



Network Concept

Networking and Organisational Development

Deliverable 5.3



Co-funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

B4C project production (CC-BY-SA)



Table of Contents

NETWORKING AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	5
1. BACKGROUND.....	6
1.1. FROM INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS TO A EUROPEAN COMMUNITY	6
1.2. EVOLUTION OF THE B4C THREE C INITIATIVE	6
1.3. POSITION OF B4C WITHIN THE THREE C NETWORK	6
1.4. BUILDING ON PREVIOUS EUROPEAN COOPERATION	7
2. WHY A EUROPEAN THREE C NETWORK?	7
2.1. ADDRESSING A EUROPEAN CHALLENGE	7
2.2. CONNECTING EDUCATION, INNOVATION AND IMPLEMENTATION	8
2.3. A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER APPROACH	8
2.4. THE EDUCATIONAL ROLE OF B4C	9
2.5. EUROPEAN ADDED VALUE.....	9
2.6. LOOKING BEYOND INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS	10
3. NETWORK DEVELOPMENT DURING B4C.....	10
3.1. FROM PROJECT PARTNERSHIP TO COMMUNITY	10
3.2. BUILDING THE EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY.....	10
3.3. CONFERENCES AND COLLABORATIVE EVENTS	11
3.4. DIGITAL NETWORKING AND RESOURCES.....	11
3.5. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT.....	11
3.6. PILOT PROJECTS AS NETWORKING CATALYSTS	12
3.7. COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE	12
3.8. PREPARING THE NEXT DEVELOPMENT PHASE	12
4. THE THREE C ECOSYSTEM.....	13
4.1. FROM NETWORK TO ECOSYSTEM.....	13
4.2. THE FIVE PILLARS OF THE THREE C ECOSYSTEM	13
4.3. INTERACTION BETWEEN THE FIVE PILLARS	16
4.4. DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE AS AN INTEGRATING ELEMENT	16
4.5. THE EDUCATIONAL POSITION OF B4C	16
4.6. AN OPEN AND EVOLVING ECOSYSTEM	16
5. MISSION AND VISION	17
5.1. OUR VISION	17
5.2. OUR MISSION	17
5.3. CORE PRINCIPLES	18
5.4. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES.....	19
5.5. LOOKING AHEAD.....	20
6. MEMBERS AND STAKEHOLDERS	20

6.1.	A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COMMUNITY	20
6.2.	STAKEHOLDER GROUPS	20
6.3.	MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES.....	21
6.4.	BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP	22
6.5.	MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES	23
6.6.	BUILDING REGIONAL COMMUNITIES.....	23
6.7.	GROWING TOGETHER	23
7.	SERVICES	24
7.1.	CREATING VALUE THROUGH SERVICES	24
7.2.	EDUCATIONAL SERVICES	24
7.3.	PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES.....	25
7.4.	INNOVATION SERVICES	25
7.5.	NETWORKING SERVICES.....	26
7.6.	IMPLEMENTATION SERVICES	26
7.7.	EUROPEAN COOPERATION SERVICES.....	27
7.8.	DIGITAL SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE	27
7.9.	CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICES	28
8.	GOVERNANCE	28
8.1.	PRINCIPLES OF COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE	28
8.2.	CURRENT ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE	28
8.3.	WORKING GROUPS.....	29
8.4.	DECISION-MAKING.....	30
8.5.	COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION	30
8.6.	TOWARDS A EUROPEAN COOPERATIVE	30
8.7.	GOVERNANCE AS A LEARNING PROCESS	31
9.	ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ROADMAP	31
9.1.	A PHASED DEVELOPMENT APPROACH	31
9.2.	PHASE I – BUILDING THE COMMUNITY (2024)	31
9.3.	PHASE II – DEVELOPING NETWORK SERVICES (2025).....	32
9.4.	PHASE III – ESTABLISHING A MEMBERSHIP COMMUNITY (2026).....	32
9.5.	PHASE IV – DEVELOPING A EUROPEAN COOPERATIVE (2027).....	33
9.6.	PHASE V – EXPANDING THE ECOSYSTEM (BEYOND 2027)	33
9.7.	MILESTONES	34
9.8.	CONTINUOUS LEARNING AND ADAPTATION	34
10.	SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY.....	35
10.1.	BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY.....	35
10.2.	FIVE PILLARS OF SUSTAINABILITY	35
10.3.	RESOURCE STRATEGY.....	36
10.4.	MAINTAINING THE DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE	36
10.5.	INVESTING IN PEOPLE.....	37
10.6.	MONITORING SUSTAINABILITY	37
10.7.	SUSTAINABLE FUTURE ACTIONS.....	38

11.	TOWARDS A EUROPEAN COOPERATIVE.....	38
11.1.	FROM NETWORK TO EUROPEAN ORGANISATION	38
11.2.	WHY A EUROPEAN COOPERATIVE?	39
11.3.	POSSIBLE FUNCTIONS OF THE COOPERATIVE	39
11.4.	SUPPORTING REGIONAL COMMUNITIES	40
11.5.	GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT	40
11.6.	CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	41
12.	ANNEX.....	42
12.1.	PREAMBLE	42

Networking and Organisational Development

Developing the THREE C Network as the European Capacity-Building Platform for the Circular Carbon Economy

Executive Summary

The Erasmus+ project **B4C (Biochar for Competence Development for the Circular Carbon Economy)** has demonstrated that competence development, practical innovation and stakeholder collaboration are essential prerequisites for accelerating the transition towards a Circular Carbon Economy. Throughout the project, the consortium developed not only a comprehensive educational portfolio but also an active European network of organisations and individuals committed to promoting sustainable carbon management through education, innovation and regional cooperation.

The network established during B4C has evolved into an emerging European multi-stakeholder community. It brings together vocational education and training providers, universities, research organisations, municipalities, SMEs, farmers, biochar producers, consultants, civil society organisations and public authorities around a shared objective: strengthening the Circular Carbon Economy through knowledge exchange, competence development and practical implementation.

The project has created much more than a collection of educational products. It has established a competence ecosystem consisting of a European Competence Framework, accredited training programmes, Continuing Professional Development (CPD), the Carbon Manager Course, digital learning environments, practical pilot projects, stakeholder communities and collaborative implementation tools. Together these elements provide the educational and organisational infrastructure required to support the long-term development of the Circular Carbon Economy across Europe.

Within this ecosystem, **B4C represents the educational and capacity-building pillar of the wider THREE C initiative**. While other THREE C activities focus on technological innovation, regional implementation, biochar value chains and circular carbon systems, B4C provides the competences, methodologies and learning environments necessary to prepare professionals capable of implementing these innovations.

This report therefore presents the networking and organisational development strategy for the next phase of the THREE C initiative. It describes how the informal project community established during B4C will evolve into a sustainable European network supported by common educational services, collaborative innovation, digital infrastructure and long-term organisational structures.

A central element of this strategy is the gradual transition from the existing THREE C Association, currently operating under German association law, towards a **European Cooperative**. This evolution will enable the network to expand geographically, broaden its range of services and strengthen the participation of organisations and individuals across Europe while maintaining its educational mission and community-oriented character.

The proposed strategy therefore extends beyond conventional networking. It outlines the development of an integrated European competence and innovation ecosystem that combines education, research, practical implementation and stakeholder cooperation into a common framework supporting the Circular Carbon Economy. Through this approach, the THREE C network aims to become the long-term European platform for competence development, innovation and collaborative action in the field of biochar and Circular Carbon Economy.

1. Background

1.1. From Individual Projects to a European Community

Over the past decade, numerous European initiatives have addressed different aspects of climate action, biochar, sustainable biomass utilisation, circular economy and vocational education. Although these projects have generated valuable knowledge and innovative educational resources, many have remained limited to the duration of their funding period, with partnerships dissolving once project activities had ended.

The B4C consortium recognised from the outset that the successful implementation of the Circular Carbon Economy requires a more permanent organisational approach. Building competences for emerging professions such as Carbon Managers, supporting educators through Continuing Professional Development and facilitating collaboration among practitioners all require a stable European community that extends beyond individual projects.

