

THE CONCEPT OF A CIRCULAR ECONOMY



A circular economy is an alternative to a traditional linear economy of 'make, use, dispose' in which the lifecycle of a material is extended as long as possible with recovery, recycling and regeneration at the end of each service cycle. This gives maximum value from each resource you use.



MAIN FEATURES OF A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

The main point of a circular economy is to optimise the yields from a resource by keeping materials, products and components circulating in the economy and not becoming waste. It also aims to maximise the sustainability of the types of resource being used, and control the types of waste leaving the economy.

Reduce. The overall process should result in less input of resources.



Substitute. Try to substitute resources for ones more sustainable and more efficient.



Restore. Allow resources to restore themselves, e.g. don't overfish.

Reuse. Reuse a product as many times as possible, such as refilling a water bottle.

Share. Share products you don't use constantly with people, such as tools.

Maintain. Design products for longevity and maintain them instead of replacing.

Repurpose. After use, adapt a product for a different purpose.



Remanufacture. Rebuild a product back to the original using new or repaired parts.

Recycle and Regenerate. At the end of its lifecycle, recycle the product or regenerate resources rather than leaving waste.

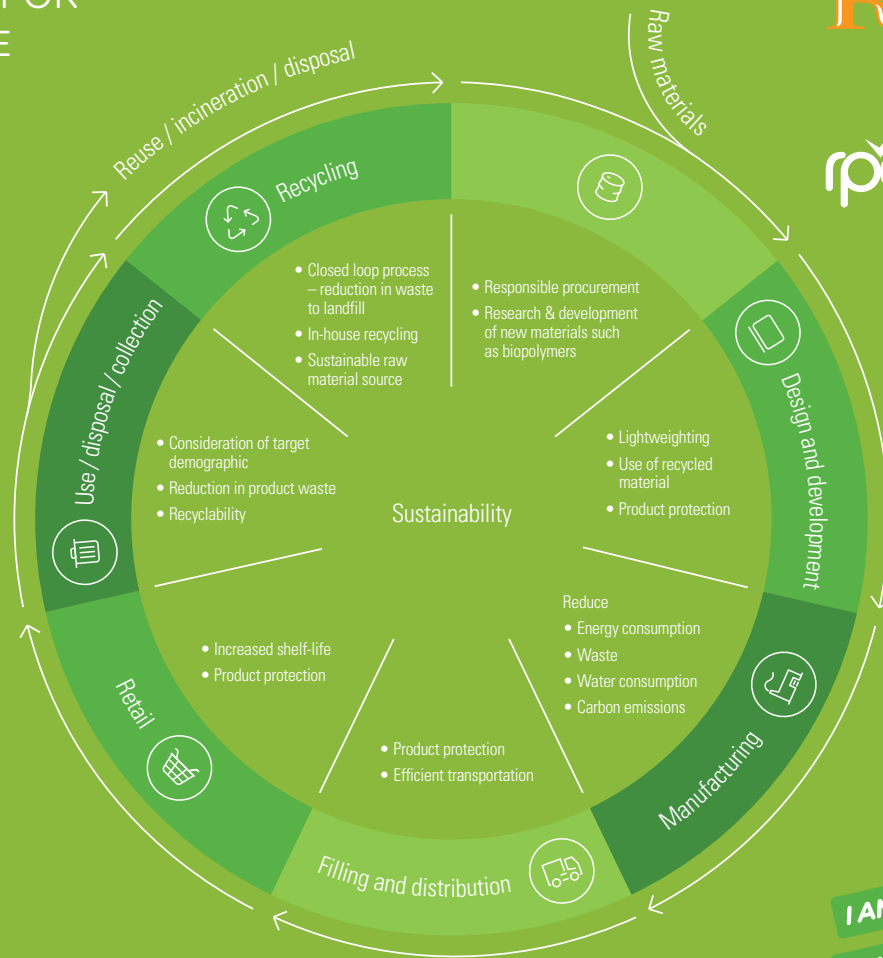


RPC ADVOCATES A CIRCULAR ECONOMY FUTURE FOR PLASTIC LIFECYCLE



The basic principle of the circular economy for RPC is to treat the materials used to manufacture products as valuable resources rather than disposable ones. This includes the energy and water used to make products.

When designing products RPC considers the full lifecycle of the product from the carbon impact of the materials it uses, the products life, and the end-of-life options.



Reduce: Resource Efficiency

RPC aims to be as resource efficient as possible to reduce the amount of material used and to reduce the amount of energy needed for transportation.

Maintain and Reuse: Containers

RPC aims to design products that are reusable where appropriate, such as bulk storage and transportation containers which are easily maintained and cleaned for reuse.

Recycle: Packaging

RPC endeavours to make products easily recyclable whilst also looking at the wider environmental picture such as resource efficiency and reusability.

RPC aims to support initiatives to increase plastic reuse and recycling and supports the view of the circular economy in its requirement to be more resource efficient and reduce landfill and litter waste.

Substitute: Materials

RPC aims to offer a light weight, low carbon solution through the use of plastic which may offer environmental benefits over more traditional heavier materials.

- I AM ✓ PROTECTING FOOD
- I AM ✓ LIGHTER THAN OTHER MATERIALS
- I AM ✓ MADE FROM RECYCLED PLASTIC
- I AM ✓ REDUCING PRODUCT WASTE
- I AM ✓ LIGHTER THAN EVER
- I AM ✓ REUSABLE
- I AM ✓ COMPOSTABLE
- I AM ✓ MADE FROM BIOPOLYMER
- I AM ✓ MORE RECYCLABLE THAN EVER



The European Union has developed a package to transition Europe into a circular economy. It aims to harmonise various waste directives including new targets in relation to the end-of-life of plastic and other materials. The whole circular economy directive could affect how plastic is made, used and disposed of across Europe and the globe.

RPC is participating in discussions to help shape the circular economy package and is also collaborating with initiatives such as the Ellen MacArthur Foundations New Plastics Economy to realise the value of plastic and ensure it is part of a circular economy in the future.