

Tackling the global circularity gap

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Since 2108 Circle Economy has monitored circularity globally. The idea was born out of frustration; to achieve an increase in circularity, which is essential for addressing our planet's polycrisis, the world needed to know where it stood. Unfortunately, there was no data to raise awareness or build urgency. Using our proprietary analysis framework, we came up with a single number that measures materials cycling back into our economy, that looks beyond recycling rates and into the full breadth of circularity.

At Circle, we believe the circularity metric is key to driving action towards a circular world, as it enables decision makers to set targets, measure progress, and take action. However, since first publishing the CGR in 2018, the percentage of circular materials in the global economy has decreased. Even though absolute numbers increase year on year, the total consumed volume increases ever more rapidly. This requires us to rethink our approach and identify which leverage points exist to increase circularity and slow down material consumption, a challenge that needs to be addressed based on the specific context of each sector. What is the role of the bioeconomy in this transition? Which are the key leverage points? And what role does research and academia play in building awareness, capacity, and momentum to act?

BIO:

Guus ter Haar is Director of Impact at Circle Economy. Biologist by education, he has dedicated his career to solving systemic issues and market failures leading to unsustainable outcomes. He has hands-on experience designing and implementing transformative sustainability strategies, specifically in tropical and temperate agri-commodities. Over his career, he has worked directly with farmer co-ops, supranational bodies, institutional funders, national governments, and supply chain actors to drive sustainable change. He now focuses on accelerating the transition towards a more just and circular society, one that respects planetary boundaries and social foundations.