The development of the THREE C initiative, which happened over the lifetime of the B4C project, therefore represents a strategic response to this challenge. Rather than establishing another temporary project network, the consortium has gradually built an open community connecting education, research, innovation and practical implementation within one coherent ecosystem.

1.2. Evolution of the B4C THREE C Initiative

The initiative has evolved progressively through a series of European cooperation projects that addressed complementary dimensions of the Circular Carbon Economy.

Early activities focused on competence development, participatory learning and collaborative innovation methodologies. These were subsequently expanded through projects and conferences dealing with biochar applications, Circular Carbon Economy, climate resilience, stakeholder cooperation and regional implementation. As new partners joined the cooperation, the network broadened its geographical coverage and disciplinary expertise while maintaining a common focus on sustainability, education and innovation.

The B4C project represents a major milestone within this evolution. For the first time, the educational dimension of the Circular Carbon Economy was systematically addressed through a comprehensive competence framework, accredited learning programmes, digital learning infrastructure and practical pilot projects. These achievements now provide the educational foundation upon which the wider THREE C community can continue to build.

1.3. Position of B4C within the THREE C Network

B4C should not be regarded as an independent network. Instead, it constitutes the educational and capacity-building pillar of the broader THREE C ecosystem.

Within this framework, B4C contributes:

- competence development for learners and professionals;

- vocational education and training programmes;
- Continuing Professional Development for educators;
- the Carbon Manager qualification pathway;
- digital learning environments and Open Educational Resources;
- competence validation methodologies;
- collaborative learning concepts; and
- educational support for regional implementation projects.

Other initiatives within the THREE C community contribute complementary elements such as technological innovation, regional demonstration projects, stakeholder cooperation, biomass valorisation, carbon management systems and applied research. Together these activities create a comprehensive European ecosystem supporting the Circular Carbon Economy.

1.4. Building on Previous European Cooperation

The organisational strategy presented in this report builds upon experiences gained through previous Erasmus+ and Interreg projects while moving beyond the traditional project-based cooperation model.

The projects RE-DIRECT, THREE C and CASCADE (2020-2026) created regional innovation systems for biochar and Circular Carbon Economy implementation. B4C complements these initiatives by providing the educational architecture that enables stakeholders to acquire the competences required for implementing Circular Carbon Economy solutions.

Future projects will further strengthen this network by contributing new educational resources, demonstration projects, research results and regional implementation experiences. The THREE C network therefore serves as the common organisational framework linking these initiatives into a coherent long-term European community.

Rather than replacing individual projects, the network provides continuity between them, ensuring that knowledge, educational resources and collaborative relationships continue to develop beyond the lifetime of any single European initiative.

2. Why a European THREE C Network?

2.1. Addressing a European Challenge

The transition towards a Circular Carbon Economy is one of the major challenges associated with Europe's Green Deal and climate neutrality objectives. While considerable progress has been achieved in developing innovative technologies for biomass valorisation, biochar production, carbon sequestration and circular resource management, their successful implementation depends equally on people, organisations and communities capable of applying these innovations in practice.

Many existing initiatives continue to operate within sectoral boundaries. Research projects often concentrate on technological development, educational institutions focus on competence development, while municipalities, SMEs and farmers primarily address regional implementation. Although each of these activities creates valuable outcomes, the absence of continuous cooperation frequently limits the transfer of knowledge into practical application.

The THREE C network has therefore been established to connect these complementary activities within one collaborative European ecosystem. Rather than replacing existing organisations or initiatives, it provides a platform where education, innovation, implementation and stakeholder cooperation reinforce one another and contribute to a common objective: accelerating the Circular Carbon Economy across Europe.

2.2. Connecting Education, Innovation and Implementation

One of the distinguishing characteristics of the THREE C network is its holistic understanding of competence development.

Education alone cannot create regional transformation without practical implementation opportunities. Likewise, innovative technologies cannot achieve widespread adoption without qualified professionals capable of applying them. Regional implementation requires cooperation among many different stakeholders, each contributing specific expertise while sharing a common understanding of Circular Carbon Economy principles.

The THREE C network therefore integrates five complementary dimensions:

- **Research and knowledge development**, generating scientific evidence and practical insights (Design Based Collaborative Learning, DBCL)
- **Education and competence development**, preparing learners, trainers and professionals through vocational education and lifelong learning.
- **Innovation**, encouraging collaborative problem solving, Design Thinking and prototype development.
- **Networking**, connecting stakeholders across sectors and European regions.
- **Implementation**, supporting practical projects, regional cooperation and sustainable value chains.

By linking these dimensions, the network creates a continuous pathway from knowledge generation to practical application.

2.3. A Multi-Stakeholder Approach

The Circular Carbon Economy cannot be implemented by individual organisations acting in isolation. It requires collaboration between diverse actors representing different perspectives, competences and responsibilities.

The THREE C network therefore brings together:

- vocational education and training providers;
- universities and research organisations;
- municipalities and regional authorities;
- farmers and biomass producers;

- biochar producers and technology providers;
- SMEs and industrial partners;
- consultants and advisory organisations;
- non-governmental organisations;
- civil society initiatives; and
- individual experts and learners.

Each stakeholder contributes to the development of regional Circular Carbon Economy solutions while simultaneously benefiting from the educational resources, collaborative opportunities and professional services offered by the network.

This diversity is regarded as one of the principal strengths of the THREE C ecosystem, enabling interdisciplinary learning and innovation across traditional organisational boundaries.

2.4. The Educational Role of B4C

Within the broader THREE C ecosystem, B4C fulfils a clearly defined strategic role.

The project provides the educational and competence-development infrastructure required to prepare professionals for implementing Circular Carbon Economy solutions. This includes the European Competence Framework, accredited VET courses, Continuing Professional Development programmes, the Carbon Manager Course, digital learning environments and competence validation methodologies.

These educational resources enable the wider network to continuously develop its human capacity while supporting future European projects, regional initiatives and professional training activities.

B4C therefore represents not an independent network but the educational branch of the THREE C initiative, ensuring that competence development remains an integral component of future innovation and implementation activities.

2.5. European Added Value

Operating as a European network creates significant added value compared with isolated regional or national initiatives.

The THREE C network enables members to exchange educational resources, implementation experiences and innovative practices across different geographical and institutional contexts. Regional pilot projects become European learning opportunities, while educational materials developed in one country can be adapted and applied by organisations throughout the network.

European cooperation also facilitates the joint development of new projects, coordinated responses to emerging policy priorities and the continuous expansion of the competence ecosystem. The network therefore contributes not only to the dissemination of knowledge but also to the creation of long-term partnerships capable of addressing future challenges collaboratively.

By integrating education, research, innovation and implementation within one organisational framework, the THREE C network creates a European capacity-building platform that supports both regional action and transnational cooperation.

2.6. Looking Beyond Individual Projects

One of the principal objectives of the THREE C initiative is to establish continuity beyond the duration of individual European projects.

Instead of creating temporary partnerships that dissolve once funding ends, the network provides a permanent organisational framework through which educational resources, digital services, stakeholder relationships and practical implementation experiences can continue to evolve.

Future Erasmus+, Interreg, Horizon Europe and national initiatives will therefore contribute to a shared European ecosystem rather than developing isolated outputs. New members will enrich the existing knowledge base, while existing members will benefit from continuous innovation and expanding opportunities for collaboration.

In this way, the THREE C network becomes more than a project consortium. It develops into a long-term European community of practice that supports competence development, innovation and practical implementation for the Circular Carbon Economy.

3. Network Development during B4C

3.1. From Project Partnership to Community

The B4C consortium was established to develop innovative vocational education and training for biochar and the Circular Carbon Economy. During the implementation of the project, however, the cooperation gradually evolved beyond a conventional Erasmus+ partnership into a broader European community of practice.

This development was driven by continuous interaction between project partners, associated organisations, external stakeholders and learners. Rather than limiting cooperation to formal project meetings, B4C created multiple opportunities for collaborative learning, joint innovation and practical implementation. As a result, relationships extended beyond institutional cooperation and developed into an active professional network connecting education, research and practice.

The network therefore emerged organically through shared activities, common learning experiences and the collaborative development of educational resources and implementation concepts.

3.2. Building the Educational Community

One of the principal drivers of network development was the educational programme established within B4C.

