

ICETT Webinar on Cooperatives for an Environmentally Just Future

#Coops4Environment

June 3rd, 2021 at 14h00 (CEST)

Background

What is ICETT?

The International Cooperative Entrepreneurship Think Tank (ICETT) was formed in 2018 by the ICA to strengthen cooperatives' entrepreneurial performance by seeking and using innovative ideas, research, education, and cooperation to address the challenges that cooperative enterprises are facing. It aims to offer strategic thinking on cooperative entrepreneurship to demonstrate that the cooperative business model can be a key differentiator for entrepreneurial competitiveness and strengthen cooperatives' business performance.

[ICETT members](#) are large cooperatives and cooperative groups that are directly or indirectly members of the ICA. They are entrepreneurial entities, differently from representative organizations and associations of cooperatives. ICETT works through its plenary sessions and its four working groups on “Future of Work”, “Human Rights in Value Chains”, “Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the World Cooperative Monitor (WCM)”, and “Cooperative Entrepreneurship & Competitive Advantage”.

ICETT Working Group 3 is composed of 8 large sized cooperatives from 7 countries: Sancor Seguros, Cooperative Obrera and Coopertiva Portuarios from Argentina, Groupe Up from France, EURICSE from Italy, IFFCO from India, Mondragon Corporation from Spain, and the Midcounties Co-operative from the U.K. WG 3 leads the discussions in the ICETT on topical issues of importance to cooperatives by sharing thematic best practices and promotes “cooperative-solutions” with the aim to further strengthen the competitive advantage of cooperative entrepreneurship. WG 3 laid specific emphasis on collecting information and creating discussion platforms for ICETT members on response to COVID-19 and Climate Action.

What is being discussed at the ICETT?

The cooperative idea has contributed to *climate change adaptation* with numerous examples such as mutual insurance for crops; agricultural cooperatives supporting diversification of crops, improved watershed management etc., as well as towards *mitigation* with increasingly known successful examples of renewable energy cooperatives, forestry and agroforestry cooperatives, and general systems that ensure climate friendly disposition of the enterprise. Cooperatives' wide-ranging membership places them in a unique position to raise members' awareness about the importance of reducing their carbon footprints and partnering with governments as well as the diverse private sector to reduce greenhouse gas emissions significantly.

The World Environment Day 2021 calls for urgent action to revive our damaged ecosystems. The UN states that [Over 4.7 million hectares](#) of forests are lost every year. Over half of the world's wetlands have disappeared in the last century, and that Global greenhouse emissions have grown for three consecutive years. It makes a notable observation that the emergence of COVID-19 has also shown just how disastrous the consequences of ecosystem loss can be. By shrinking the area of natural habitat for animals, we have created ideal conditions for pathogens – including coronaviruses – to spread. In an attempt to “build back better”, the day will see the launch of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration while noting the urgency to act and repairing our environment. The decade is expected to see large scale programmes and action on growing trees, greening cities, rewilding gardens, changing diets or cleaning up rivers and coasts. This year, the UN lays special emphasis on **this** being the final chance to set things right. To prevent climate catastrophe; to stem the growing tide of pollution and waste, and to halt biodiversity loss.

The role of young persons has been particularly highlighted in the effort needed to restore our environment. In this regard, it is pertinent to realize the significance of the 5th cooperative principle on *Education, Training and Information* which elaborates “*cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of cooperation*”. An internal survey in 2020 helped the ICETT find out certain strategic programmes being run with the aim of protecting the environment by large cooperatives. Some examples include Environment Care Strategy of Sancor Seguros, Climate programmes of the The Rabobank (The Netherlands) and the S Group (Finland), Nano fertilizers, Tree plantation, reforestation drives by IFFCO and 1Change by The Midcounties Co-operative

World Cooperative monitor

The World Cooperative Monitor is a project designed to collect robust economic, organizational, and social data about cooperatives worldwide. It is the only report of its kind collecting annual quantitative data on the global cooperative movement. 2020 marks the ninth edition of this annual research report produced by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) with the scientific and technical support of the European Research Institute on Cooperative and Social Enterprises (Euricse). The Top 300 cooperatives and mutuals report a total turnover of over two trillion USD (2,146 billion USD), based on 2018 financial

data. These organizations operate in various economic sectors, the agricultural (104 enterprises) and insurance sectors (101 enterprises) being the ones leading the list. This year's results show the largest cooperatives performing well, with only slight variations in the top positions across the sectors. Since 2018, the World Cooperative Monitor (WCM) includes analysis of the contribution of the Top 300 to the objectives of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 2020 report focuses a section specifically related to SDG 13 - Climate Action.

