

**Session Society: April 11th 13.45 hrs**

**2s1: What kind of circular society**

## **Mapping Changes of Dynamic Discourse Coalitions in EU Circular Bioeconomy Controversies**

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The transition towards a sustainable and circular bioeconomy (CBE) is debated in European Union (EU) policy-making, at least since the first official Bioeconomy Strategy 2012 and during its update in 2018. Actors in different discourse coalitions utter conflicting narratives to (de-)legitimize both visions of why and what form of EU CBE is desirable as well as pathways to achieve these visions. Currently, CBE controversies on the EU level seem to be very polarized: Industry organizations and the core group of European Commission (COM) units involved in the further development of the Bioeconomy Strategy promote new technologies to increase the circular use of bio-resources, whereas environmental NGOs and parts of the COM point out adverse sustainability effects of increasing the use of bio-resources. There seems to be little common ground between the two coalitions. However, these coalitions change continuously, polarization might consequently decrease or even increase over time. We map these changes of involved discourse coalitions by applying a longitudinal Discourse Network Analysis based on expert interviews, position papers, and Twitter data. The aim is to explore how these changes in the network structure of discourse coalitions correspond with either a decreased or increased polarization of controversies. Based on this analysis, we outline reframing opportunities to advance deadlocked stalemates towards more productive forms of controversy.

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*Keywords: circular bioeconomy, discourse network analysis, discourse coalition, European Union, Twitter*