

September 26th 2024



“CIRCULAR ECONOMY 360: Fostering circular practices to minimize resource waste”.

PANEL 2

CIRCULAR CONSUMPTION AND CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT: PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION

Shaping a Sustainable Future through
Circular Economy Principles



Co-funded by
the European Union



**HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT
ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS TO
YOUR PHONE, CLOTHES, OR
FURNITURE AFTER YOU'RE
DONE WITH THEM?**

THE PROBLEM WITH LINEAR CONSUMPTION

Resource depletion: we're running out of non-renewable resources like minerals and fossil fuels.

Waste: a "take-make-dispose" approach creates massive amounts of waste.

Environmental impact: large carbon footprints, pollution, deforestation, and biodiversity loss.

EXTRACT, PRODUCE,
USE AND DISPOSE

CONSTANT
DRAIN ON
NATURAL
RESOURCES

By 2050, global waste is projected to increase by 70% if current trends continue.

WHAT IS CIRCULAR CONSUMPTION?

Circular consumption is a sustainable model where the life of **products is extended**, and **waste is minimized**.



- **Reduce:** minimize waste at the source.
- **Reuse:** extend the life of products through repair or resale.
- **Recycle:** turn waste into new products.
- **Design for longevity:** products should be designed to last and be easily repaired.

LINEAR ECONOMY



CIRCULAR ECONOMY



CIRCULAR ECONOMY PRINCIPLES

- **Design out waste:** products should be designed with minimal waste in mind.

- **Keep materials in use:** everything, from raw materials to products, should be kept in circulation for as long as possible.

- **Regenerate natural systems:** focus on renewable resources and reducing environmental damage.

IT'S **NOT JUST ABOUT**
RECYCLING, BUT ABOUT DESIGNING
SYSTEMS WHERE PRODUCTS HAVE
MULTIPLE LIFE CYCLES.



HOW CONSUMERS DRIVE CIRCULARITY

- **Consumer responsibility:** consumers play a critical role in driving the shift toward circular consumption.
- **Demand for sustainable products:** people are increasingly looking for products that are eco-friendly.
- **Behavioral shifts:** adopting the mindset of using less, reusing more, and supporting companies with circular practices.



**HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE
BOUGHT A SECONDHAND ITEM
OR REPAIRED SOMETHING
INSTEAD OF REPLACING IT IN
THE PAST YEAR?**

CASE STUDIES OF CIRCULAR CONSUMPTION



Buy-back program: customers can return used furniture for resale or recycling.

Furniture rental: IKEA is experimenting with renting furniture instead of selling it outright.

CASE STUDIES OF CIRCULAR CONSUMPTION



Trade-in program: old devices are refurbished, resold, or recycled into new products.

Recycling robots: Apple uses robots like "Daisy" to disassemble and recycle components from old phones.

CASE STUDIES OF CIRCULAR CONSUMPTION



PATAGONIA

Worn Wear Program: customers can trade in used clothing for store credit, and the clothes are resold.

Repair campaigns: Patagonia offers free or low-cost repairs to extend the life of garments.

BENEFITS OF CIRCULAR CONSUMPTION

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- **Reduced waste:** keeping products in use prevents them from ending up in landfills or incinerators.
- **Lower carbon footprint:** extending product life means less energy is spent manufacturing new goods.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- **Job creation:** new industries are created around repair, remanufacturing, and recycling.
- **Cost savings:** for both companies and consumers, it's cheaper to repair or recycle than to continually buy new products.

SOCIAL BENEFITS

Fairer access: by promoting secondhand markets, more people can afford quality products.

**CIRCULAR CONSUMPTION
BENEFITS EVERYONE, FROM
THE PLANET TO THE
CONSUMER AND THE
ECONOMY.**

**WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES
TO CIRCULAR CONSUMPTION?**

CHALLENGES TO CIRCULAR CONSUMPTION

BEHAVIORAL
CHALLENGES

INFRASTRUCTURE
ISSUES

CORPORATE
RESISTANCE

PRODUCT DESIGN

WHAT ARE SOME CHALLENGES YOU THINK WE FACE IN MOVING TOWARD A CIRCULAR ECONOMY?

ENGAGING CONSUMERS FOR CIRCULARITY

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

- Consumers need information about circular options
- Companies should educate customers on the benefits of circular products (repair services, secondhand, etc.)

INCENTIVES FOR RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION

- Discounts for bringing in old products
- Financial incentives for recycling or reselling items
- Loyalty programs that reward sustainable behavior

TRANSPARENCY

- Consumers need to trust that companies are truly circular, not engaging in "greenwashing"

MARKETING THAT FALSELY CLAIMS A PRODUCT IS ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

POLICY AND GOVERNMENT ROLE IN CIRCULARITY

- **Extended producer responsibility (EPR):** companies are responsible for their products' entire lifecycle, including disposal.
- **Subsidies for circular practices:** financial support for businesses that adopt circular models.
- **Bans on single-use plastics:** laws that restrict disposable items to encourage reuse.



**THE EUROPEAN
UNION'S CIRCULAR
ECONOMY ACTION
PLAN**

**WHAT POLICIES COULD BE
IMPLEMENTED TO ENCOURAGE
MORE COMPANIES TO ADOPT
CIRCULAR MODELS?**

THE FUTURE OF CIRCULAR CONSUMPTION

WHAT THE FUTURE LOOKS LIKE

- **MORE SHARING PLATFORMS, REPAIR SERVICES, AND RESALE OPTIONS WILL BE AVAILABLE**
- **COMPANIES WILL DESIGN PRODUCTS TO BE LONG-LASTING AND EASY TO REPAIR**
- **CONSUMERS WILL PRIORITIZE SUSTAINABILITY OVER SHORT-TERM CONVENIENCE**

**"THE GREATEST THREAT TO
OUR PLANET IS THE BELIEF
THAT SOMEONE ELSE WILL
SAVE IT"
– ROBERT SWAN**

ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO START SMALL—BUY SECONDHAND, REPAIR INSTEAD OF REPLACE, AND SUPPORT COMPANIES THAT ARE EMBRACING CIRCULARITY.

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