

WHAT YOU CAN DO

CIRCULAR ACTIONS FOR SUPPLY CHAIN PROFESSIONALS



WORK THROUGH THIS LIST AND TICK OFF AS MANY AS YOU CAN.

01 OPTIMISE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

- Set up regional hubs to collect, sort, and process materials, improving circular input sourcing and resilience against cross-border logistics or legislative challenges.

02 REIMAGINE NETWORK PARTNERSHIPS

- Collaborate with suppliers or competitors to co-invest in shared take-back and reprocessing hubs, particularly for high-volume, low-value materials that benefit from localised, pooled infrastructure.
- Determine whether to manage circular processes (repair, remanufacturing) internally or through third parties, based on cost, expertise, and existing supply chain capabilities.

03 ENGAGE AND INCENTIVISE SUPPLIERS

- Include specific circular economy requirements (e.g. durable, recyclable, reused inputs) in supplier negotiations, contracts, and evaluations to align partners with circular supply chain goals.
- Create templates and guidelines that clearly state circular process requirements (e.g. disassembly) in proposals, RFPs, and contracts to ensure consistent expectations.
- Use circular economy criteria to select new suppliers and reward existing ones who show innovation and measurable progress towards enabling circular supply chains.
- Work together with suppliers, customers, and policymakers to educate and upskill all relevant stakeholders on key concepts and practices around the circular economy and support the transition.

04 HARNESS TECHNOLOGY

- Use technologies like blockchain, AI, digital twins, or IoT to gather data that allows improved visibility of circular input quality and availability (e.g. location and quantity) across the supply chain, to help make more informed sourcing and design decisions.

05 RETHINK PERFORMANCE METRICS

- Track circular input ratios - measure the proportion of circular materials (e.g. secondary or regenerative inputs) versus virgin inputs.
- Monitor process output destinations - track the volumes of where outputs end up; either being recirculated in the economy as valuable resources (e.g. through reuse, recycling), or becoming waste/sent to landfill.
- Measure product usage lifespan - assess how long products deliver value before needing repair/refurbishment/recycling e.g. technical lifetime, functional lifetime, and product utilisation.
- Evaluate resource use per output - compare total material, water, or energy inputs against revenue generated to measure material intensity.

06 INFLUENCE LEADERSHIP

- Advocate for circular targets/KPIs to be tied to the performance evaluation and incentive systems across key organisational teams.
- Become a champion and aim to onboard leadership (e.g. CSO, CFO, CSCO) to the overall ambition and success factors of the circular supply chain built.

07 INFLUENCE BUSINESS MODELS/PRODUCT DESIGN

- Collaborate early with product and business model teams to share supply chain insights and the landscape of network partners to support effective design choices e.g. enabling more cost-effective repair, or reverse logistics.
- Connect internal stakeholders with relevant teams in upstream and downstream partners to improve the efficiency of designs and processes.
- Co-design customer return incentives with marketing teams (e.g. deposit schemes or discounts) to align them with supply chain capabilities and encourage effective, value-generating reverse logistics.

08 INFORM POLICY AND LEGISLATION

- Collaborate with policymakers and/or industry associations to advocate for supportive legislation, such as standardised product labels and harmonised resource classifications in waste legislation.
- Turn legislative constraints into solutions by exploring local circulation options like repair, reuse, or refurbishment when cross-border transport is restricted.