The six vocational education courses, the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme for VET trainers and the Carbon Manager Course created regular opportunities for participants from different countries and professional backgrounds to learn together, exchange experiences and jointly develop practical solutions.

The highly blended learning approach further strengthened these relationships. Participants collaborated before the face-to-face workshops through the B4C Moodle platform and online meetings, worked intensively together during the residential courses and continued exchanging experiences

during the follow-up phase. This continuous interaction transformed individual training activities into long-term professional relationships.

The educational activities therefore served not only as competence development programmes but also as important mechanisms for community building.

3.3. Conferences and Collaborative Events

The B4C project actively promoted networking through conferences, workshops and public dissemination events.

Partner meetings were regularly combined with stakeholder workshops, demonstration activities and regional study visits, allowing participants to experience practical biochar applications while interacting with local actors from municipalities, agriculture, research and industry.

The Carbon Manager Course was integrated into an international conference on biochar, sponge cities and climate resilience, enabling participants to engage directly with researchers, policy makers, practitioners and technology providers. These interactions considerably expanded the professional network established through the educational activities and strengthened connections between learning and practical implementation.

The project also contributed to international conferences and thematic events organised by partner organisations and related European initiatives, thereby extending the visibility of the emerging THREE C community beyond the immediate project partnership.

3.4. Digital Networking and Resources

Digital collaboration formed an essential component of network development.

The B4C website became the central public gateway for project information, publications and educational resources, while the Moodle platform supported collaborative learning and continuous communication among participants. The Biochar Course and the developing repository of Open Educational Resources created shared knowledge spaces that remain accessible beyond individual training activities.

Regular online meetings, webinars and virtual collaboration sessions enabled participants to remain connected throughout the project and facilitated the involvement of stakeholders who could not participate in face-to-face activities.

The digital infrastructure therefore complemented physical meetings by creating a permanent communication environment that supports continuous learning and knowledge exchange.

3.5. Stakeholder Engagement

Throughout the project, considerable effort was invested in identifying and engaging relevant stakeholder groups.

Surveys, interviews and stakeholder mapping activities involved vocational education providers, universities, municipalities, farmers, SMEs, biochar producers, consultants, NGOs and public authorities. These activities not only informed the development of the Competence Framework and educational programmes but also contributed to the gradual expansion of the emerging network.

Many organisations initially involved as consultation partners subsequently participated in workshops, conferences, pilot projects or educational activities, illustrating the progressive integration of external stakeholders into the THREE C community.

The continuously expanding stakeholder database therefore represents an important organisational asset supporting future cooperation and network development.

3.6. Pilot Projects as Networking Catalysts

The practical pilot projects implemented by the project partners created another important mechanism for community building.

Rather than being developed independently, many pilot activities involved collaboration between educational institutions, businesses, municipalities, advisory organisations and local communities. Learners, trainers and external stakeholders jointly addressed authentic challenges related to biochar applications and Circular Carbon Economy implementation.

These collaborative learning projects created new regional partnerships while simultaneously strengthening transnational cooperation through the exchange of implementation experiences and educational approaches.

The pilot projects therefore generated both educational outcomes and durable professional relationships that continue beyond the completion of the project.

3.7. Communities of Practice

One of the most significant achievements of B4C has been the emergence of informal communities of practice.

Participants from different educational programmes have remained connected after completing their courses, exchanging experiences, discussing implementation challenges and supporting one another in the development of regional initiatives.

These communities extend beyond the original consortium and increasingly involve associated partners, external experts and new organisations interested in joining the THREE C initiative.

Such communities of practice represent an important step towards establishing a self-sustaining European network in which knowledge is continuously generated, shared and applied through collaborative learning and practical implementation.

3.8. Preparing the Next Development Phase

The networking activities carried out during B4C have laid the organisational foundations for the next stage of the THREE C initiative.

The educational programmes have created a growing community of trained professionals, the digital infrastructure provides permanent communication and learning environments, and stakeholder relationships continue to expand through new collaborations and follow-up projects.

Rather than concluding with the end of the Erasmus+ project, the network is now entering a new phase characterised by broader membership, expanded services and increasing European cooperation.

This transition from project partnership to European community forms the basis for the organisational strategy presented in the following chapters.

4. The THREE C Ecosystem

4.1. From Network to Ecosystem

The development of the Circular Carbon Economy requires much more than cooperation between individual organisations. It requires a dynamic ecosystem in which knowledge, competences, innovation, practical implementation and stakeholder collaboration continuously reinforce one another.

For this reason, the THREE C initiative is deliberately described as a **European competence and innovation ecosystem** rather than simply as a network. While a network primarily connects organisations, an ecosystem creates relationships between people, institutions, knowledge, services, projects and practical applications that continue to evolve over time.

The THREE C ecosystem has gradually emerged through successive European cooperation projects and now provides a common framework within which educational activities, regional implementation, research, innovation and stakeholder engagement are mutually supportive.

B4C represents the educational and capacity-building pillar of this ecosystem, while other initiatives contribute technological innovation, demonstration projects, applied research and regional implementation.

4.2. The Five Pillars of the THREE C Ecosystem

The ecosystem is organised around five complementary pillars that together support the development and implementation of the Circular Carbon Economy.

Knowledge

Knowledge forms the foundation of the ecosystem. Scientific research, practical experience and educational resources are continuously collected, validated and shared among community members.

Knowledge resources currently include:

- the European Competence Framework;
- the B4C Moodle platform;
- the Biochar Course;
- Open Educational Resources;
- methodological handbooks;
- pilot reports;
- implementation guidelines; and
- research publications.

These resources provide the common knowledge base upon which education and innovation are built.

Capacity Building

Competence development represents the educational core of the ecosystem.

The B4C project has established a comprehensive learning pathway that supports learners at different qualification levels and professional backgrounds.

The educational portfolio includes:

- vocational education and training courses;
- Continuing Professional Development for VET trainers;
- the Carbon Manager Programme;
- Erasmus+ KA1 mobility courses;
- competence validation using the LEVEL5 methodology; and
- digital learning environments supporting lifelong learning.

Rather than delivering isolated courses, the ecosystem provides continuous competence development throughout professional careers.

Innovation

Innovation within the THREE C ecosystem is driven through collaborative learning and practical experimentation.

Innovation activities include:

- Design Thinking workshops;
- challenge-based learning;
- collaborative prototype development;
- pilot implementation projects;
- regional demonstration activities;
- new biochar application scenarios; and
- educational innovation.

By integrating learning directly with experimentation, participants become active contributors to innovation rather than passive recipients of knowledge.

Networking

Networking provides the social infrastructure of the ecosystem.

The THREE C community connects educational institutions, research organisations, municipalities, SMEs, farmers, biochar producers, consultants, NGOs and public authorities through continuous exchange and collaboration.

Networking activities include:

- European conferences;
- workshops and webinars;
- thematic working groups;
- communities of practice;
- collaborative project development;
- peer learning; and
- international stakeholder cooperation.

These interactions enable knowledge to circulate rapidly throughout the ecosystem and stimulate new partnerships.

Implementation

The ultimate objective of the ecosystem is practical implementation.

Educational activities and collaborative innovation culminate in regional projects that apply Circular Carbon Economy principles in authentic contexts.

Implementation activities include:

- regional biochar projects;
- Circular Carbon Management planning;
- stakeholder facilitation;
- consultancy;
- biomass valorisation strategies;
- follow-up European projects; and
- practical support for municipalities, businesses and community initiatives.

This implementation pillar ensures that competence development generates measurable environmental, economic and societal impact.

4.3. Interaction Between the Five Pillars

Although each pillar fulfils a distinct function, their true value lies in their continuous interaction.

- Knowledge informs educational programmes.
- Education develops competences that enable innovation.
- Innovation generates practical implementation projects.
- Implementation creates new experiences that enrich the shared knowledge base.
- Networking connects all participants throughout this continuous learning cycle.

The ecosystem therefore operates as a dynamic system in which every activity contributes simultaneously to competence development, innovation and regional implementation.

4.4. Digital Infrastructure as an Integrating Element

The digital infrastructure developed during B4C provides the connective tissue linking all five pillars.

The B4C website introduces the ecosystem to external stakeholders.

The Moodle platform supports competence development.

The Biochar Course provides flexible online learning.

