



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# Climate ambition and the role of the Circular Economy transition

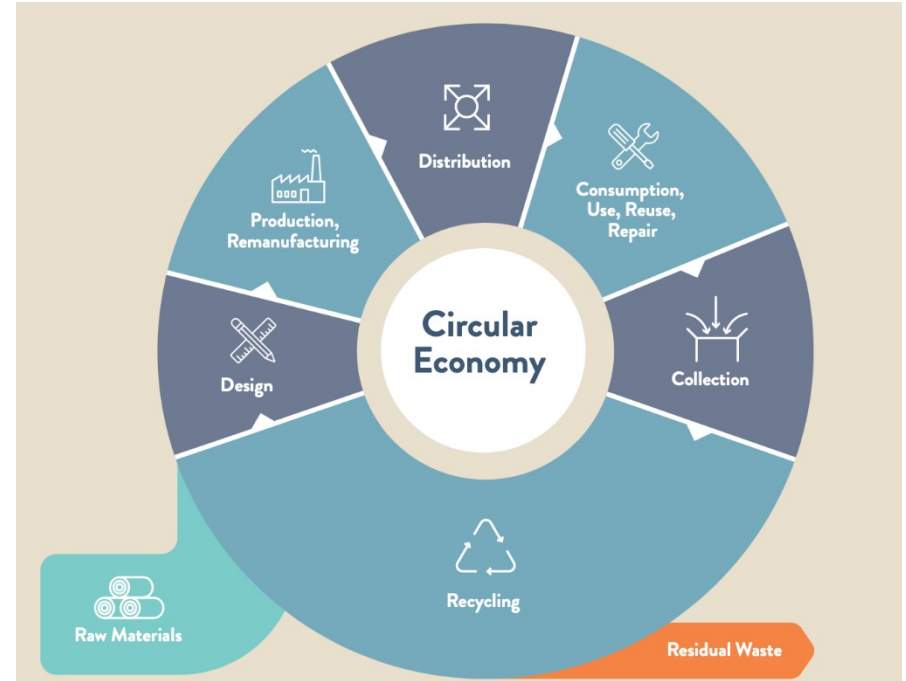
Environment Ireland

January 2022

# Circular Economy - Key messages



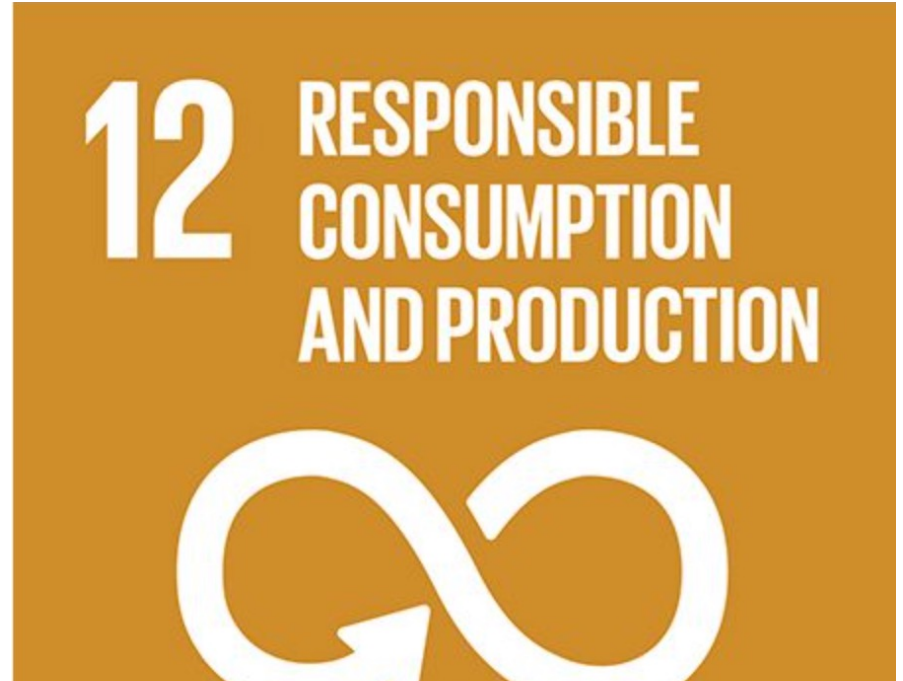
- Circular Economy (CE) transition is a key component of climate action.
- Not simply a waste issue - waste emissions small part of national inventory: 1.5% total GHG
- Emissions arising from materials management 55 – 65% national emissions – less “stuff” and better “stuff” to reduce production / consumption emissions.
- CE is not a ‘sector’ that will deliver emissions reductions like energy, agriculture, transport, manufacturing.
- Circularity opportunities in every sector – rethink value chains / production & consumption processes.



