



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

# The Resources and Waste Strategy

Plastic Planet – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

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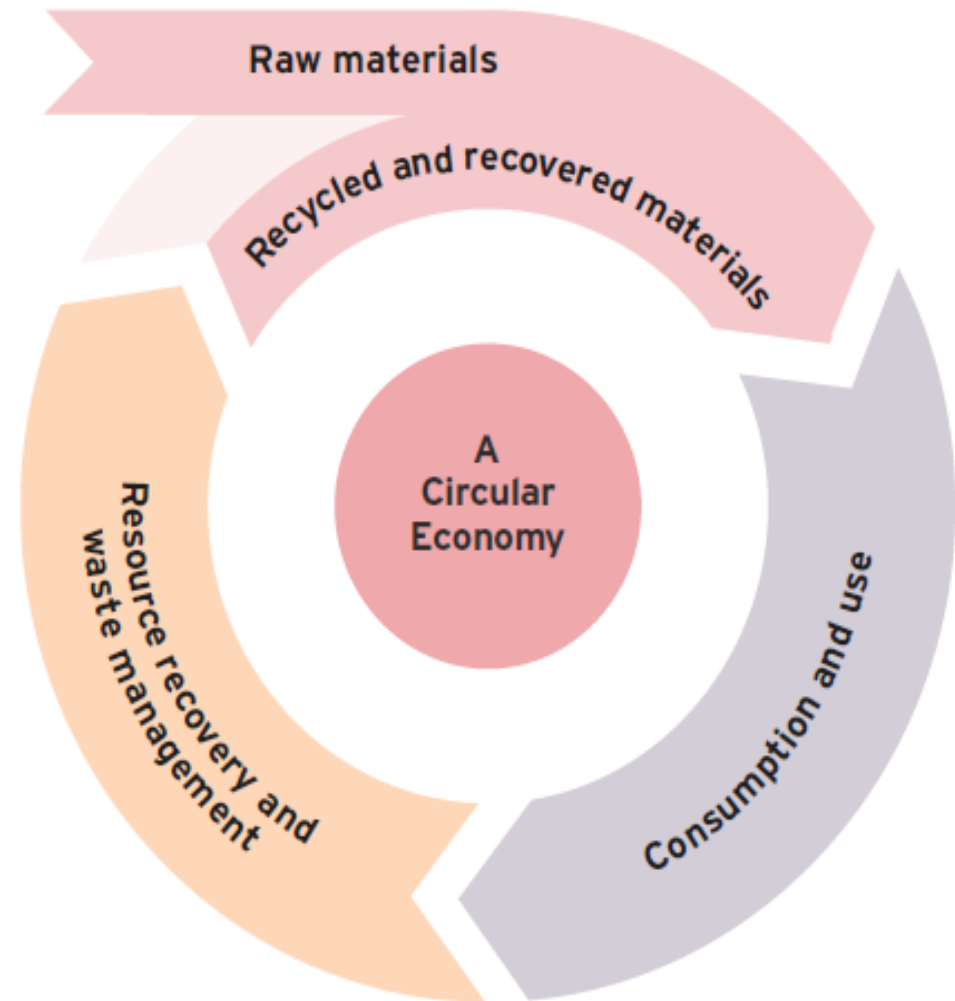
Policy Advisor, Resources and Waste

# Circular Economy

We want to prolong the lives of the materials and goods that we use.

Our plan is to move society away from the inefficient 'linear' economic model of 'take, make, use, throw'.

A more circular economy will see us keeping resources in use for as long as possible, allow us to extract maximum value from them, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of their lifespan.



# Plastics

**The UK uses 5 million tonnes of plastic every year, half of which is packaging, and demand for this material continues to rise.**

- Plastics is a significant contributor to the UK economy.
- As a material, plastics are incredibly useful: strong & versatile.
- If leaked out of the system, into the environment, their durability ensures they survive for hundreds of years.
- The plastic problem is one of management not eradication.
- A robust, sensible, and responsible system is needed to capture and dispose of plastic waste to the appropriate management stream.

# Measures already announced

- **We have introduced a world leading ban on Microbeads**
- **We are currently consulting on plans to increase and extend the plastic bag charge to all retailers**
- **We have consulted on proposals to ban the distribution and/or sale of plastic straws, plastic drink stirrers, and plastic-stemmed cotton buds**
- **We are working with retailers on reducing plastic packaging in supermarkets**
- **We support the UK Plastic Pact and continue to work with International Initiatives to combat plastic pollution**
- **We will lead by example, and remove all consumer single-use plastics from the central government office estate by 2020**

# Resources and Waste Strategy

This Strategy will set us on the right path to shifting to **the circular economy model**.

Guided by **two overarching objectives**:

- **To maximise the value of resource use, and minimise adverse environmental impacts**
- **To minimise waste and its impact on the environment**

The Strategy combines actions we will take now with firm commitments for the coming years. For plastics specifically, we aim to:

1. To eliminate all avoidable plastic waste throughout the lifetime of the 25 year environment plan **(2042)**
2. To work towards all plastic packaging placed on the market being recyclable, reusable, or compostable by **2025**



# Our approach to Plastics

**Our Ambition:** To eliminate all avoidable plastic waste over the lifetime of the 25 Year Environment Plan.

**How** are we going to do this?

- 1. Production** - Increase producer responsibility for the environmental impacts of their products placed on the market and encourage reduction of their plastic content.
- 2. Circulation** - Reduce and amount of plastic in circulation and decrease demand for single-use plastics.
- 3. Simplification** - Improve recycling rates and simplify the process of recycling for citizens.

# Our approach to Plastics

We are currently consulting on several key policy initiatives:

- **Reform of the packaging waste regulations** to ensure that producers pay the full net costs of disposal of their products
- **Introducing a deposit return scheme** to increase the recycling of single-use drinks containers
- **Introducing a consistent set of recyclable materials** collected from all households and businesses to drive up recycling rates
- **The introduction of a tax on plastic packaging with less than 30% recycled plastic** to stimulate the secondary market for plastic material

# Research and Innovation

## **£20 million to support the tackle of plastics and boost recycling**

- £10m pioneer innovative approaches to boosting recycling and reducing litter
- £10m Plastics R&D

## **£20 million Plastics Research and Innovation Fund**

- to deliver strategic networking and research that will coordinate existing knowledge across the UK.

## **Up to £60 million through the Industrial Challenge Fund**

- To challenge innovators to make the UK a world-leader in creating sustainable packaging and reduce the impact of harmful plastics on the environment

Three areas of further research to support the reduction of plastic waste:

- **Encourage analysis** of the issues surrounding the **reducing the use of plastic** and investigation of new alternative materials, including the environmental trade-offs involved in transition
- Explore how we can **improve plastic recycling**, through rationalising the range of polymers on the market, and **improve sorting and separation technologies**, which include cost effective analytical tools that identify hazardous chemicals and substances of concern
- Gain a **better understanding of the technical issues** surrounding the manufacture and use of recycled plastic.



# International approach

On the global stage we have shown leadership:

- Signed the **Ellen MacArthur Foundation's New Plastics Economy Global Commitment** to come behind a common vision and targets to address plastic waste and pollution at its source.
- First country to support the **Global Plastic Action Partnership**.
- Continue **helping countries to improve their waste management** to protect the marine environment.
- Continue to be an **influential presence** in the UN, G7, G20 and other global and regional partnerships to ensure that the action needed at all stages of the lifecycle – from design to material recovery – is taken.



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# Thank you

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