

# GREEN GROWTH

## EMBRACING THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY PRINCIPLES

Environment

### GREEN GROWTH, A CIRCULAR ECONOMY STORY

The 'take, make, use, throw away' approach to scarce resources is a thing of the past. It's **time to close the loop** and invest in the circular economy and green growth!



The circular economy package brings the pieces together – production, consumption, secondary raw materials, waste management, innovation & investment – to cover the whole product lifecycle.

It means Europe is now the best place to grow a sustainable green business.

### GETTING PRIORITIES IN ORDER

The environment, the economy, international trade, society, research, regions... The circular economy **cuts across policy areas**. It's transversal... and vital to future EU competitiveness.



# PRODUCT DESIGN MATTERS

Did you know that smart product design can help to save precious resources? Smartphones contain up to 50 metals, so why throw them away? Products should be more durable and easier to repair. In a circular economy, products are **designed to save materials** and to keep them longer within our economy.

WORLDWIDE IN 2014...

- 41.8m tonnes** of e-waste generated (filling 1.15 million trucks)
- 15.5%** of e-waste generated is properly treated via official take-back schemes
- ~60%** of e-waste by weight comes from kitchen, laundry and bathroom appliances
- 5-10%** annual growth in e-waste
- ...YET THAT E-WASTE COULD HAVE BEEN WORTH €48.7BN**



TAKE THE SMARTPHONE...

- ~1.2 billion** sold annually
- ~7%** of e-waste by weight comes from mobiles, calculators, IT

...YET PHONES ARE PACKED WITH VALUE

- 1 tonne** of old phones nets 300g of gold
- 95%** mobiles recuperated = €1bn material costs savings

## OLD PHONE, NEW OPPORTUNITIES...

Discarding old phones is bad for the economy, environment and health. So why not design them to better reuse, recycle and create new opportunities?

- **Break mobiles up into components...** batteries, circuits, accessories, plastics, packaging
- **Extract the value...** gold, copper, lithium, cobalt, zinc, silver, plastic, cardboard
- **Make new things...** stainless steel, plastic products, batteries, car parts, other electronics, jewellery, boxes

Source: UN, Eurostat and European Commission

# WE SIMPLY CAN'T AFFORD TO WASTE OUR WASTE

The circular economy is an economic model that treats **waste as a valuable resource** – nothing is wasted. It's good for the environment, good for business and good for the economy.



TODAY'S CHALLENGES...

- 475kg** of annual municipal waste generated per person
- ~600m tonnes** of recyclable materials thrown away or 'wasted' annually
- 48%** of total waste treated is sent to landfill
- only **44%** of municipal waste in EU composted or recycled
- ~50%** of plastics go to landfill (<25% are recycled)



TOMORROW'S OPPORTUNITIES...

- 50%** less food waste
- 100%** ban on landfilling separated waste
- maximum **10%** landfilling of municipal waste
- 65%** of municipal waste recycled
- 3%** boost in GDP from industrial material savings

...AND ALL WITHIN OUR LIFETIME!

## CLOSING THE LOOP...

The European Union's circular economy package closes the loop in production, consumption, waste and raw materials.

*Because it's time to leave behind the linear – take, make and throw away – economy in favour of the circular – make, use, reuse – economy.*

Source: Eurostat and European Commission

# WIN-WIN FOR ALL

The circular economy is actually a **win-win-win situation**: for the economy, for the environment – and for you!

59% OF EUROPEANS SAY THEY WANT...



➤ **better waste recycling facilities & more municipal composting**

➤ **FINANCIAL INCENTIVES TO BOOST RECYCLING**

➤ **LIMITS ON PLASTIC WASTE**

➤ **MORE EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES**

96% OF EUROPEANS SAY THEY WANT...

[www.ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy](http://www.ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy)

[www.facebook.com/EUEnvironment](https://www.facebook.com/EUEnvironment)

[twitter.com/EU\\_ENV](https://twitter.com/EU_ENV)

## AND ABSOLUTELY EVERYONE WANTS...

- things that last longer
- goods that are easier to take apart
- simpler ways to recycle and repair
- to save energy and resources
- healthy families and a healthier environment
- secure jobs and economic stability

By embracing the circular economy principles, we can achieve these goals!



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Source: Eurostat

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