# Context and challenge



- Patterns of production and consumption are a huge driver of climate change - BAU 3x Earths.
- Renewables, energy efficiency will get us so far, embedding circularity across all sectors will get us further.
- Up to 80% of product environmental impacts are determined at design phase.
- Reduce life-cycle climate and env footprint of products.
- Pursue circularity principles across multiple regulatory codes – e.g. planning, licencing, environment etc to move CE from the margins to mainstream.
- Improve the data Availability of CE agreed indicator.
- Communicate & demystify.



# Waste Action Plan - headline actions



**DEPOSIT AND RETURN SCHEME  
FOR PLASTIC BOTTLES AND  
ALUMINIUM CANS**



**RECYCLING  
TARGETS  
FOR WASTE  
COLLECTORS**



**WASTE RECOVERY LEVY TO  
ENCOURAGE RECYCLING**

**EXPANDED ROLE FOR WERLAS  
TO ADDRESS PRIORITY WASTE  
ENFORCEMENT CHALLENGES**



**ALL PACKAGING  
REUSABLE OR  
RECYCLABLE  
BY 2030**

**HIGH LEVEL ALL OF  
GOVERNMENT CIRCULAR  
ECONOMY STRATEGY**



# Scope of the Circular Economy – where does it end?



## Characteristics of the CE

- Design for circularity (design for repair, durability);
  - Products as service (pay per use or pay for performance, product owned by manufacturer);
  - Re-use / shared use (product used again for same purpose or shared across multiple users);
  - Remanufacturing (returning a used product to new product standard);
  - Repair and refurbishment (returned to good condition);
  - Take-back / reverse logistics (product recovery to enable repair, reuse to recover embedded value);
  - Industrial symbiosis (collaborations to ensure efficient re-use of by-products or co-development);
  - Recycling (transforming discarded materials into secondary raw materials).
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- Multi-sectoral application – e.g. Built environment, packaging, electronics, textiles, agri-food, pharma, plastics, textiles.



# Why the Circular Economy?



<b>Environment</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Social</b>
<b>Emissions reductions</b>	<b>Economic growth / resource cost savings / Support recovery, NDP</b>	<b>Job creation and retention potential</b>
<b>Reduced demand for resources</b>	<b>Innovation opportunities</b>	<b>Consumer empowerment</b>
<b>Reduced waste generation</b>	<b>Shorter, more resilient, secure supply chains</b>	<b>Quality work, all skills levels</b>
<b>Reduced biodiversity / water stress</b>		<b>Urban / rural renewal – emphasis on local, work/life balance</b>



# Circular Economy in Ireland



## How is Ireland performing?

- Our circular material use rate or share of material recovered and fed back into the economy was the second worst in the EU, 1.6% compared to EU average of 11.9% and high of 28.5% in Netherlands.
- Structure of the domestic economy.
- Location as an island on the EU's geographic periphery.
- Countries most successful in moving towards circularity benefit from having overarching circular economy policies - cohesive framework for government, private sector and civil society activity, clearly set out national ambitions and priorities in relation to the circular economy.
- Public understanding of CE principle is poor – e.g. only 51% of IBEC member companies understand what is meant by CE (IBEC / EPA research, 2019)



