

RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

TASMANIAN
CLIMATE
CHANGE
OFFICE

FACT SHEET

This fact sheet provides an overview of resource efficiency and how small to medium-sized businesses can participate in the development of the Circular Economy in Tasmania.

WHAT IS THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY?

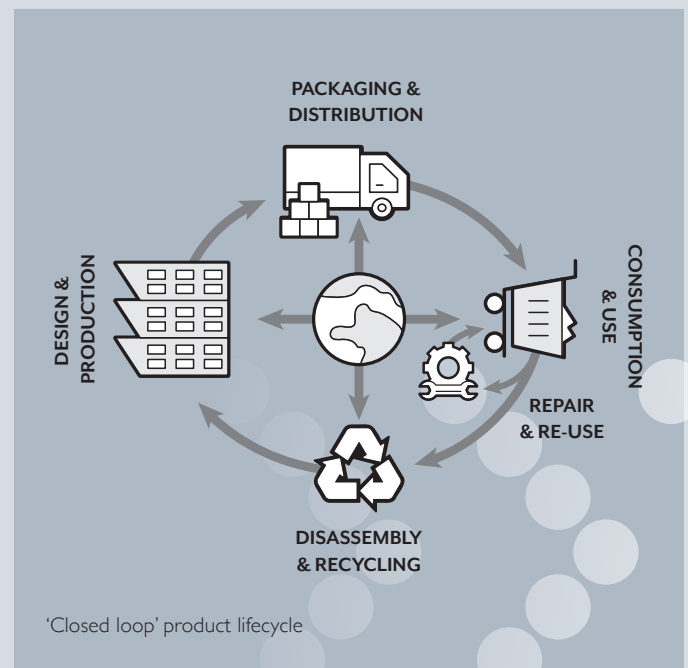
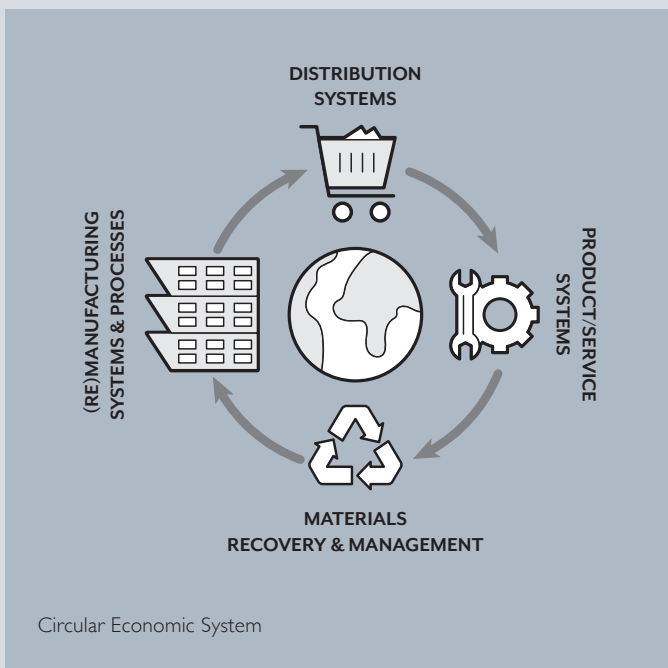
The Circular Economy (CE) is an alternative to the traditional linear economy, sometimes described as *take, make, use and dispose*.

In a circular economy, we keep resources in use for as long as possible, extract the maximum value from them whilst in use, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of each product service life.

WHAT IS RESOURCE EFFICIENCY?

Resource efficiency promotes the idea of using resources efficiently at all stages of a product or service lifecycle. The ultimate goal we are pursuing is a 'closed loop', minimising or eliminating the need for virgin materials and eliminating waste from every stage in the product lifecycle.

The Circular Economy is a 'closed loop' economic system that supports resource efficiency. As we reduce the inputs and outputs at each stage of the product/service lifecycle, we need a supporting system for extracting value and retaining resources in the system.



IMPROVING RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

There are a number of things that small to medium-sized businesses can do to increase their resource efficiency and support the development of the Circular Economy in Tasmania.

INCLUDE RECYCLED CONTENT

Make the switch to recycled materials, or products with recycled content. This helps create the demand for recycled materials. For example, if you have products or packaging that include paper or plastic materials, make sure they include at least some recycled content.

CHOOSE RECYCLABLE MATERIALS

If there are no recycled options, then choose virgin materials that have established recycling systems and known secondary markets. For example, food safety standards exclude the use of recycled plastics in food production but choosing common plastics like polypropylene and high density polyethylene will increase opportunities for recycling. For single use plastics, consider compostable materials.

MANAGE YOUR MATERIALS

Introduce procedures for sorting and separating waste in-process to keep material streams as free from contaminants as possible. Think about your responsibility as a producer; what happens to the materials you use in your products and/or services when their useful life is over? Are there opportunities for you to reclaim them and reintroduce them to the system?

DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Design your products so that component parts can be easily replaced, repaired or separated for recycling. Think about your business model and pricing strategy – does it support after-sales services like spare parts replacement, repairs or servicing of products to extend their useful life? See the TCCO Fact Sheet on Sustainable Design for more information.



Bridestowe Lavender Estate has established processes for separating waste into material types. Employees have been trained to recognise different types of plastic and have created a sensory board as a guide.

INFLUENCE YOUR SUPPLY CHAIN

As a customer, you can influence your supply chain to support the circular economy. For example, you could ask your suppliers to use recycled packaging, or develop re-usable packaging solutions.

As a supplier, you can educate your customers to help them make choices that support the Circular Economy. This might include offering recycled alternatives and providing information about how to recycle the materials in your products at the end of its useful life.

Increasing resource efficiency in Tasmanian businesses will help drive down business costs, support business resilience and better protect the environment.

The Business Resource Efficiency Program (BREP) is delivered by Business Action Learning Tasmania (BALT) in partnership with the Tasmanian government.

For more information about BREP

Visit www.climatechange.tas.gov.au or businessactionlearningtas.com.au/brep

For more information about this fact sheet

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