sustainability Transitions (STR) at the European Environment Agency. The activities of Programme include the five year European state of the environment and outlook report (SOER). The work of the programme covers sustainability challenges and responses including the many interdependencies between social, economic and environmental objectives in Europe and globally. Key foci include progress towards policy objectives and targets, drivers of change, foresight, system transitions, indicators, environmental accounting, environmental economics, sustainable finance, and urban sustainability.

Prior to joining EEA, Riyong led the programme on Decision Metrics and Finance at EIT Climate KIC. This work included developing a systems innovation approach to tackling short-termism and mainstreaming climate in financial markets in the EU. She has worked in environmental and climate policy closely with UN Environment and UNFCCC, and before that, led the work on developing the methodology for capturing environmental and forest resources under the Living Standards Measurement Survey with the UN FAO, CIFOR, and World Bank PROFOR, and for the regional ENPI-FLEG program with IUCN.

Riyong has an interdisciplinary background, with a B.A., and B.Sc. in Environmental Science from University of New South Wales, Australia, and a M.Sc. in Agricultural Development (Forestry) and Ph.D. in Natural Resource Economics from University of Copenhagen, Denmark. She started her career working in international development and leading country programmes in Timor Leste and Aceh, Indonesia, and brings experience from the Brazilian Amazon, and Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as EU and CEE countries.



Tanja Suni is the Research director of the Finnish Ministry of the Environment. As research director, her job is to support policy-making with the best available research and foresight. She develops the research skills and networks of staff and identify knowledge and research needs in environmental policy. An important part of her work is international collaboration with funders, research organisations and other stakeholders both domestically and internationally. From a wider perspective, throughout her career she has aimed at supporting the sustainability transition with scientific knowledge. She believes that solving the grand societal challenges of our time requires a culture change at the science-society interface. Her role is to help scientists and stakeholders come together, identify pressing questions, and co-design research to solve them.

Off work, she can usually be found immersed in the history of peoples and languages, detective stories, or digging around her garden trying to get her Queen Elizabeth roses to survive the winter.



Master of Ceremony's biographies



Katja Rosenbohm is Head of Communications (COM) at the EEA and is responsible for the EEA communication strategy and its implementation. She coordinates EEA strategic messages in order to contribute to political and public agendas. Katja ensures that EEA communication initiatives are fully integrated into the agendas of the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the Council of Ministers. The programme is responsible for the tools and channels used to publish and communicate EEA findings and ensures that they are adapted to the way society creates and consumes information. She was appointed Head of Programme in 2009. Katja holds a university degree in geophysics and has worked for more than 20 years within the environment and energy sectors on communications and public relations.

Before joining the EEA, she worked at the German Emissions Trading Authority – part of the German Environment Agency – where she built up and headed the Communications and Customer Services Section. Before that she worked for many years as a PR consultant on environment and energy issues focusing on Eastern European markets.



Milan Chrenko is heading the networks and partnerships coordination group at the European Environment Agency.

He holds a Masters degree in Environmental Management and Policy from the Lund University, Sweden and a Master's degree in Environmental Planning and Landscape Ecology from the Comenius University Bratislava, Slovakia.

Milan has been working for the Regional Environmental Center for CEE, Bratislava (1999-2004), United Nations Development Programme, Bratislava (2004-2007) and for the European Environment Agency, Copenhagen (2007-2015). Between 2016-2020 he served as a Director General for Environmental Policy, EU and International Affairs at the Slovak Ministry of the Environment. Since 2020 he has been working for the EEA leading the Eionet network and partnership coordination.

His main field of expertise are EU environmental policies, partnership coordination and state of environment reporting. He has served as a member of various governmental advisory bodies as well as a Vice-chair of OECD Environmental Policy Committee Bureau.