



CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Closing the loop

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THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND CHEMICALS, PRODUCTS AND WASTE LEGISLATION

In a circular economy the value of products and materials is maintained for as long as possible. Waste and resource use are minimised, and when a product reaches the end of its useful life, the resources it contains are used again to create further value. With the ambitious **Circular Economy Package** adopted in December 2015, the EU aims to make its economic model more sustainable. The package included new legislative proposals on waste and an Action Plan with measures for all stages of the production cycle, from design to production and consumption, waste management and recycling.

Currently, recycled materials still account for only a small proportion of the production materials used in the EU. To achieve the more stable supply of recycled raw materials that industry needs, some issues must be addressed:

- Lack of information about substances of concern in products and waste
- Presence of substances of concern in recycled materials
- Rules on about how waste can become new material need to be more harmonised with chemicals legislation
- Differences in how hazardous waste and hazardous chemicals are classified, which is leading to confusion.

The Commission wants to address these issues as part of its Circular Economy Plan. A [Communication](#), published in January 2018, sets out the lines for a broad discussion on how obstacles at the **interface between chemicals, product and waste legislation** can be tackled. One of the considerations is how to improve the tracking of chemicals of concern in products.

The Communication is a call for input and evidence from all over Europe on how to tackle these wide-ranging issues—to ensure that all recycled materials are safe for people and the environment, fit-for-purpose and designed for durability.

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