



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

Africa21 Nairobi 2023 Circular Economy Workshop

Introductory session: the international challenges of the circular economy/geopolitics of a new economic model

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A. Introduction

In this presentation:

- B. Linear economies and the global and regional aspirations for inclusive sustainable development.**
- C. Circular economy and why it matters**
- D. Global and regional challenges to transitioning to Circularity**
- E. Emerging priorities to drive circular economy:**
- F. Selected interventions and Actions towards circular economy**

B. Linear economies and the Global and regional aspirations for inclusive sustainable development.

- Current economic systems are based on linear principles of extracting natural resources, using them up, and creating huge volumes of waste**
- Use of resources has tripled since 1970, and could double again by 2060 with BAU scenario**
- Earth resources are being overused.**
- E-waste increasing - In 2019, 7.3 kilograms of e-waste per capita was generated globally.**
- About 67% of global greenhouse gas emissions are related to material management.**
- Estimates are that every year, close to 13 million tonnes of plastic leak into oceans where it harms biodiversity, economies and, potentially, human health.**
- For Africa:**
 - Population is forecast to double its 2017 levels by 2050 – means increased pressure on the continent's already stretched resources.**
 - Need to ensure efficient and sustainable use of our resources to grow our economies to create jobs and lift around 460 million people out of poverty**

C. Circular economy and why it matters

- **Circular economy principles**
- **An opportunity to optimize resources**
- **An opportunity to reduce the consumption of raw materials**
 - ✓ **The 2023 global circularity gap report asserts that “a global circular economy will allow us to fulfil people's needs with only 70% of the materials we now extract and use**
 - ✓ **CE is key to addressing the three planetary crises: the climate crisis, the biodiversity and nature crisis, and pollution and waste crisis:**
- **Embedding circularity across industries and governments’ priorities is crucial to reaching the 2050 net zero commitments.**
- **Can contribute to addressing 45% of global greenhouse gas emissions thus mitigating the unfolding climate crisis.**
- **Presents a US\$4.5 trillion economic opportunity, globally**
- **According to the AfDB circular economy represents an annual market opportunity of about \$8 billion in Africa.**

D. Global and Regional Challenges to transitioning to Circularity

Limited awareness and knowledge on circular economy and poor communication of the benefits of CE

Poor institutional arrangements and inadequate policy frameworks

Limited technology and capacity to recycle

Lack of/Poor infrastructure

Inadequate finance for the transition to Circular economy:

Limited demand for circular products

E. Emerging priorities to drive circular economy:

Creating awareness and increasing appreciation of CE

Behavior and attitude change

Institutional, Regulatory and incentive frameworks

**Strengthening collaboration to transform systems:
bringing together finance, policy, practice and value
chain actors together**

**Strengthen market demand for circular economy
products and services**

**Strengthening platforms and networks for CE
Economy**

**International and regional partnerships and
collaboration**

F. Selected interventions and Actions towards Circular Economy

(a) Global

- **United Nations General Assembly and the United Nations Environment**
- **EU circular economy action plan:**
- **Global Circular economy Forum**
- **Platform for Accelerating the Circular Economy (PACE)**
- **National Circular Economy Roadmaps: Globally more than 40 countries already have circular economy road maps and strategies•**

(b) Regional

- **Regional Guidelines – UNEP, ECA, AUC, AfDB**
- **Action Plan -AUC with support of Regional Expert Working Group on Circular Economy**
- **National Circular economy Road maps and action plans in Africa**
- **Africa Circular Economy alliance; Africa Circular Economy Foundation**
- **Africa Circular economy Network**

F. Selected interventions and Actions towards Circular Economy Continued

(c) ECA Programme supporting transition to CE

In the context of transition to inclusive, job creating and just green and blue economies in Africa

- **Member of the Africa Regional Experts Working Group of AUC:**
 - ✓ Partnership in the design and implementation of Regional guidelines and action Plan
- **Circularity and Blue economy** – Plastics as major threat
- Support to implementation of the Continental Circular Economy action plan
- **Trade and circularity**
- **Critical Minerals & Circular economy:** Leveraging investment for a circular economy and promoting opportunities for women and youth in low-emission and green value chains of minerals for the energy transition
- **Digital revolution and circularity** - a great opportunity to couple national digitalization visions and roadmaps with national circular economy policies, plans and programmes to stem e-electronic waste including through appropriate re-use, recycling and job-creating ventures.

THANK YOU!

Ideas
+ Action