

A global roadmap for an inclusive circular economy : from Stockholm+50 to the Summit of the Future

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Background to paper

- Process started with Stockholm+50 conference in 2022 (“Global Roadmap to an inclusive circular economy”)
- ~400 organisations expressed support for the initiative



Research
Paper

Environment and
Society Centre

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How the circular economy can revive the Sustainable Development Goals

Priorities for immediate global
action, and a policy blueprint
for the transition to 2050

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SWITCH to Circular Economy at a glance

Aim

Support enterprises to adopt circular economy practices



Funded by

European Union and Finland



Value chains

Textile & Garments
Plastic packaging
ICT



Duration

2021-2025



Total budget

€20,870,000



Lead partner

United Nations
Industrial
Development
Organization
(UNIDO)



Project partners

Chatham House
Circle Economy
European
Investment Bank

Five pathways

1. Embed justice and inclusivity principles

2. Enhance policy coordination

3. Reform financial architecture

4. Rewire trade system

5. Shared standards & metrics

1 Embed principles of justice and inclusivity in CE Development



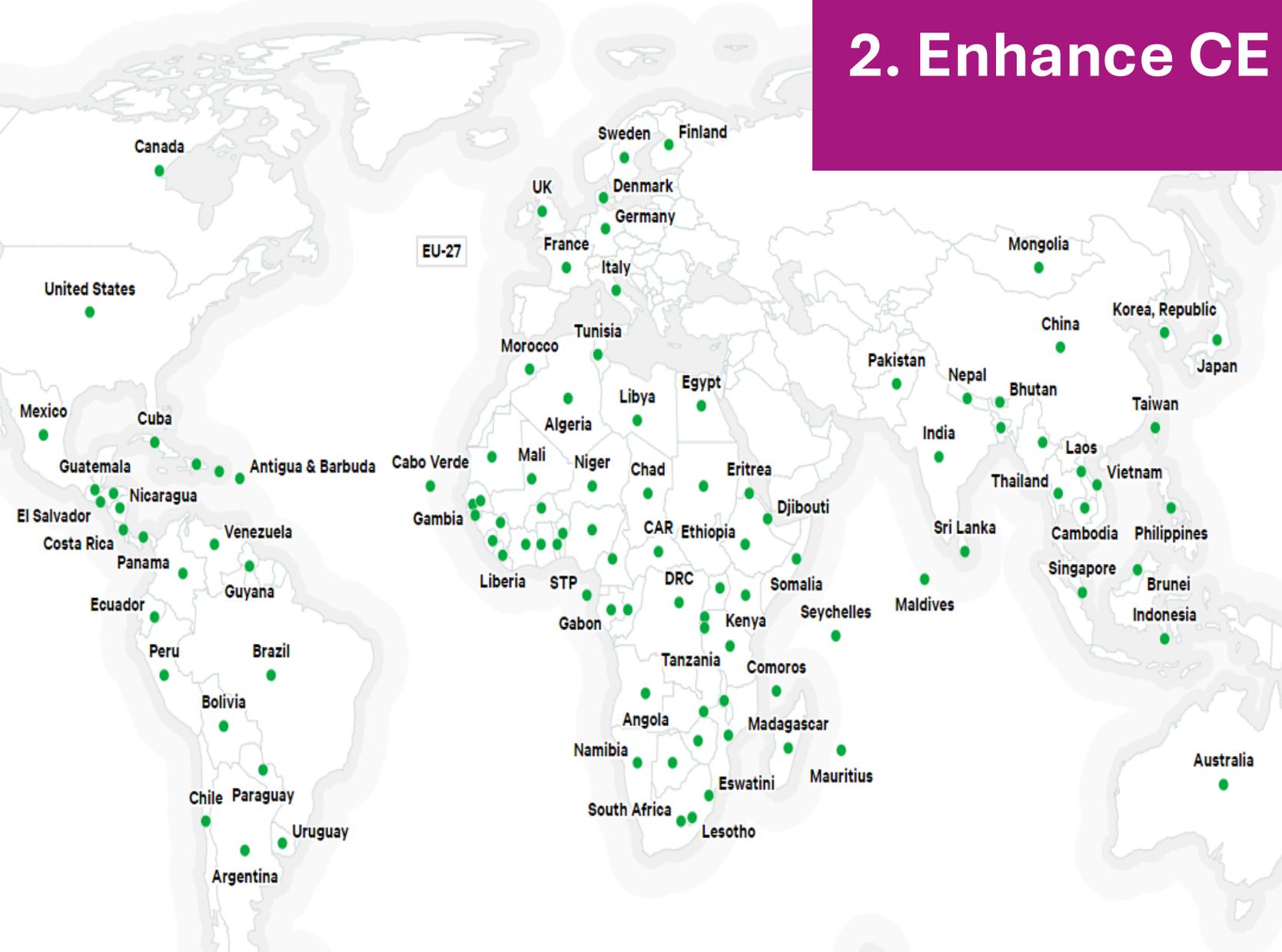
“To achieve its transformative potential, the transition to a circular economy will *need* to be just and inclusive.”