The Support Hub and educational repositories provide access to resources.

The developing Virtual Marketplace facilitates stakeholder interaction and future collaboration.

Together these digital services enable continuous communication and knowledge exchange independent of geographical location while supporting the long-term sustainability of the network.

4.5. The Educational Position of B4C

Within the broader ecosystem, B4C fulfils a unique strategic role.

The project provides the educational methodologies, competence frameworks and learning environments that prepare professionals for implementing Circular Carbon Economy solutions.

The accredited VET courses, Continuing Professional Development programme, Carbon Manager Course and Erasmus+ mobility courses together establish a coherent European learning pathway supporting learners from vocational education through to advanced professional practice.

This educational infrastructure enables the wider THREE C ecosystem to continuously develop its human capacity and ensures that future innovation is supported by appropriately qualified professionals.

4.6. An Open and Evolving Ecosystem

The THREE C ecosystem has been designed as an open organisational model that welcomes continuous growth and adaptation.

New educational institutions, research organisations, municipalities, companies and civil society organisations can contribute additional expertise, implementation experiences and educational resources while simultaneously benefiting from the existing infrastructure.

Future European projects will not create isolated outputs but will contribute directly to the shared ecosystem, enriching its educational resources, expanding stakeholder cooperation and strengthening regional implementation.

This openness ensures that the ecosystem remains dynamic, responsive and capable of supporting Europe's transition towards a Circular Carbon Economy over the long term.

5. Mission and Vision

5.1. Our Vision

The THREE C initiative shares a common vision of a Europe in which the Circular Carbon Economy contributes significantly to climate neutrality, resilient regional economies and sustainable resource management. This vision recognises that the transition towards circular carbon systems depends not only on technological innovation but also on competent people, collaborative organisations and active communities capable of implementing change.

The network therefore envisions a future in which biochar, sustainable biomass utilisation and circular carbon management are widely integrated into agriculture, horticulture, forestry, construction, environmental management and regional development. Professionals, educators, researchers, businesses and public authorities work together within interconnected regional ecosystems that combine scientific knowledge with practical implementation.

Education plays a central role within this vision. Competence development enables individuals and organisations to understand complex systems, cooperate across sectors and design innovative solutions adapted to regional conditions. Through continuous learning and collaboration, the THREE C network aims to strengthen Europe's capacity to address climate challenges while creating new opportunities for sustainable economic development.

Vision Statement

A European Circular Carbon Economy supported by competent people, collaborative innovation and regional implementation.

5.2. Our Mission

The mission of the THREE C network is to strengthen Europe's capacity for the Circular Carbon Economy by connecting education, research, innovation and practical implementation within one collaborative ecosystem.

The network supports organisations and individuals throughout the complete innovation cycle—from competence development and collaborative learning to regional implementation and European cooperation. Rather than acting as a single project consortium, THREE C provides a long-term platform through which knowledge, educational resources and practical experience can be continuously exchanged and further developed.

To achieve this mission, the network:

- develops and disseminates competence-oriented education and training;
- supports lifelong learning and Continuing Professional Development;
- facilitates collaboration among stakeholders from education, research, business and public authorities;
- promotes innovation through challenge-based learning and collaborative project development;
- supports regional implementation of Circular Carbon Economy solutions;
- contributes to European cooperation through Erasmus+, Interreg, Horizon Europe and other collaborative initiatives; and
- builds a sustainable organisational framework that enables long-term cooperation beyond individual projects.

5.3. Core Principles

The activities of the THREE C network are guided by a common set of principles that reflect its educational philosophy and collaborative culture.

Collaboration

Sustainable innovation emerges through cooperation between different disciplines, organisations and sectors. The network therefore promotes openness, mutual learning and long-term partnerships.

Competence Development

People are the most important resource for the transition towards a Circular Carbon Economy. The network invests in competence development through vocational education, higher education, professional training and lifelong learning.

Innovation

Innovation is understood as a collaborative process in which new ideas are developed, tested and refined through practical application. The network encourages experimentation, Design Thinking and continuous improvement.

Sustainability

Environmental, social and economic sustainability are considered together. Activities supported by the network aim to strengthen climate resilience, circular resource management and regional value creation.

Openness

Educational resources, implementation experiences and practical knowledge should be shared whenever possible to accelerate learning and innovation across Europe. The network therefore promotes Open Educational Resources, collaborative knowledge exchange and transparent cooperation.

Regional Relevance

Although operating at European level, the network recognises that Circular Carbon Economy solutions must always respond to local conditions. Regional diversity is therefore regarded as a source of innovation rather than a barrier to cooperation.

5.4. Strategic Objectives

To realise its vision and mission, the THREE C network will pursue several long-term strategic objectives.

Strengthening European competence development

Expand high-quality education and professional development opportunities that prepare learners, educators and practitioners for the implementation of Circular Carbon Economy solutions.

Supporting collaborative innovation

Create environments in which stakeholders jointly develop new educational concepts, technologies, implementation models and regional solutions.

Facilitating regional implementation

Support municipalities, businesses, educational institutions and community organisations in designing and implementing Circular Carbon Economy initiatives adapted to their regional contexts.

Building a European community

Develop a vibrant network of organisations and individuals that continuously exchange knowledge, support one another and jointly shape future developments.

Ensuring long-term sustainability

Establish stable organisational structures, digital services and collaborative mechanisms that enable the ecosystem to grow beyond the duration of individual European projects.

5.5. Looking Ahead

The vision and mission presented in this chapter provide the strategic orientation for the continued development of the THREE C initiative.

They also reflect the evolution from a project-based partnership towards a permanent European community dedicated to competence development, collaborative innovation and practical implementation. Future organisational structures, membership models and network services described in the following chapters are intended to support this common vision and enable members to contribute actively to Europe's transition towards a Circular Carbon Economy.

The THREE C network therefore sees itself not merely as an organisation but as a community of practice that connects people, knowledge and action across Europe.

6. Members and Stakeholders

6.1. A Multi-Stakeholder Community

The transition towards a Circular Carbon Economy requires cooperation between a wide range of organisations and individuals. No single stakeholder possesses all the competences, resources or responsibilities necessary to establish sustainable circular carbon systems. Successful implementation depends on interdisciplinary collaboration that combines scientific knowledge, educational expertise, technological innovation, entrepreneurial initiative and practical regional experience.

The THREE C network has therefore been established as an open multi-stakeholder community that welcomes organisations and individuals from different sectors while providing a common platform for cooperation, competence development and innovation.

Membership is based not on institutional type but on a shared commitment to advancing the Circular Carbon Economy through education, collaboration and practical implementation.

6.2. Stakeholder Groups

The ecosystem currently brings together stakeholders from a broad range of professional fields and organisational backgrounds.

Educational Organisations

Vocational education providers, adult education centres, schools and training organisations form the educational backbone of the network. They develop and deliver competence-oriented learning programmes, pilot innovative teaching approaches and support the dissemination of educational resources throughout Europe.

Universities and Research Organisations

Higher education institutions contribute scientific expertise, applied research and methodological development. They support innovation, evaluate new technologies and strengthen the connection between research, education and practical implementation.

SMEs and Technology Providers

Small and medium-sized enterprises play an essential role in developing, testing and commercialising innovative Circular Carbon Economy solutions. Their practical experience ensures that educational activities remain closely connected to technological developments and market needs.

Municipalities and Public Authorities

Local and regional authorities increasingly recognise the importance of circular carbon strategies for climate action, waste management, sustainable procurement and regional development. Their participation enables educational activities to address authentic implementation challenges while strengthening regional cooperation.

Farmers, Land Managers and Biochar Producers

Agricultural stakeholders contribute practical knowledge of biomass production, soil management and biochar applications. Their experience is essential for validating innovative approaches under real operational conditions and for developing sustainable regional value chains.

NGOs and Civil Society Organisations

Civil society organisations support awareness raising, community engagement and citizen participation. They facilitate dialogue between technical experts and local communities while promoting the broader societal benefits of Circular Carbon Economy initiatives.

Consultants and Individual Experts

Independent professionals contribute specialised expertise in education, engineering, carbon accounting, environmental management, project development and facilitation. Their flexible involvement strengthens the interdisciplinary character of the network.