Webinar

What will be discussed?

The discussion will be themed on “Cooperatives for an Environmentally Just Future” with the aim to identify and elaborate on the practices and policies of large cooperatives in protecting the environment, during the course of enterprise. In other words, to understand the ‘cooperative difference’ made by cooperatives in the communities and countries they operate in, and how they translate the 7th Cooperative Principle on the Concern for the Community into actions. Acknowledging the overwhelming global impact of the pandemic and the role cooperatives play, the discussion will highlight the thematic findings of the recently published World Cooperative Monitor. This year, the World Environment Day is themed on Ecosystem Restoration, meaning preventing, halting and reversing the ongoing environmental damage¹.

This webinar is being organized a month ahead of the International Day of Cooperatives 3 July 2021 which is themed on “Cooperatives for a People Centered and Environmentally Just Recovery” #ReuildBetterTogether.

99th International Day of Cooperatives

The International Day of Cooperatives (#CoopsDay) was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly during the same year as the centenary of the ICA in 1995 vide its resolution 47/90 of 1992 on the role of cooperatives in the light of new economic and social trends. The aim of the International Day of Cooperatives is to increase awareness of cooperatives and promote the movement's successes and ideals of international solidarity, economic efficiency, equality, and world peace. Since 1995, the ICA and the United Nations through COPAC jointly set the theme for the celebration of #CoopsDay. It underscores the **contribution of the international cooperative movement to resolving global issues**. The theme of #CoopsDay in July 2021 is **“Cooperatives for building a people-centered and environmentally just recovery”** underlining the challenges emerging COVID-19 and the need for solidarity.

¹ United Nations reports every three seconds, the world loses enough forest to cover a football pitch and over the last century we have destroyed half of our wetlands. As much as 50 per cent of our coral reefs have already been lost and up to 90 per cent of coral reefs could be lost by 2050, even if global warming is limited to an increase of 1.5°C.

Speakers of the event

- Pete Westall, *Chief Values Officer at The Midcounties Co-operative (U.K.)*, will moderate the discussions
- Representatives from *Young People’s Multi-Purpose Cooperative Society (YPMCS), Zimbabwe* on founding a cooperative to promote renewable energy and winning the ICA Global Youth Replication Project; Video on Go Green Campaign being implemented by ICA Global Youth Network
- Gianluca Salvatori, *Secretary General, EURICSE*, will speak about the World Cooperative Monitor
- Betina Azugnam, *CSR Manager at Sancor Seguros* will speak about the group’s environment strategy and sustainability reporting
- Representative from *Rabobank* will speak about their environment protection programmes and impact measurement
- Representative from *Japan Cooperative Alliance* will share best practices of environment protection and the historic role of cooperatives in this regard in Japan.

Michael Fletcher, *Retail Chief Commercial Officer The Co-operative Group (UK)* will speak about the Group’s sustainability strategy.

- Representative from *National Co-operative Grocers, USA* on the environmentally friendly practices and policies developed, implemented and exchanged by cooperatives

Draft PROGRAM 90 Minutes [all tbc]

4 Mins	Introduction to the event	Pete Westall Chief Values Officer, Midcounties Co-operatives U.K., and Leader of ICETT WG3 on SDGs and WCM
4 Mins	Background information on #CoopsDay and ongoing research on environment and the 33 rd ICA World Cooperative Congress on Deepening our Cooperative Identity	ICA Staff

7 Mins	WCM 2020 findings with a focus on #Coops4Environment	Gianluca Salvatori, Secretary General, EURICSE
5 Mins	Selected questions to set the tone for discussions	Response by Gianluca Salvatori, and Pete Westall
5 Mins	Youth and Climate Action	Young People’s Multi-Purpose Cooperative Society (YPMCS) , Zimbabwe and ICA Youth Network
45 Mins	Panel #Coops4Environment	[5 X 6 mins Presentation + 15 mins Discussion] Rabobank (The Netherlands) Sancor Seguros (Argentina) Agricultural cooperatives (Japan) The Co-operative Group (UK) National Co-op Grocers (USA)
20 Mins	Live Q/A Closing	Moderated by Pete Westall

Please feel free to contact us at kumar@ica.coop for questions and clarifications