

SPOTLIGHTS 2026

Shaping the Chemical Transition Together

by the German Environment Agency & International Sustainable Chemistry Collaborative Centre (ISC3)

14th and 15th of October 2026, Dessau-Roßlau, Germany



AGENDA

Moderation: Conny Czymoch

DAY 1: Wednesday, 14th October 2026

	Programme
10:00	Guided tour of the German Environment Agency
11:30 – 12:30	Registration
12:30 – 12:45	Opening Remarks The balance in sustainable development under pressure – why the chemical industry plays a prominent role Prof. Dr Dirk Messner , President, German Environment Agency (UBA)
12:45 – 13:45	Session 1 The future of the chemical industry in Germany and Europe – strategic leadership and responsibility within planetary boundaries Keynotes by A vision for a sustainable European chemical industry Dr Volker Strauß , Head of Department Pharmaceuticals, Chemicals, Environmental Testing, German Environment Agency (UBA) The European chemical industry of the future - how can we become the world market leader? Marco Mensink , Director General, CEFIC Transformation as a necessity to safeguard jobs Alexander Bercht , Member of the Executive Board, Industrial Union of Mining, Chemicals and Energy (IGBCE) European Commissions perspective on the chemical industry, policy aims and the relevance of the zero pollution agenda Veronica Manfredi , Director Unit C, Zero Pollution, Water Resilience and Green Urban Transition, Directorate-General for the Environment (DG Env), European Commission

13:45 – 14:30	Panel discussion with the speakers from opening and session 1 How can we successfully transition to a sustainable chemical industry with secure jobs within the boundaries of our planet?
14:30 – 15:15	Refreshments and snacks
15:15 – 16:15	Session 2 Innovation, investment and new business models for a competitive, sustainable chemical industry – how can we foster closer collaboration between academia, industry and politics to bring research into practical application more quickly? Keynote by Prof. Dr Dr h.c. Peter H. Seeberger, Director Max Planck Institute of Colloids and Interfaces (MPIKG); Scientific Director, Centre for the Transformation of Chemistry (CTC) Panel discussion with Dr Christoph Gürtler, Senior Research Manager, Covestro Deutschland AG and Vice Chair of VAA Führungskräfte Chemie e.V. Sonja Haider, Head of Sustainable Finance division, ChemSec Koos van Haasteren, Chemelot, The Netherlands Isabel Thoma, Head of Impact, Traceless Materials
16:15 – 16:30	Coffee break
16:30 – 18:00	Session 3 Economy and governance – how can we create a fruitful environment for innovation, competitiveness and sustainability? Keynote by Kristin Schreiber, Director Unit F for Chemicals, Bioeconomy and Retail, Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW), European Commission Panel discussion with: Kristin Schreiber, Director DG GROW, European Commission Matthias Belitz, Head of Sustainability, Energy and Climate Protection, Member of the Management Board, VCI Kristina Jeromin, Head of “Initiative Made in Germany 2030”, supported by Mercator Foundation Oliver Loebel, Secretary General, European Federation of National Associations of Water Services (EurEau) Dr Katrin Ostertag, Head of Department of Sustainability and Infrastructure Systems, Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research (Fraunhofer ISI)
18:00	End of day 1 of the conference

19:30	Evening programme Reception and dinner at the Bauhaus Café (at your own expense) Welcome address: Regina Bittner, Deputy Director of the Bauhaus Academy
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Day 2: Thursday, 15th October 2026

