Parallel session III
Civil society actions - conclusions

In their comments and questions, the panellists and participants highlighted the following points:

- A shift to the green economy is impossible without civil society. Given the complexity of the transition to a green economy and the high stakes involved, it is all the more important that citizens have a say.

- There needs to be a large degree of trust and cooperation among involved stakeholders in order to find solutions to common challenges. Continuous efforts must be made to build such trust.

- Stakeholder engagement and societal buy-in are fundamental for the transition to a green economy, and this involves more than simply taking part in meetings; it means helping civil society to become equal partners in development and implementation. Civil society actions are especially visible the climate change mitigation, biodiversity and ecosystems restoration, energy efficiency, waste management, or the circular economy.

- Civil society allows for a more holistic take on the transition to a green economy. Its key role lies in changing the economic paradigm and consumer behaviour and in further forging powerful and mutually beneficial alliances with businesses.

- Civil society also provides continuity, explores and pilots social and technological innovation potential, enhances connectivity between research and policy-making, organises social debates and public opposition, triggers policy responses, assumes a ‘watchdog’ role
and supports information exchange and awareness-raising.

- ‘Dealing with the same things from different angles’ helps to keep track of things, cover all relevant issues and ensure that policies are going in the right direction.