

**From:** [REDACTED]  
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**To:** circulareconomy  
**Subject:** Public Consultation Submission re. Proposed Circular Economy Strategy

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Hello,

The circular economy is nothing new, was practised for centuries by our ancestors up to the second half of the twentieth century, and is still practised by millions in other countries and certain social sectors still in the West, either by choice or necessity. A globalised consumer culture nursed into being during the past forty or fifty years makes it extremely difficult for most citizens to handle waste in this way anymore, so this is another area where intervention by the state is called for in order to achieve the objectives of re-using, recycling and reducing.

1. Government regulations, and empowerment of local authorities and community groups are essential elements.
2. Compliance on household waste management is relatively excellent. However, without other major recycling and repair services and elimination of manufacture obsolescent features, very little can be achieved except population anxiety and guilt.
3. Most single use plastics are produced by fossil fuel dealers - [https://earthbound.report/2021/05/26/the-top-ten-producers-of-single-use-plastics/?blogsub=confirming#blog\\_subscription-2](https://earthbound.report/2021/05/26/the-top-ten-producers-of-single-use-plastics/?blogsub=confirming#blog_subscription-2) [REDACTED]


The International Energy Agency has just announced cessation of support for energy from fossil fuels in the future - <http://bright-green.org/2021/05/28/the-latest-iea-report-spells-the-end-of-one-excuse-for-climate-inaction/>

This is an obvious case for extended producer responsibility, a form of governance that cannot be left to voluntary involvement. EPR must be embedded through law in all commercial operations, to result in the widespread change necessary in the time available. Information campaigns to discourage businesses from s.u.p. wrapping and availability of eco-alternatives should be simultaneously rolled out.

4. Businesses have taken some initiatives to reduce the shocking level of food waste which can be hugely popularised with government help.

5. Microbeads from synthetic textiles destroying sea-life and poisoning water supplies should be no longer tolerated. The disposable clothes mindset can no longer be tolerated. information campaigns would help get people on board. The three R's are

vital here. EPR would force manufacturers to improve quality, reduce harmful materials and inform customers. 

6. Construction waste is often listed  as one of the worst offenders, proportionate to other types of waste, and for inherent toxicities. EPR is definitely long overdue in this sector. There is an extreme shortage of knowledge about sustainable building, and life-cycle impacts of materials used. The materials pyramid shows why this is environmentally important in terms of embodied carbon -

<https://vandkunsten.com/en/news/material-pyramid>

A 2014 European report on sustainable building resources noted: "*In summary, the use of steel, aluminium and copper in buildings is responsible for the majority of pollutant and climate change emissions stemming from building construction, although concrete is also a major contributor, particularly to GHG emissions, due to the high volumes used. The impacts tend to take place during the extraction and processing of materials and the production of building products used in building construction, while the construction process itself, demolition and waste management cause relatively few environmental impacts 57 . However, the demolition of buildings and their disposal, rather than the re-use or recycling of material, leads to a loss of material that could, in many cases, substitute or negate the need for virgin materials. In this way, the management of the end-of-life buildings, and indeed, how one arrives at the decision that a building has reached its end-of-life, has important consequences for the overall resource use and environmental impacts of buildings.*" -

<https://ec.europa.eu/environment/eussd/pdf/Resource%20efficiency%20in%20the%20building%20sector.pdf>

7. A recent article on Finland's ambitious plans to operate a peerless circular economy shows understanding of the gravity of the undertaking, and the determination and imaginative lateral thinking needed to get it done -

<https://socialeurope.eu/the-climate-x-factor> I recommend drafters of the Irish circular economy strategy adopt a similar attitude.

Best,