Learners and Young Professionals

Learners are not only beneficiaries of educational activities but active contributors to innovation. Through challenge-based learning, pilot projects and collaborative design processes, they continuously enrich the ecosystem with new ideas and implementation concepts.

6.3. Membership Categories

To accommodate the diversity of organisations involved, the THREE C network foresees several complementary membership categories.

Membership Category	Typical Members	Main Contribution
Educational Members	VET providers, adult education centres, schools	Training, curriculum development, competence development

Membership Category	Typical Members	Main Contribution
Academic Members	Universities, research institutes	Research, innovation, scientific support
Professional Members	SMEs, consultants, technology providers	Practical implementation, innovation, demonstration
Public Members	Municipalities, regional authorities	Regional strategies, policy development, pilot implementation
Civil Society Members	NGOs, associations, community initiatives	Participation, dissemination, citizen engagement
Individual Members	Experts, trainers, learners, Carbon Managers	Professional expertise, networking and community building
Associated Members	European projects and strategic partner organisations	Cooperation, knowledge exchange and joint development

These categories provide flexibility while ensuring that all members contribute to the common objectives of the network.

6.4. Benefits of Membership

Membership in the THREE C network offers access to a growing European ecosystem of knowledge, expertise and collaboration.

Members benefit from:

- participation in European communities of practice;
- access to educational resources and Open Educational Resources;
- Continuing Professional Development opportunities;
- Carbon Manager training programmes;
- competence validation methodologies;
- webinars, workshops and conferences;
- collaborative project development;
- dissemination through the THREE C communication channels;
- access to implementation examples and pilot projects; and
- opportunities to participate in future European initiatives.

Rather than representing a traditional membership organisation, the network aims to create mutual value through collaboration, shared learning and joint innovation.

6.5. Member Responsibilities

The success of the network depends upon active participation by its members.

Members are therefore encouraged to:

- contribute expertise and practical experience;
- participate in educational and networking activities;
- share good practice examples and implementation experiences;
- support collaborative learning and peer exchange;
- contribute to the continuous improvement of educational resources;
- identify new cooperation opportunities; and
- promote the principles and objectives of the THREE C initiative within their own organisations and professional networks.

Membership is therefore understood as an active contribution to a European learning community rather than simply an affiliation.

6.6. Building Regional Communities

Although organised at European level, the THREE C network recognises that Circular Carbon Economy solutions are implemented locally.

The network therefore encourages the development of regional communities that connect educational institutions, municipalities, businesses, farmers, research organisations and civil society around common regional objectives.

These regional communities may organise workshops, demonstration projects, study visits, Carbon Manager courses and collaborative innovation activities while remaining connected to the wider European ecosystem through common methodologies, digital infrastructure and educational resources.

Regional hubs will therefore become important building blocks of the future network and, eventually, of the planned European Cooperative.

6.7. Growing Together

The membership model has deliberately been designed as an open and evolving framework.

New organisations and individuals will be able to join as the ecosystem expands through additional European projects, regional initiatives and educational activities. Diversity is regarded as one of the network's greatest strengths, ensuring that the ecosystem remains innovative, interdisciplinary and responsive to emerging societal challenges.

By bringing together educators, researchers, practitioners, policy makers and learners within one collaborative framework, the THREE C network creates the social capital necessary to support long-term competence development and practical implementation of the Circular Carbon Economy across Europe.

7. Services

7.1. Creating Value through Services

The long-term success of the THREE C network depends not only on its membership but also on its ability to provide valuable services that support education, innovation and implementation. The network therefore aims to offer a comprehensive portfolio of activities that address the needs of educators, researchers, businesses, municipalities, practitioners and civil society.

Unlike many project-based networks that primarily exchange information, THREE C combines knowledge management, competence development, collaborative innovation and practical support within one integrated service ecosystem. These services will continue to evolve as the network grows and new members contribute additional expertise and experience.

The service portfolio is organised into six complementary areas.

7.2. Educational Services

Education represents the core function of the THREE C ecosystem.

Building upon the achievements of the B4C project, the network provides competence-oriented learning opportunities covering vocational education, higher education, adult learning and Continuing Professional Development.

Educational services include:

- accredited vocational education and training (VET) courses;
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes for trainers and educators;
- the Carbon Manager Programme;
- Erasmus+ KA1 mobility courses;
- competence validation using the LEVEL5 methodology;
- Open Educational Resources (OER);
- the B4C Moodle learning platform;
- the online Biochar Course; and
- curriculum development and educational consultancy.

Together these services establish a European learning pathway that supports learners from introductory vocational education through to advanced professional practice.

7.3. Professional Support Services

The network supports professionals and organisations wishing to strengthen their competences in the Circular Carbon Economy.

Professional services include:

- competence assessment and validation;
- mentoring and peer learning;
- expert webinars and online seminars;
- exchange of educational and implementation experience;
- coaching for new educational initiatives;
- support for competence-oriented curriculum development; and
- guidance for educational institutions introducing Circular Carbon Economy topics.

These activities encourage continuous professional development while strengthening collaboration among educators and practitioners across Europe.

7.4. Innovation Services

Innovation within the THREE C network is understood as a collaborative process that combines education, research and practical implementation.

Innovation services include:

- Design Thinking workshops;
- collaborative innovation laboratories;
- prototype development;
- challenge-based learning activities;
- regional scenario development;
- pilot project support;
- interdisciplinary working groups; and
- exchange of innovative biochar applications and Circular Carbon Economy solutions.

Through these services, the network transforms educational activities into practical innovation processes while enabling members to jointly develop new ideas and implementation concepts.

7.5. Networking Services

The network provides multiple opportunities for communication, collaboration and partnership development.

Networking services include:

- annual European conferences;
- thematic workshops;
- webinars;
- communities of practice;
- expert groups;
- stakeholder brokerage;
- partner search for European projects;
- regional networking events; and
- dissemination of member activities through the THREE C communication channels.

These activities strengthen the exchange of knowledge and contribute to the continuous growth of the European Circular Carbon Economy community.

7.6. Implementation Services

Education and innovation ultimately aim to support practical implementation.

The network therefore provides services that assist organisations in planning and implementing regional Circular Carbon Economy initiatives.

These services include:

- application of the Circular Carbon Management System (CCMS);
- stakeholder mapping and engagement;
- regional biomass and value-chain analysis;
- support for regional Circular Carbon Economy strategies and
- the development of local and regional strategies and action plans for the CCE
- facilitation of collaborative planning processes;
- dissemination of implementation case studies;
- development of demonstration projects; and

- exchange of good practices among European regions.

Through these services, educational competences are translated into practical regional action.

7.7. European Cooperation Services

One of the major strengths of the THREE C network is its ability to connect organisations through European cooperation.

The network supports members by:

- identifying suitable European funding opportunities;
- facilitating consortium building;
- supporting project development;
- sharing project ideas and partnership requests;
- coordinating thematic working groups;
- disseminating European project results; and
- strengthening synergies between Erasmus+, Interreg, Horizon Europe and other European programmes.

By linking educational activities with collaborative project development, the network contributes to the continuous expansion of the ecosystem and enables members to participate actively in future European initiatives.

7.8. Digital Service Infrastructure

All services are supported by a common digital infrastructure that enables continuous communication, learning and collaboration.

The digital environment currently includes:

- the THREE C and B4C websites;
- the B4C Moodle platform;
- the Biochar Course;
- digital resource repositories;
- collaborative communication tools;
- webinar platforms; and
- the developing Virtual Marketplace.

These digital services ensure that members have continuous access to learning resources, implementation examples and networking opportunities regardless of geographical location.

7.9. Continuous Development of Services

The service portfolio presented in this chapter should be regarded as a living framework rather than a fixed catalogue.

As new members join the network and additional European projects contribute new knowledge and expertise, further educational offers, implementation tools and professional services will be integrated into the ecosystem.

This continuous evolution ensures that the THREE C network remains responsive to technological developments, educational needs and emerging opportunities within the Circular Carbon Economy.

The long-term objective is to establish a European centre of competence that supports members throughout the entire innovation cycle—from learning and competence development to regional implementation and international cooperation.

