

What is a Circular Economy?

A circular economy is a systems-based approach to addressing major global challenges such as waste, pollution, carbon emissions, and biodiversity loss. It draws inspiration from nature, where nothing is wasted and everything is reused in a continuous cycle.

Consider the food chain: plants convert solar energy into biomass, which feeds herbivores. These are consumed by carnivores, and when any organism dies, decomposers like fungi break down organic matter, returning nutrients to the soil. This closed-loop system ensures resources are continually cycled without waste.

The circular economy applies this principle to human systems. It aims to keep products and materials in use for as long as possible through reuse, repair, remanufacturing, and, as a last resort, recycling. It is based on three core principles:

- 1. Eliminate waste and pollution**
- 2. Keep products and materials in use at their highest value**
- 3. Regenerate natural systems**

By closing resource loops, the circular economy offers a pathway to a more sustainable, resilient, and efficient economic model one that mirrors the balance of the natural world.