Potential solutions

Establish global guidelines for ensuring social equity in the transition to a CE. Develop UN-endorsed framework - includes principles of just transition, focusing on the equitable distribution of resources, fair and transparent decision-making, and recognition of rights.

Develop comprehensive guidelines and best practice for measuring decent work in the circular economy. Address employment impacts of CE policy alongside job safety, fair wages and social protection. *(e.g continue work by International Labour Organization, the Circle Economy Foundation & World Bank)*

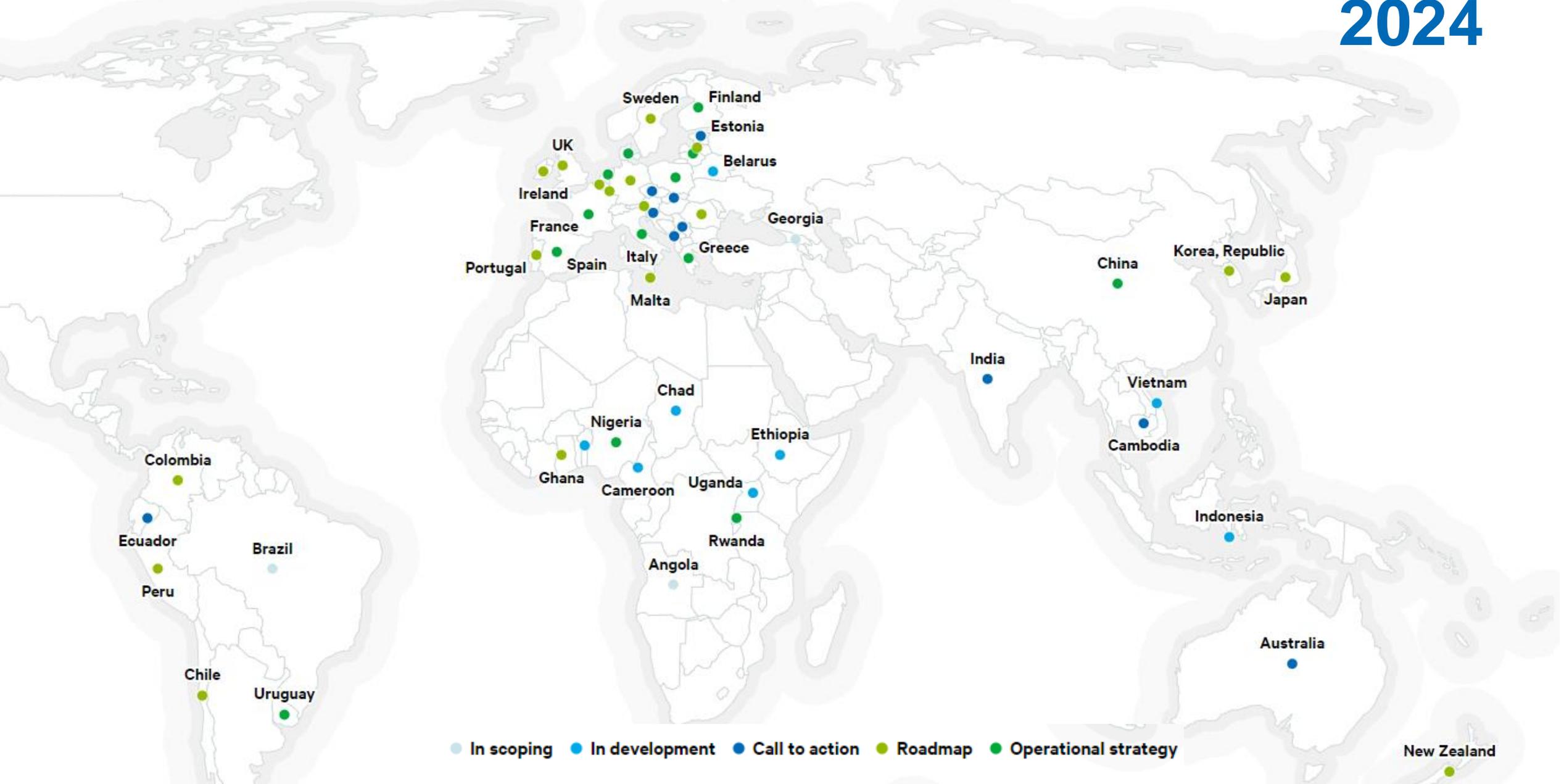
2. Enhance CE policy coordination



“75 national circular economy roadmaps and strategies exist committing to ~3000 policies spanning 17 sectors, 20 policy categories”

Map of circular economy roadmaps and strategies

2024



● In scoping ● In development ● Call to action ● Roadmap ● Operational strategy

Note: This map was produced by Chatham House and does not reflect the position of UNIDO regarding sovereign borders.

Background report on roadmap stocktake

Rapid proliferation of CE roadmaps worldwide

Limited global understanding of their collective content

Global stocktake published April 2024



75

National CE roadmaps

29000

CE policy commitments

17

Sectors

2900 CE policy commitments

Spanning 20 circular economy public policy categories...