8. Governance

8.1. Principles of Collaborative Governance

The THREE C network is founded on the principle that long-term innovation in the Circular Carbon Economy can only be achieved through shared responsibility, transparency and active participation. Governance is therefore understood not merely as an administrative function but as a collaborative process that enables members to contribute to the strategic development of the network while respecting the diversity of their institutional backgrounds and regional contexts.

Rather than establishing a highly centralised organisation, the THREE C initiative promotes distributed leadership. Strategic coordination is combined with thematic working groups, regional initiatives and collaborative decision-making, allowing members to actively shape the future development of the ecosystem.

This governance philosophy reflects the educational principles of B4C, where participation, competence development and collaborative learning are regarded as essential drivers of sustainable innovation.

8.2. Current Organisational Structure

At present, the THREE C network operates under the umbrella of a German non-profit association, which provides the legal framework for coordinating activities, managing communication and supporting European cooperation.

The current governance structure consists of four complementary levels:

General Assembly

The General Assembly represents the participating organisations and provides the strategic direction for the network. It approves major developments, annual priorities and organisational changes while

ensuring that the network continues to pursue its mission of supporting the Circular Carbon Economy through education, innovation and collaboration.

Network Board

The Network Board coordinates the operational activities of the network. It is responsible for implementing the strategic decisions of the General Assembly, facilitating cooperation among members, coordinating European projects and overseeing the development of common services.

Working Groups

Thematic Working Groups bring together members with shared interests and expertise. They develop educational resources, organise collaborative activities, prepare project proposals and exchange implementation experiences in specific fields such as education, biochar applications, construction, agriculture, climate resilience or regional development.

Regional Communities

Regional communities connect local stakeholders within specific geographical areas. They facilitate regional cooperation, organise workshops and pilot activities and ensure that European knowledge is adapted to local needs and implementation contexts.

Together these four levels provide a flexible governance structure that combines European coordination with regional initiative and thematic expertise.

8.3. Working Groups

Working Groups form the operational core of the network.

Rather than creating permanent committees, the network encourages flexible groups that respond to emerging topics, technological developments and project opportunities.

Indicative Working Groups include:

- Education and Competence Development
- Biochar and Circular Carbon Economy
- Agriculture and Climate Farming
- Construction and Bio-based Materials
- Municipal and Regional Development
- Carbon Management and CCMS
- Digital Learning and Open Educational Resources
- European Projects and Innovation

Additional groups may be established whenever new priorities emerge or members identify common interests.

Working Groups are expected to produce practical outcomes, including educational materials, implementation guidelines, workshops, project proposals and good practice examples.

Members are currently active in DE, FR, SE, LU, BE, NL, IE, UK and ES.

8.4. Decision-Making

The governance model combines strategic coordination with broad member participation.

Major strategic decisions, including changes to organisational structures, long-term strategies and membership policies, will be taken collectively through the General Assembly.

Operational decisions concerning educational activities, conferences, project development and communication are coordinated by the Network Board in close consultation with the relevant Working Groups.

This balanced approach enables efficient management while maintaining openness, transparency and shared ownership among members.

Whenever possible, decisions are reached through dialogue and consensus, reflecting the collaborative culture that characterises the THREE C community.

8.5. Communication and Coordination

Continuous communication is essential for maintaining an active European community.

The network therefore combines regular face-to-face meetings with digital communication tools that enable continuous collaboration throughout the year.

Communication mechanisms include:

- annual member meetings;
- European conferences;
- online Working Group meetings;
- webinars;
- newsletters;
- collaborative digital platforms;
- the B4C Moodle environment;
- the THREE C and B4C websites; and
- the Virtual Marketplace.

These communication channels ensure that members remain connected, informed and actively involved in the development of the ecosystem.

8.6. Towards a European Cooperative

The current governance structure has proven effective for establishing and expanding the network. However, the continued growth of the THREE C initiative is expected to require a broader organisational framework capable of supporting an increasing number of members, European projects and professional services.

The long-term vision is therefore the gradual evolution of the existing association into a **European Cooperative**.

A cooperative structure would provide:

- shared ownership by members;

- democratic participation;
- long-term organisational stability;
- strengthened European identity;
- sustainable management of common services;
- greater visibility at European level; and
- increased opportunities for collaborative investment and innovation.

This transition will be undertaken gradually and in consultation with all members. It represents an evolutionary process rather than a replacement of the existing community.

Throughout this development, the collaborative values, educational mission and open culture established during the B4C project will remain central to the identity of the THREE C network.

8.7. Governance as a Learning Process

The governance model of the THREE C network is intentionally designed to evolve alongside the community itself.

As membership expands, new services are introduced and regional activities grow, governance arrangements will be reviewed and adapted to ensure that they continue to support effective collaboration while preserving openness and participation.

In this sense, governance is regarded as a continuous learning process. Experiences gained through educational activities, collaborative projects and regional implementation will inform future organisational development, ensuring that the network remains responsive to the needs of its members and to the evolving challenges of the Circular Carbon Economy.

9. Organisational Development Roadmap

9.1. A Phased Development Approach

The THREE C network has deliberately adopted an evolutionary approach to organisational development. Rather than creating a complex organisational structure from the outset, the network has grown step by step alongside the educational activities, collaborative projects and stakeholder community established through European cooperation.

This gradual development enables the network to respond flexibly to emerging opportunities while ensuring that organisational structures remain proportionate to the needs of the community. Each development phase builds upon the achievements of the previous one, creating continuity rather than disruption.

The roadmap presented below therefore describes a realistic pathway from the informal project community established during B4C towards a sustainable European organisation capable of supporting education, innovation and implementation over the long term.

9.2. Phase I – Building the Community (2024)

The first phase focused on creating relationships rather than organisational structures.

During the early stages of the B4C project, cooperation centred on establishing trust among project partners, identifying common objectives and engaging additional stakeholders from vocational education, research, municipalities, businesses and civil society.

Important milestones included:

- establishment of the project consortium;
- stakeholder mapping and surveys;
- creation of the European Competence Framework;
- development of the first educational programmes;
- launch of the B4C website and Moodle platform; and
- first networking activities with associated partners.

At this stage, the network functioned primarily as an informal European learning community.

9.3. Phase II – Developing Network Services (2025)

During the second phase, the community evolved into an active European network supported by concrete educational and collaborative services.

Major developments included:

- delivery of accredited VET courses;
- implementation of the CPD programme for trainers;
- launch of the Carbon Manager Course;
- creation of Open Educational Resources;
- pilot learning projects;
- conferences and workshops;
- expansion of the stakeholder database;
- establishment of digital learning services; and
- increased cooperation with related European initiatives.

The network therefore moved beyond project communication and began providing tangible services for its members and stakeholders.

9.4. Phase III – Establishing a Membership Community (2026)

Following the completion of the B4C project, attention will shift towards consolidating and expanding the community.

Key priorities include:

- introducing a structured membership model;
- strengthening communication with existing stakeholders;
- expanding the educational portfolio;
- increasing participation in webinars and Working Groups;
- supporting regional communities of practice;
- maintaining the digital learning infrastructure; and
- encouraging active member participation in future European projects.

The objective of this phase is to transform project participants into long-term members of the THREE C community while preserving the open and collaborative character of the network.

9.5. Phase IV – Developing a European Cooperative (2027)

As membership and activities continue to expand, the network intends to establish a more robust organisational framework.

The proposed European Cooperative will build upon the experience gained through the existing association while providing greater opportunities for shared ownership, joint investment and collaborative governance.

Its principal objectives will include:

- coordinating European educational services;
- maintaining the digital infrastructure;
- supporting regional competence centres;
- organising European training activities;
- facilitating collaborative innovation;
- strengthening project development; and
- representing the community at European level.

The cooperative is envisaged as a service organisation that enables members to work together more effectively while preserving the collaborative culture established during the B4C project.

9.6. Phase V – Expanding the Ecosystem (Beyond 2027)

The final phase represents the long-term vision of the THREE C initiative.

Rather than concentrating solely on organisational growth, the emphasis will be placed on expanding the ecosystem through new educational offers, regional implementation projects and European cooperation.

Future developments may include:

- regional competence hubs;
- specialised Carbon Manager programmes;
- advanced Continuing Professional Development;
- European summer schools and study visits;
- expanded digital services;
- certification and quality assurance;
- collaborative research and innovation projects; and
- stronger cooperation with European policy initiatives.

