**THE BASQUE ECODESIGN MEETING 2020 IN BILBAO TO CELEBRATE 20 YEARS’ LEADERSHIP BY BASQUE COMPANIES IN ENVIRONMENTAL INNOVATION**

**The event, one of Europe’s most important in the field of ecodesign and organised by the Basque Government’s Ministry of the Environment and the Basque Ecodesign Center, will be held at the Euskalduna Conference Centre from 26-28 February.**

**The ecodesign and circular economy sector generates sales of nearly €2.5 billion a year in the Basque Country.**

*Bilbao, 14 February 2020*

From 26 to 28 February, different sectors will gather at Bilbao’s Euskalduna Conference Centre to discuss and reflect on the circular economy and ecodesign at the latest Basque Ecodesign Meeting (BEM 2020), one of Europe’s most important ecodesign events.

On the first day, Wednesday 26th, the BEM will analyse how companies and leading institutions of the sector are preparing for the new economy, by considering the main trends and challenges in the framework of the circular economy. One of the main speakers at BEM will be Marc Vidal, an economic analyst and consultant in digital transformation strategy, with a prolific career in writing and speaking about the digital era and Industry 4.0. Vidal, who champions technology and robots as allies and as tools to serve people, will be one of the speakers on the first day.

The second session, on the 27th, will go over the two decades of ‘Made in Euskadi’ ecodesign by considering 50 case studies of companies based in the territory, many of which are SMEs.

The last session, on Friday 28 February, will be geared exclusively to the new generations, under the slogan “*Youth Power – Leaders in a New Circular Economy.* Two hundred university and vocational training students will be in attendance.

The forum will attract professionals representing Basque companies, sectors such as machinery, the electricity sector, renewables, transport & mobility, packaging & packing, food, ICTs, construction materials, and furniture, from posts of responsibility in the company’s strategic decision-making to professional from the technical field and the academic world.

They will consider aspects related to legislative and regulatory trends, the improvements implemented by Basque companies in the last two years or examples of best practices.

**Two decades heading the environmental revolution in product design**

The leadership of Basque companies in this field statewide is enshrined in the year marking two decades since the first ecodesign projects in the Basque Country. Over half of Spanish companies certified in ecodesign are from the Basque Country, with over 38 products with environmental declaration.

Basque companies account for 5% of certificates worldwide, the same percentage as for the countries the size of Australia and double that for Argentina, Norway or Germany. It is a heterogeneous sector posting annual sales of over €2.5 billion in the Basque Country, according to 2018 figures, for circular economy products and services.

Furthermore, it is a way of addressing the range of products and services that increasingly more consumers are demanding. 82% of the Basque population quite or totally agrees that protecting the environment may drive economic growth in the Basque Country and 73% considers protecting the environment to be very important, a percentage that has steadily grown in recent years and puts the Basque Country on a par with countries such as Sweden, according to the Special Eurobarometer of the European Commission.

Registration to attend the session is free-of-charge and is through the BEM website (https://www.basqueecodesignmeeting2020.eus).

Further information: <https://www.basqueecodesignmeeting2020.eus>

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