Brokering

Fiscal instruments

Research and Innovation

Producer requirement

Product requirement

Resource management

Business Support

Standards

Consumer habits

Education and Skills

Public Procurement

Circular Infrastructure

Sector level action plans

Waste management

Monitoring

**Municipalities and
local authorities**

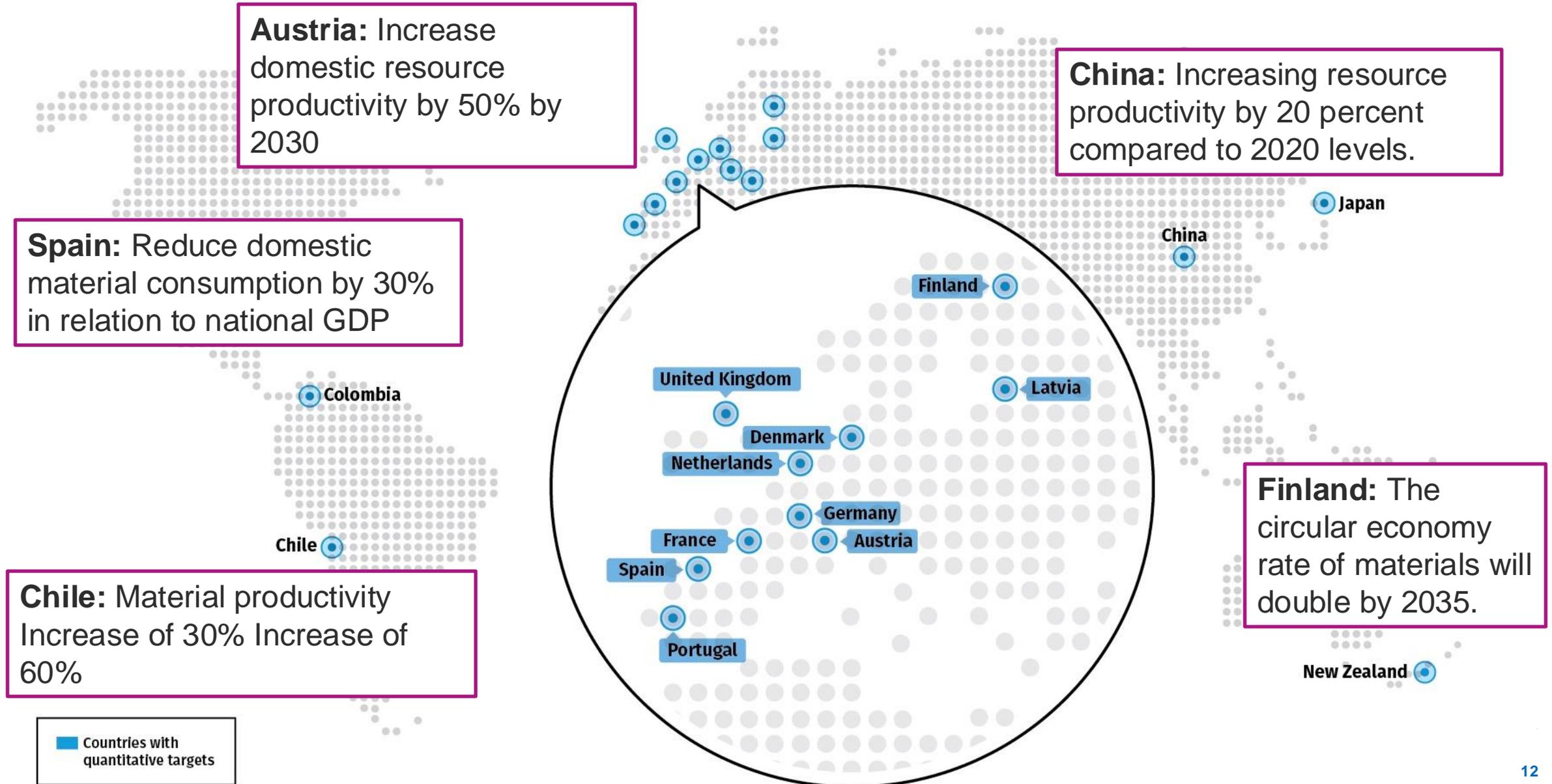
Policy design

Roadmap governance

Worker and consumer rights

**Trade policy and
international governance**

Quantitative CE targets in 15 countries



Policies span across 17 sectors....

**Construction
& Built
Environment**

Food

Mining

**Agriculture &
Bioresources**

Water

Plastics

Energy

**Electronics
& ICT**

Mobility

Industry

Textiles

Renewables

Chemicals

Nature regen

Furniture

Tourism

What does all this mean?



Global wave of CE policy coming online – ~3000 in the next decade spanning 17 sectors. Set to reconfigure most value chains.

