EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 12.2.2026
C(2026) 1011 final

Dear Chair,

The Commission would like to thank the Tweede Kamer for its Opinion on the circular economy and raw materials in electrical and electronic waste.

The Commission appreciates that the Opinion recognises the circular economy as a key economic model that the EU must pursue and fully shares the views of the Tweede Kamer on the role of circularity in ensuring European prosperity, strategic autonomy and the achievement of international climate goals.

As part of the Clean Industrial Deal, the upcoming Circular Economy Act, planned for Commission adoption in 2026, will focus on establishing a Single Market for secondary raw materials, increasing the supply of high-quality recycled materials and stimulating demand for these materials in the EU. It will encompass, inter alia, a revision of the Directive on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), the reform of the end-of-waste criteria, and extended producer responsibility.

The Commission welcomes the recommendations of the Tweede Kamer which are particularly timely considering the ongoing preparations of the Circular Economy Act. The views expressed in the Opinion will inform the development of these initiatives.

The Commission takes note of the proposals at national level. As regards the recommendations for actions at EU level, the Commission is pleased to provide some initial responses in the annex.

The Commission hopes that these reactions address the issues raised by the Tweede Kamer and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

Maroš Šefčovič
Member of the Commission

Jessica Roswall
Member of the Commission

Mr Peter DE GROOT
Chair of the Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Water Management
Postbus 20018
NL – 2500 EA DEN HAAG

cc. *Mr Thom VAN CAMPEN*
President of the Tweede Kamer
Postbus 20018
NL – 2500 EA DEN HAAG

Annex

The Circular Economy Act

The Commission agrees that circularity requires the active involvement of a broad spectrum of governmental departments and appropriate integration in all relevant policies, both at national and at the EU level. The circular economy is one of the top priorities for the Commission whose internal policy-making mobilises all relevant services to ensure a comprehensive, cross-cutting approach.

The Commission shares the view that the circular economy needs a compelling narrative to convey its systemic importance supported by coherent policy action and financial resources. The Commission has been consistently promoting this approach through several recently adopted policy documents, including the Competitiveness Compass, the Clean Industrial Deal and RESourceEU.

The Commission welcomes the recommendation to involve stakeholders and Member States at an early stage in the shaping of the Circular Economy Act, as well as to devote more attention to circular financing and create national roadmaps for its development. Early cooperation between the Commission and the Member States in policy development benefits the quality and acceptance of future laws and provides a valuable national perspective. The Opinion of the Tweede Kamer is an important step in that direction.

As regards the recommendation to set recycled content targets to create demand and keep materials in the value chain, the Commission included this tool in the Batteries Regulation, the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation, as well as in the recently agreed regulation on circularity requirements for vehicle design and the management of end-of-life vehicles. Further considerations will be undertaken in the context of the Circular Economy Act.

The Commission notes the recommendation to better guard EU borders against unfair competition from third countries, including through increased focus on border controls. The Commission is fully committed to protecting the EU industry from unfair and harmful import practices, including through trade defence investigations.

The Commission welcomes the recommendation to strengthen Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and expand it to more materials at EU level, including through incentives to prioritise top levels of the waste hierarchy, adequate governance and effective enforcement. Indeed, EPR can be a powerful tool to increase the circularity of products and lift waste management to the top levels of the waste hierarchy. The Commission will look into this matter in the context of the impact assessment for the Circular Economy Act and consider the recommendations made by the Tweede Kamer.

The revision of the Directive on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE)

At the EU level, one of the pillars of the forthcoming Circular Economy Act is a revision of existing rules on WEEE aiming to ensure that they are simpler, fit-for-purpose and

recover the critical raw materials that such waste contains. The revision of the WEEE Directive will thus include measures to improve the collection of end-of-life electrical and electronic equipment to enhance the recovery of critical raw materials (CRMs). It will also propose to enhance the end-of-life treatment of electrical and electronic equipment to preserve CRM-rich components.

This fits into the broader objective of the Circular Economy Act to create an EU market for secondary raw materials. It may involve increased WEEE collection, further harmonization of rules, including through a regulation and improving CENELEC standards, as rightly highlighted by the Tweede Kamer. The impact of such potential measures is currently being assessed from an economic, social and environmental perspective to feed into the proposal for a WEEE review, planned for the third quarter of 2026.

Regarding specific measures on the reuse of electrical and electronic equipment, these are dealt with under product rather than waste legislation and will thus not be included in the WEEE review. The Commission is currently running a study on the circularity of second-hand products that will feed into the revision of the new legislative framework on electrical and electronic equipment, which aims to improve the internal market for goods and strengthen the conditions for placing a wide range of products on the EU market.

The Tweede Kamer stresses that the average Dutch household holds around 131 electrical or electronic appliances, approximately 20% of which are defective. A study of the WEEE Forum and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) showed, in the same vein, that EU households own an average of 74 electrical and electronic equipment items (excluding lamps and luminaires), of which 61 items are in use, nine are hoarded but working, and four are hoarded and not working. This specific hoarding issue is a difficult challenge to address. The Commission is currently exploring possible measures to do so, and practical suggestions from the Tweede Kamer would be welcome.

A ban on e-vapes, e-cigarettes, including single use disposable ones, would fall under the Tobacco Products Directive. Already under the current legal framework, a Member State may prohibit a certain category of tobacco or related products, including disposable e-cigarettes, if such prohibition is justified by the need to protect public health and based on grounds relating to the specific situation in that Member State (see Article 24(3) of Directive 2014/40/EU).

Finally, the Commission would welcome any additional information concerning the destruction of electrical and electronic equipment that the Tweede Kamer could share.