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## Circular Economy

### Why in news?

The COP27 meet brought to fore a circular economy's relevance in mitigating carbon emissions by ensuring responsible consumption and sustainable resource management.

### What is circular economy?

- **Circular economy** - According to the World Economic Forum, a circular economy is “an industrial system that is restorative or regenerative by intention and design.”
- It is a model of production and consumption, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible.
- In practice, it implies reducing waste to a minimum.



- **Need to switch to a circular economy** - The world's population is growing with the

demand for raw materials but the supply of crucial raw materials is limited.

- Extracting and using raw materials has a major impact on the environment.
- It also increases energy consumption and CO2 emissions.

### How does circular economy work?

- **Designs out waste and pollution** - Circular economy designs out economic activities that negatively impact human health and natural systems.
- **Keeps products and materials in use** - Circular economy favors designing products for durability, reuse, remanufacturing, and recycling to keep materials circulating for as long as possible.
- **Regenerates living systems** - Circular economy avoids the use of fossil fuels and non-renewable energy.

### What about the picture in India?

- **Rules** - In sync with a circular economy, the government formulated
  - Battery Waste Management Rules 2022
  - Plastic Waste Management Rules as amended in 2022
  - e-Waste Management Rules 2022
- These rules promote utilisation of waste generated by setting out target waste disposal standards for stakeholders along with enabling transactions for extended producer responsibility certificates.
- **Budget** - The Budget recognises the action plans formulated across 10 sectors including electronic waste, lithium-ion batteries, end-of-life vehicles, scrap metal, municipal solid waste, etc.
- They emphasise the importance of reusing secondary materials recovered from waste, implementation of an extended producer responsibility framework and tax rebates.

## CIRCULAR ECONOMY



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### BENEFITS

**Consumers** - Increase disposable income Provide a new range of efficient, high-quality products and sustainable services  
Reduce ownership costs and hassles Improve health

**Economy** - Boost economic growth (as defined by GDP) Reduce cost of materials Create new jobs Inspire innovation

**Businesses** - Lower costs and generate new profit streams Stabilize volatility in material prices and supply Create demand for new services in collection, logistics, remarketing, refurbishment and remanufacturing Engage long-term customer interaction and loyalty

**Environment** - Halve carbon dioxide emissions and lower greenhouse gas emissions Reduce primary material consumption by 32% Enhance value of land and soil as assets

### WORKING

1. Designs out waste and pollution
2. Keeps products and materials in use
3. Regenerates living systems

### BARRIERS

Lacking awareness and/or willingness to engage with the circular economy

Lacking economic viability of circular economy business models

Lacking policies that support a circular economy transition

Lacking (proven) technologies to implement CE

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### What are the challenges?

- **Lack of clear vision** - There is a lack of clear vision towards the end-goal of India's circular economy mission and gaps in actual implementation of the policies.
- **Reluctance of industries** - Industry is also reluctant in adopting the circular economy model due to supply chain limitations, lack of incentives to invest, complex recycling processes.
- **Sub-optimal outcomes** - The efforts are made at the very end of value chains, resulting in sub-optimal economic and environmental outcomes.

### What more needs to be done?

- There must be legislative mandates for the procurement of recycled/ secondary raw materials in the initial stages of the production cycle.
- A streamlined framework on circular economy for providing fiscal incentives to businesses to complete the supply chain will also help.
- The government's initiatives need to be in conjunction with industry collaboration to reap the benefits of the circular economy.

### References

1. [The Hindu Businessline | Circular economy](#)
2. [RTS | How does circular economy work?](#)



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