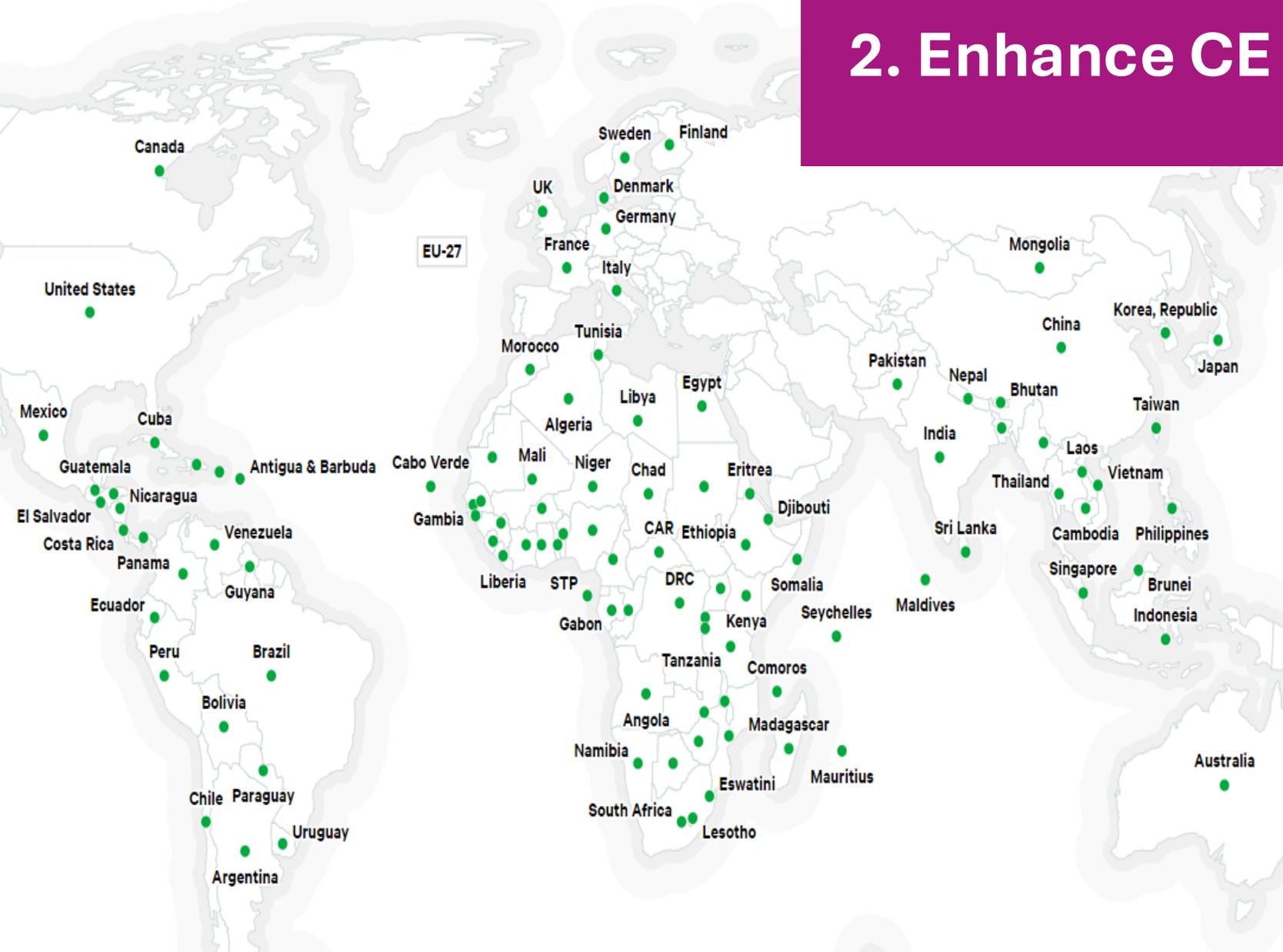


Policies currently developed unilaterally - growing fragmentation across markets, additional transition costs and complexities & derailing a global just transition.



Currently no global home for CE to encourage coordination and collaboration on the circular economy within the current multilateral or intergovernmental system

2. Enhance CE policy coordination



“CE lacks a permanent global home within the multilateral or intergovernmental landscape to enable policy coordination”

2. Enhance Global Policy Coordination on the Circular Economy

Potential solutions

A multilateral policy coordination mechanism would ensure that best practices are shared, policies are consistent, and collective goals