By this stage, the network will have evolved from a project-based partnership into a mature European competence and innovation ecosystem.

9.7. Milestones

The organisational development pathway can be summarised through a series of strategic milestones.

Year	Development Stage	Main Outcomes
2024	Informal Community	Consortium building, stakeholder engagement, educational development
2025	Network with Services	Courses, conferences, Moodle, pilot projects, digital infrastructure
2026	Membership Community	Membership model, Working Groups, expanded educational services
2027	European Cooperative	Shared governance, coordinated services, strengthened European identity
Beyond 2027	European Ecosystem	Regional hubs, certification, expanded cooperation, continuous innovation

The roadmap should be regarded as a strategic orientation rather than a rigid implementation plan. Its purpose is to provide a common direction while allowing sufficient flexibility to respond to emerging opportunities and the evolving needs of the network.

9.8. Continuous Learning and Adaptation

One of the defining characteristics of the THREE C initiative is its commitment to continuous learning.

Just as the educational programmes encourage reflection and improvement, the organisational development of the network will also be reviewed regularly. Experiences gained through European projects, member feedback and regional implementation activities will inform future adaptations of the organisational model.

This adaptive approach ensures that the network remains relevant, resilient and capable of supporting the continued transition towards a Circular Carbon Economy.

Rather than pursuing growth for its own sake, the THREE C network aims to develop sustainably by strengthening collaboration, creating value for its members and continuously improving the services offered to the European community.

10. Sustainability Strategy

10.1. Building a Sustainable European Community

The long-term sustainability of the THREE C network depends on much more than securing financial resources. Sustainable development requires an active community, valuable services, continuous innovation and an organisational structure capable of adapting to future challenges.

The B4C project has established many of the essential building blocks for such a community, including competence frameworks, accredited courses, digital learning platforms, pilot projects, collaborative methodologies and an expanding European stakeholder network. The purpose of the sustainability strategy is to ensure that these achievements continue to develop after the completion of the project and remain accessible to future generations of learners, educators and practitioners.

The strategy therefore combines educational sustainability, organisational development, collaborative innovation and diversified resource mobilisation into one integrated approach.

10.2. Five Pillars of Sustainability

The long-term sustainability of the THREE C ecosystem is based on five mutually reinforcing pillars.

Membership and Community

An active membership community forms the social foundation of the network. Members contribute knowledge, educational resources, practical experience and collaborative activities while simultaneously benefiting from shared services and European cooperation.

The continued growth of the community will strengthen both the resilience and the diversity of the ecosystem.

Education and Training

Competence development represents the core activity of the network.

The continued delivery of accredited VET courses, Continuing Professional Development programmes, the Carbon Manager Course and Erasmus+ KA1 mobility courses will ensure that educational activities remain active while attracting new members and strengthening the visibility of the network.

Professional Services

The network will gradually expand its portfolio of professional services, including competence validation, mentoring, webinars, curriculum development, stakeholder facilitation and regional advisory support.

These services create value for members while simultaneously supporting the implementation of Circular Carbon Economy initiatives across Europe.

European Cooperation

Future Erasmus+, Interreg, Horizon Europe and national projects will continue to contribute new educational resources, implementation experiences and collaborative opportunities.

Rather than functioning as isolated initiatives, future projects will become integral components of the common THREE C ecosystem.

Innovation and Implementation

Continuous innovation ensures that the network remains relevant.

Pilot projects, demonstration activities, regional implementation initiatives and collaborative innovation processes will continuously enrich the educational resources and strengthen the practical impact of the network.

Together these five pillars create a balanced sustainability model that combines educational excellence, community development and practical implementation.

10.3. Resource Strategy

The THREE C network aims to maintain a diversified resource base that reduces dependence on individual funding programmes.

Potential sources supporting future activities include:

- membership contributions;
- participation fees for specialised professional courses;
- Erasmus+ learning mobility activities (KA1);
- European cooperation projects;
- consultancy and advisory services;
- collaborative research and innovation initiatives; and
- strategic partnerships with public and private organisations.

This diversified approach increases organisational resilience while preserving the network's commitment to accessible education and collaborative knowledge sharing.

10.4. Maintaining the Digital Infrastructure

The digital infrastructure established through B4C represents one of the network's most valuable long-term assets.

The websites, Moodle platform, Biochar Course, Open Educational Resources and future Virtual Marketplace will continue to serve as the digital backbone of the community.

Their maintenance will focus on:

- continuous updating of educational resources;
- integration of new implementation examples;
- expansion of Open Educational Resources;
- support for online communities of practice;
- dissemination of member activities; and
- provision of digital collaboration tools.

Maintaining these services ensures that knowledge remains accessible while supporting collaboration across Europe.

10.5. Investing in People

Ultimately, the greatest strength of the THREE C network lies in its members.

The sustainability strategy therefore places particular emphasis on developing people rather than simply maintaining products.

Future activities will focus on:

- supporting new trainers and Carbon Managers;
- strengthening communities of practice;
- encouraging peer learning;
- promoting leadership among members;
- involving young professionals and learners; and
- recognising contributions made by active members.

By investing continuously in human capacity, the network ensures that knowledge, experience and innovation continue to expand over time.

10.6. Monitoring Sustainability

The development of the network will be reviewed regularly using a combination of qualitative and quantitative indicators.

Indicative indicators include:

- growth in membership;

- participation in educational activities;
- number of accredited courses delivered;
- use of digital learning platforms;
- participation in webinars and conferences;
- collaborative European projects initiated;
- regional implementation activities;
- contributions to Open Educational Resources; and
- member satisfaction.

Monitoring these indicators enables the network to identify emerging needs, improve services and adapt its organisational strategy where necessary.

10.7. Sustainable Future Actions

The sustainability strategy presented in this report reflects the long-term ambition of the THREE C initiative.

Rather than preserving the outputs of a completed project, the network aims to establish a continuously evolving European ecosystem that supports competence development, collaborative innovation and practical implementation in the Circular Carbon Economy.

Through active membership, shared responsibility and continuous learning, the community will continue to grow while remaining faithful to the educational values established during the B4C project.

The proposed transition towards a European Cooperative will provide an appropriate organisational framework for this continued development, ensuring that the network remains open, resilient and capable of supporting future generations of professionals working towards a climate-neutral and circular Europe.

11. Towards a European Cooperative

11.1. From Network to European Organisation

During the implementation of the B4C project, the THREE C initiative evolved from a project partnership into an active European community connecting education, research, business, public authorities and civil society. This development has demonstrated that long-term cooperation requires an organisational framework capable of maintaining educational services, coordinating collaborative activities and supporting the continuous expansion of the ecosystem.

The current organisational structure, based on a German non-profit association, has provided a stable and flexible basis for establishing the network. However, as the community continues to grow,

additional organisational capacities will be required to support an increasing number of members, European projects, educational programmes and regional initiatives.

The consortium therefore envisages the gradual evolution of the current network towards a **European Cooperative** that reflects the collaborative nature of the THREE C community while providing an appropriate legal and organisational framework for long-term European cooperation.

This transition should be understood as an evolutionary process that builds upon the existing strengths of the network rather than replacing them.

11.2. Why a European Cooperative?

The cooperative model closely reflects the values and working principles that have characterised the THREE C initiative from its inception.

The network has always been based on:

- voluntary collaboration;
- shared knowledge;
- mutual support;
- democratic participation;
- practical innovation;
- regional engagement; and
- long-term capacity building.

These principles correspond closely to the cooperative philosophy of jointly creating value for members while pursuing wider societal objectives.

A European Cooperative would therefore provide an organisational framework that enables members to jointly develop educational services, digital infrastructure, innovation activities and collaborative projects while preserving the openness and participatory culture established during the B4C project.

Rather than operating as a commercial enterprise, the cooperative would function as a European service organisation supporting its members in the transition towards a Circular Carbon Economy.

11.3. Possible Functions of the Cooperative

The future cooperative could gradually assume responsibility for coordinating and developing common services that benefit the entire community.