	Programme
08:15 – 09:00	Registration
09:00 – 09:15	Opening of day 2 Energizer session and introduction to day 2, Atrium
09:15 – 10:45	Session 4: Breakout groups (roundtables and panels) 1 – Innovation and future business Discussion with Dr Anne Braune , Deutsche Gesellschaft für Nachhaltiges Bauen - DGNB e.V. Nora Jeske , Senior Key Expert at Siemens and member of the Sustainability Leadership Council at the Global Electronics Association Dr Nina Fechner , Global Director Strategic Marketing & Business Development, Evonik Miguel Ramoa , Vice President Commercial and Industrialisation, Ronzino von Oswald S.A. (ROVO) Additional speaker to be confirmed 2 – Financing the chemical transition – from vision to sound investment Discussion with Matthias Belitz , Head of Sustainability, Energy and Climate Protection, Member of the Management Board, VCI Frank Sibert , Senior Advisor Sustainable Advisory & Business Germany, BNP Paribas, tbc 3 – The future of plastics - closing the loop on a global material Discussion with Mara Jensen , Project Manager Materials and Circularity, WWF Dr Manuel Häußler , Co-Founder & Chief Security Officer, aevolooop Dr Jens Hamprecht , Vice President, Global Plastics Steering Committee Coordination, BASF Prof. Dr Thomas Müller Kirschbaum , Chief Scientist, Circular Valley Foundation Christian Kitazume , German Environment Agency (UBA) 4 – Safe and sustainable consumer products – insights from the electronics sector

	Input by Prof. Dr Rüdiger Kühr, Head of UNITAR Office Bonn, United Nations Institute for Training & Research (UNITAR) Discussion with Dr Henning Friege, Partner N³ Nachhaltigkeitsberatung Stefan Seidel, Chief Impact Officer at ZDHC and former Senior Director of Corporate Sustainability at PUMA Dr Diana Radovan, Director of Sustainability Policy, Global Electronics Association Dr Bettina Rechenberg, Head of Division Sustainable Production and Products, Waste Management, German Environment Agency (UBA) 5 – Less bureaucracy, more sustainability? Panel with Dr Roland Fornika, Head of Technology Management - Operational Efficiency, Röhm AG and President of the European Federation of Managerial Staff in the Chemical and Allied Industries (FECCIA) Florian Schöne, Managing Director German League for Nature, Animal and Environment Protection (DNR) Dr Regina Weber, Head of Industrial Transformation, Stiftung Arbeit und Umwelt of the IGBCE Prof. Dr Dirk Messner, President, German Environment Agency (UBA) 6 – The chemical industry in transition: zero pollution between regulation and reality Panel with Prof. Dr Lilian Busse, Vice President, German Environment Agency (UBA) Ulrike Kallee, Head of Department for Ressource Conservation, BUND e.v. Prof. Dr Klaus Kümmerer – Professor of Sustainable Chemistry and Material Resources, Leuphana University Lüneburg; Director, Research & Education Hub, ISC3 Additional speaker to be confirmed
10:45 – 11:30	Coffee break and snacks
11:30 – 12:00	Reporting back from breakout groups (Session 4)
12:00 – 12:45	Session 5 Recommendations for action and next steps in the transformation of the European chemical industry Panel discussion with the “Reporter” who followed the presentations and discussions closely over both days

	Prof. Joel Tickner, Professor, Department of Public Health UMass Lowell, Founder and Strategic Advisor, Industrial Transformation, Change Chemistry Dr Regina Weber, Head of Industrial Transformation, Stiftung Arbeit und Umwelt of the IGBCE Dr Patrick ten Brink, Secretary General, European Environmental Bureau (EEB) Prof. Dr Markus Große Ophoff: Academic Director and Authorised Signatory, DBU Centre for Environmental Communication; Honorary Professor of Event Management and Sustainability Communication at Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences Dr Manuel Häußler, Co-Founder & Chief Security Officer, aevoloop, tbc Additional speaker to be confirmed
12:45 – 13:00	Closing remarks Antje von Broock, Head of Directorate-General Circular Economy, Immission Control and Chemical Safety, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany (BMUKN)
13:00	Lunch together , canteen German Environment Agency (at your own expense)
14:30	Guided tour of the Bauhaus Dessau, Special event for the 100th birthday (https://bauhaus-dessau.de/en/to-the-core/) (at your own expense)