are achieved at an international level, preventing duplication and regulatory confusion. *E.g. an ‘International Resource Agency’...*

Create a cross-sectoral circular economy alliance between UN agencies, multilateral development banks (MDBs), the private sector, and civil society to provide guidelines, best practices, and technical knowledge. *E.g. expand the membership, mandate and funding of the Global Alliance on Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency (GACERE)*

3. Reform the Global Financial Architecture



“Ghana’s national circular economy roadmap has an estimated required budget of US\$2.4 billion, equivalent to 3% of GDP.”

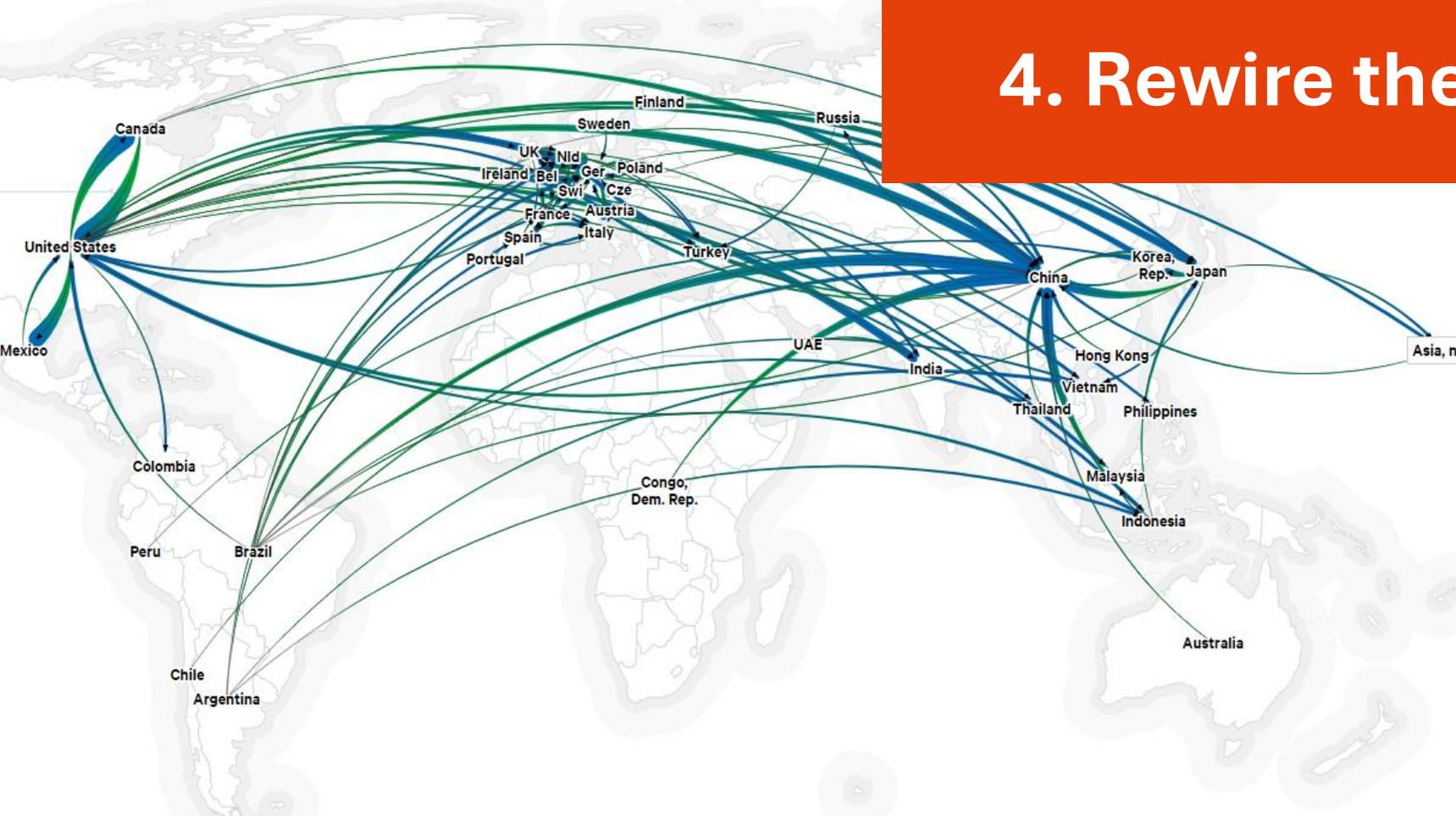
3. Reform the Global Financial Architecture