Indicative functions include:

- maintaining the THREE C digital infrastructure;
- coordinating the B4C educational portfolio;
- organising Continuing Professional Development programmes;
- delivering the Carbon Manager Course;
- supporting competence validation and certification;

- facilitating communities of practice;
- coordinating thematic Working Groups;
- organising European conferences and networking events;
- supporting collaborative project development;
- maintaining knowledge repositories and Open Educational Resources;
- promoting quality assurance; and
- representing the interests of the network at European level.

The cooperative would therefore act primarily as an enabling organisation that strengthens collaboration rather than centralising activities.

11.4. Supporting Regional Communities

Although organised at European level, the cooperative should strengthen regional activities rather than replace them.

Regional communities remain the places where Circular Carbon Economy solutions are implemented, educational programmes are delivered and innovation is tested under local conditions.

The cooperative could therefore support regional hubs by:

- facilitating knowledge exchange;
- providing educational resources;
- coordinating trainer development;
- supporting Carbon Manager programmes;
- assisting regional project development;
- promoting international cooperation; and
- disseminating successful implementation examples across Europe.

This approach ensures that European coordination complements local initiative while respecting regional diversity.

11.5. Guiding Principles for Future Development

The future development of the THREE C initiative should continue to be guided by the principles that have characterised the B4C project.

These include:

- openness to new members and ideas;
- collaboration across disciplines and sectors;
- commitment to high-quality education;

- promotion of practical innovation;
- respect for regional diversity;
- transparency in decision-making;
- responsible environmental action;
- lifelong learning and competence development; and
- European cooperation based on mutual benefit.

These principles provide continuity between the current network and any future organisational structure.

11.6. Concluding Remarks

The B4C project has demonstrated that education, competence development and collaborative innovation are essential components of the Circular Carbon Economy.

By integrating these elements into the wider THREE C ecosystem, the consortium has established a strong foundation for long-term European cooperation. The network already connects people, organisations and projects across multiple sectors and countries, creating a dynamic community that extends well beyond the original Erasmus+ partnership.

The proposed evolution towards a European Cooperative represents the next logical step in this development. It will provide the organisational capacity required to maintain common services, coordinate collaborative activities and support the continued growth of the community while preserving the openness, participation and educational values that define the THREE C initiative.

Ultimately, the success of the THREE C network will not be measured by the size of its organisation but by its ability to strengthen competences, stimulate innovation and support practical implementation of the Circular Carbon Economy throughout Europe.

In this sense, the B4C project represents not the conclusion of a successful European project but the beginning of a long-term European movement that connects knowledge, education and action for a more sustainable and climate-resilient future.

12. Annex

Memorandum of Cooperation in the 3C/B4C Network

European Capacity-Building Platform for the Circular Carbon Economy

12.1. Preamble

The transition towards a Circular Carbon Economy requires close cooperation between education, research, business, public authorities and civil society. The challenges associated with climate change, sustainable resource management and regional bioeconomy development can only be addressed through interdisciplinary collaboration, continuous competence development and the joint implementation of innovative solutions.

The THREE C Network (Circular Carbon Communities) has been established as a European multi-stakeholder platform that promotes cooperation in the fields of biochar, Circular Carbon Economy, climate resilience, sustainable biomass utilisation and competence development.

This Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) expresses the shared intention of participating organisations to collaborate within the THREE C Network. It establishes common principles, objectives and modes of cooperation while respecting the autonomy and legal independence of all participating organisations.

This Memorandum does not constitute a legally binding partnership agreement but provides the framework for voluntary and long-term cooperation.

2. Objectives

The partners agree to cooperate in order to:

- promote competence development for the Circular Carbon Economy;
- strengthen vocational education, adult education and lifelong learning;
- facilitate cooperation between research, education and practice;
- support regional implementation of biochar and Circular Carbon Economy solutions;
- encourage collaborative innovation and Design Thinking;
- exchange educational resources, implementation experiences and good practices;
- initiate and support European cooperation projects;

- contribute to climate action, circular resource management and sustainable regional development; and
 - strengthen the European THREE C community.
-

3. Areas of Cooperation

The partners may cooperate in one or more of the following areas:

Education

- Competence Frameworks
 - Curriculum development
 - Vocational education
 - Adult education
 - Continuing Professional Development
 - Carbon Manager programmes
 - Erasmus+ learning activities
-

Research and Innovation

- collaborative research
 - Living Labs
 - Design Thinking
 - pilot projects
 - demonstration activities
 - innovation workshops
-

Regional Development

- stakeholder engagement
- Circular Carbon Economy strategies

- biochar implementation
 - regional value chains
 - municipal cooperation
 - climate resilience initiatives
-

European Cooperation

- Erasmus+
 - Interreg
 - Horizon Europe
 - LIFE
 - national programmes
 - joint project development
-

4. Shared Principles

The partners agree to cooperate according to the following principles.

Collaboration

Partners share knowledge, experience and expertise while respecting the contributions of all members.

Openness

The network promotes open dialogue, transparent communication and, wherever possible, open educational resources.

Competence Development

Continuous learning and professional development are regarded as essential prerequisites for implementing the Circular Carbon Economy.

Innovation

Members encourage experimentation, interdisciplinary collaboration and practical problem solving.

Sustainability

Environmental, social and economic sustainability guide all activities of the network.

European Cooperation

Members actively support transnational exchange and collaborative European initiatives.

5. Commitments of the Partners

Partners joining the network agree, where appropriate, to:

- participate in network activities;
- contribute expertise and good practice examples;
- support collaborative learning;
- exchange information relevant to the network;
- contribute to Working Groups according to their interests;
- promote the objectives of the THREE C Network;
- encourage new organisations to join the community; and
- contribute to the continuous improvement of the ecosystem.

Participation in specific activities remains voluntary.

6. Services Provided by the Network

The network aims to provide participating organisations with access to:

- educational resources;
- competence frameworks;
- accredited learning programmes;
- Continuing Professional Development;
- Carbon Manager training;
- digital learning platforms;
- Open Educational Resources;

- webinars;
- conferences;
- Working Groups;
- project development support;
- European partner search;
- dissemination opportunities; and
- communities of practice.

These services will continuously evolve as the network expands.

7. Governance

The THREE C Network is coordinated through a collaborative governance structure consisting of:

- General Assembly (future)
- Network Board
- Working Groups
- Regional Communities
- Coordinating Organisation

The governance model may evolve as the network develops and may ultimately be integrated into a future European Cooperative.

8. Membership

Membership is open to organisations and individuals supporting the objectives of the THREE C Network.

Potential members include:

- vocational education providers;
- universities;
- research institutes;

- municipalities;
- SMEs;
- NGOs;
- farmers;
- biochar producers;
- consultants;
- individual experts;
- learners; and
- associated European projects.

Membership categories and procedures are described separately in the Membership Framework.

9. Communication

Partners agree to maintain regular communication through:

- annual meetings;
- conferences;
- webinars;
- newsletters;
- digital collaboration platforms;
- the THREE C website;
- the B4C educational platform;
- Working Groups; and
- communities of practice.

Partners are encouraged to share relevant news, events and project results with the network.

10. Intellectual Property and Knowledge Sharing

Each partner retains ownership of its own intellectual property.

Educational resources jointly developed within collaborative projects should, wherever possible, be made available under appropriate open licences to encourage European knowledge exchange.

The partners recognise the value of Open Educational Resources and collaborative innovation while respecting existing legal obligations and project-specific agreements.

11. Future Development

The partners acknowledge that the THREE C Network represents a long-term European initiative.

During the coming years the network intends to:

- strengthen its membership;
 - expand educational activities;
 - establish regional competence hubs;
 - develop additional European projects;
 - enlarge its digital service infrastructure;
 - strengthen cooperation among stakeholders; and
 - explore the establishment of a European Cooperative providing long-term organisational support for the network.
-

12. Duration

This Memorandum of Cooperation becomes effective upon signature by the participating organisation.

Participation remains voluntary.

Any partner may withdraw from the Memorandum at any time by written notification to the coordinating organisation.

The Memorandum may be reviewed and updated by mutual agreement as the network continues to develop.

Signatures

Organisation Representative Signature Date

In 2026, this MoC serves as a **declaration of intent** for organisations that wish to become part of the B4C/THREE C community. When the network transitions to the planned European Cooperative, this Memorandum can be replaced or complemented by formal membership agreements and statutes. This keeps the document flexible while giving the network a clear and professional framework for cooperation from the outset.