# Circular Economy– Policy Developments



## Whole-of-Government Circular Economy Strategy – Published Q4 2021

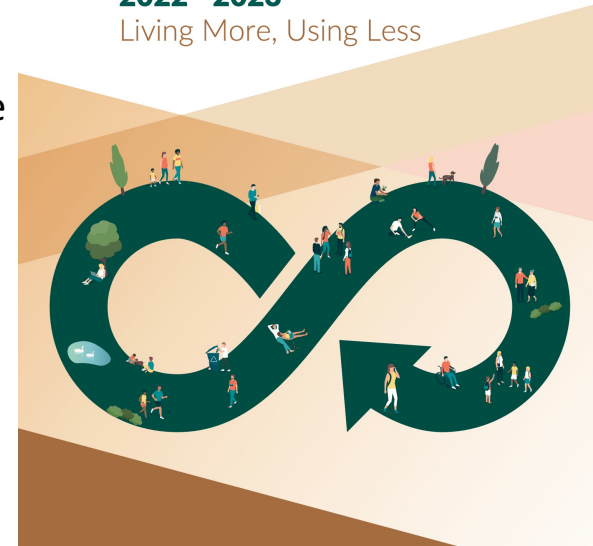
- Provide a national policy framework for Ireland’s transition to a circular economy and to promote public sector leadership in adopting circular policies and practices
- Support and implement measures that significantly reduce Ireland’s circularity gap, so that Ireland’s rate is above the EU average by 2030
- Raise awareness amongst households, business and individuals about the circular economy and how it can improve their lives
- Support and promote increased investment in the circular economy in Ireland, with a view to delivering sustainable, regionally balanced economic growth and employment
- Identify and address the economic, regulatory and social barriers to Ireland's transition to a more circular economy.
- New Circular Economy Advisory Group to support implementation of this strategy and help develop CE Strategy 2.0



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## Whole of Government Circular Economy Strategy 2022 - 2023

Living More, Using Less



# Circular Economy in Ireland – Other Developments



- *National Marine Planning Framework* – need to embed CE principles across all marine planning functions, July 2021, DHLGH
- Deposit and Return Scheme – regulatory framework in place – November 2021, DECC, operational Q3 2022
- *Circular Economy Programme* – December 2021, EPA
- New EoW and By-products processes, Q1 2022, EPA
- *Geothermal Energy for a Circular Economy*, draft December 2021, DECC
- *Raw Materials for Ireland’s Circular Economy Transition*, draft Q1 2022, DECC
- *National Food Waste Prevention Roadmap*, draft Q1 2022, DECC
- Action on disposables – reusable coffee cups only for sit-in, opt-in required for condiments, sachets, napkins etc., Q2 2022, DECC

# Circular Economy in Ireland – Other Developments



- *National Circular Economy Platform* – an overarching CE ‘brand’, 2022, DECC / EPA and CE Advisory Group
- *National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy*, draft Q2 2022, Local Government Sector
- *Petroleum Policy Statement* – no new oil / gas authorisations, Q1 2022, DECC
- *Inland Fisheries Policy Statement* – focus on conservation, water quality, impacts of climate action, Q2 2022, DECC
- National Broadband Plan / digital agenda – roll-out ongoing, DECC
- Energy transition – decarbonisation, DECC
- Range of CAP Actions (e.g. bioeconomy, bog rehabilitation, transport, enterprise)
- Structural:
  - DECC and the CE agenda now hardwired into terrestrial and marine planning systems
  - New specific focus on materials management

# Circular Economy in Ireland – Policy Developments



## Circular Economy Bill – Due for Publication Q1 2022

- Legislative underpinning for Waste Action Plan measures, for example:
  - *Streamlining End-of-Waste and By-Product Decisions*
  - *Incentivised pricing for commercial waste*
  - *Economic instruments – disposable hot / cold beverage cups, single-use food containers / packaging, plastic bags*
  - *Provision for levies and, ultimately, bans on sale*
- Future Proofing further CE Development:
  - *Enabling Minister for Environment to impose environmental levies and set targets, e.g. around re-use and repair*
- General Scheme approved by Government last year and available to view on [gov.ie](http://gov.ie)
- Detailed drafting now underway – will take full account of the PLS report of Joint Oireachtas Committee.



# Thank You

