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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 11 June 2021 16:01  
**To:** circulareconomy  
**Subject:** Circular Economy Strategy Consultation  
**Attachments:** CE Strategy Public Consultation Jun 21.docx

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To whom it may concern,  
Attached is my submission for the Circular Economy Strategy Consultation.  
Kind regards  
[REDACTED]

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**1. Do you agree with the draft Strategy's proposed key objectives? In your view, are there further or alternative objectives that should be included?**

I agree with the proposed key objectives set out in the draft Strategy here. The issue I would raise is with the third aim's phrasing. The circular economy is not just a new ideal that is added to the list of Irish and EU environmental schemes replaced every few years. It is an economic, environmental and social necessity, which won't just improve individuals lives but is central in maintaining them as they are now. The current phrasing makes the CE initiative sound like an optional gimmick rather than a plan the government wholeheartedly commits to.

**2. Do you agree with the overall level of ambition set out in the draft Strategy? If not, is further ambition needed or is the draft Strategy overly ambitious?**

I feel this strategy is appropriately ambitious – some aspects are lacking in detail (raising awareness seems vague). If anything, I doubt Ireland's ability to reach these ambitious goals, but the ambition is necessary and appreciated.

**3. Should Ireland measure its progress in achieving a more circular economy relative to its European Union peers? If not, what alternative benchmark should Ireland adopt and why?**

I'm aware of the disparity in Irish waste percentages compared to EU average but not sure why the goal is to lead with ambitious EU MS or even exceed them. There probably is a reason but cannot see it in this report. I think a suitable similar MS that is close to Irish demography and economy could be a useful comparison.

**4. Would you rate Irish public awareness of the circular economy as high, medium or low? And how important do you think raising public awareness is to further developing the circular economy?**

I would currently rate Irish public awareness of the circular economy as low. As someone researching the circular economy, I spend a lot of my time explaining what it is to people. Articles in the news on the circular economy also tend to explain the circular economy broadly without delving into further

discussions or debates within CE circles. I think broadening public understanding of CE and its place in their lives is essential to encouraging and facilitating uptake of CE initiatives. My only reluctance is that in committing to 'raising awareness' the consumer is only tangentially added to government plans involving the CE, when they should be actively involved in change, rather than informed of it after the fact.

**5. What are the most effective awareness raising measures that could be taken under the Strategy?**

I can think of certain government environmental schemes that have had a public impact as a good benchmark – Green Schools, the Team Green program etc. A large scale and buildable media campaign that has people discussing circularity in their communities. Without it, circular initiatives appear disjointed and untethered to policy. For example, yellow bins appeared in Dublin city centre with #CircularCities on them without any context I can imagine that they could be used as regular bins and not for their intended purpose.

**6. Are you satisfied with the proposed stakeholder engagement arrangements in the draft Strategy? Which additional stakeholders (if any), not already part of the Waste Action Group, do you think should be included in the Strategy's implementation?**

Yes, seems to include regular and constant feedback cycles which facilitate consumer engagement and positive outcomes for businesses, policymakers and individuals alike.

**7. What do you see as the major economic and/or social co-benefits of moving towards a more circular economy in Ireland, so that environmental improvements also provide economic and social opportunities, and vice versa?**

The circular economy principles integrated into Irish society could produce multiple social and economic benefits. In terms of materials retention, once a successful cycle had been established, Irish construction and manufacturing businesses could save money in their businesses. Adding in features like

equipment leasing, remanufacturing, repair services and deposit schemes would foster a stronger product knowledge in companies while serving customers better too. Socially, features of the circular economy could allow communities to profit from increased returns from above businesses. Sites like the Ballymun Rediscovery Centre can be replicated, building community links with business while promoting social and skills development.

**8. What do you see as the major regulatory barriers to the further development of the circular economy in Ireland? In answering this question, please feel free to address economy-wide issues or those affecting your sector in particular.**

**9. What do you see as the major non-regulatory barriers to the further development of the circular economy in Ireland? In answering this question, please feel free to address economy-wide issues or those affecting your sector in particular.**

**10. How important do you consider Green Public Procurement is in supporting the development of new circular goods and services?**

I would consider it to be moderately important but not a key objective of the circular economy. As a show of support for CE initiatives it would be helpful but should not distract from broader and deeper change needed to enact the circular economy in Irish society.

**11. What would be the most effective action Government could take to promote/support and incentivise the further development of the circular economy?**

Introducing a dual tax and incentive approach to circular initiatives, which make it the economically and environmentally wise decision to behave circularly. Supporting circular public-private initiatives that target key sectors that need circularity and learning from the positive policy outcomes used in other EU MS.

**12. Which sectors do you think can make the biggest contribution to making Ireland's economy more circular?**

Manufacturing (particularly plastic-related fields), waste management and agriculture.

**13. Do you broadly agree with the policy areas listed for future development in the draft Strategy? If not, which areas would you remove/add to the list?**

Broadly speaking, yes the areas mentioned in this strategy appear to be good choices to develop in the future. However, I would note that almost all areas in the Irish economy need to be changed significantly, so this is merely a starting point.

**14. Any other comments?**

I am pleased to see this draft as it shows a beginning of what should be a great development in Ireland as we become more circular. I just hope these ambitious aims are placed central to the governments future plans and not shelved within the next few years. We must stay committed to achieving a circular economy soon.