Potential solutions

Establish a Global Circular Economy Fund, modelled on the Green Climate Fund, to mobilize public and private investments, particularly focusing on low- and middle-income countries.

MDBs formalize their existing circular economy working group, and to seek alignment between institutions on circular economy definitions, assessment methodologies and investment priorities for the SDGs. The new objectives, milestones and alignment efforts would need to be anchored in a reformed MBD agenda.

4. Rewire the trade system

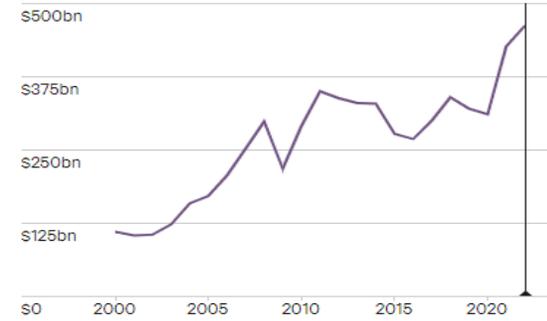


Trade in used goods, secondary raw materials and waste

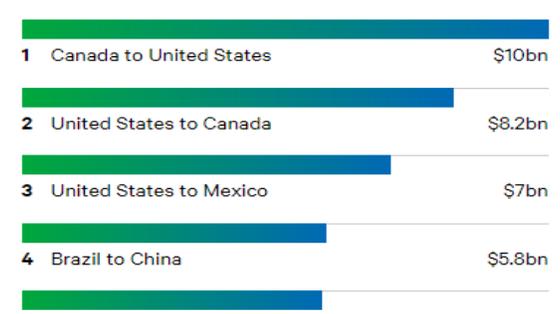
Displaying 106 of 14,116 flows

“No country can achieve a circular economy in isolation.”

\$462bn



Top 5



Fastest growing



4. Rewire the Global Trade System

Potential solutions

Establish working group to identify practical solutions to better capture and communicate circular-relevant information on goods at international borders in a way that is globally interoperable and compatible with the HS.

Plurilateral pilot projects could be launched between willing countries.

Relevant stakeholders include WCO and national border and environmental agencies

Formalize the TESSD informal working group on the circular economy.

Conduct a comprehensive ‘stocktaking’ exercise among willing WTO members and industry of best practice, existing definitions, and classifications of products in relation to circularity for key sectors such as construction, plastics, electronics and textiles. Mapping future commitments.



ISO 59000 series

ISO 59 004

Circular Economy – Terminology,
Principles and Guidance for implementation

ISO 59 010

Circular Economy – Guidance
on business models and value
networks

ISO 59 020

Circular Economy – Measuring
and assessing circularity

ISO 59 040

Circular Economy – Product
Circularity Data Sheet

ISO 59 014

Secondary materials –
Principles, sustainability
and traceability
requirements

ISO TR 59 031 – Circular Economy – Performance based approaches

ISO TR 59 032 – Circular Economy – Review of business model implementation

5. Develop Shared Standards and Metrics

“Many different standards and metrics will need to be developed. They will need to span all major sectors and all stages of the value chain”

5. Develop Shared Standards and Metrics

Potential solutions

Ensure widespread adoption of ISO 59000 standards both up to 2030 and beyond. Deepen cooperation with international bodies such as ISO and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) to facilitate implementation of the first tranche of ISO 59000 standards

Develop and ensure the adoption of key performance indicators (KPIs) and metrics that can be universally used to assess and drive circularity in various sectors and industries. The new KPIs and metrics should be based on the WBCSD's Global Circularity Protocol

Embedding circular economy in post-2030 development agenda

1. High-Level CE Objective in Post-2030 SDG Framework

2. Set CE Global Targets on Resource Use and Waste

3. Integrate CE Targets Across All SDGs

4. Align CE Targets with the UN's 'Beyond GDP' Initiative

5. Create Measurable Indicators for Inclusive CE by 2050

Towards 2050 SDG circular economy targets -

Suggested circular economy SDG targets for 2050 in a hypothetical extended and expanded SDG framework

 <p>1. NO POVERTY</p> <p>2050 – Circular goods and services provide affordable access to basic services for the poor. Localized circular economy businesses and livelihoods enable community resilience to economic shocks and environmental disasters.</p>	 <p>2. ZERO HUNGER</p> <p>2050 – Zero food waste is achieved, and food waste valorization is widely enabled. Food systems are based on regenerative agricultural practices and contribute to global food security.</p>	 <p>3. GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p> <p>2050 – Toxic materials, waste and pollution have been fully eliminated through the widespread adoption of closed-loop systems and bio-based alternatives, significantly improving human health and well-being.</p>	 <p>4. QUALITY EDUCATION</p> <p>2050 – Circular skills development is fully integrated into educational and vocational programmes, and circular knowledge resources are widely accessible.</p>	 <p>5. GENDER EQUALITY</p> <p>2050 – Decent work is realized for women in circular industries. Significant advancement in female entrepreneurship through circular economy businesses is achieved.</p>
 <p>6. CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</p> <p>2050 – Full access to sanitation and water for all is achieved through uptake of circular water technologies and urban sanitation systems redesigned to enable recovery of valuable resources from waste.</p>	 <p>7. AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</p> <p>2050 – Full access to affordable clean, renewable and circular energy systems is achieved. The majority of critical materials needed for clean energy systems are supplied through secondary sources or substituted with alternative materials.</p>	 <p>8. DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p> <p>2050 – Decent work standards are upheld and informal sectors have undergone a positive transformation. Circular business models have become the norm and major source of employment.</p>	 <p>9. INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p> <p>2050 – Circular industrial design and closed-loop industrial manufacturing have become central to sustainable industrial development, and enable global value chains to operate fully on circular principles.</p>	 <p>10. REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p> <p>2050 – High-value circular economic trade opportunities are realized across global value chains.</p>
 <p>11. SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p> <p>2050 – Urban environments, infrastructure and housing are redesigned according to circularity principles to be affordable, resilient and inclusive.</p>	 <p>12. RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p> <p>2050 – Trends in unsustainable global resource consumption have peaked and gone into reverse, with all countries becoming close to zero-waste.</p>	 <p>13. CLIMATE ACTION</p> <p>2050 – Circularity principles are fully embedded in climate mitigation and adaptation. Circular practices are applied to decarbonize upstream and downstream emissions of industrial value chains.</p>	 <p>14. LIFE BELOW WATER</p> <p>2050 – There is zero leakage of plastic waste and pollutants into the aquatic environment. Restorative and regenerative practices are used to rebuild marine systems.</p>	 <p>15. LIFE ON LAND</p> <p>2050 – Net-positive nature regeneration is achieved through nature-positive circular bioeconomies.</p>
 <p>16. PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p> <p>2050 – Organized criminal networks engaged in illegal waste trade and environmental crimes are stopped. Accountable and transparent institutions for sustainable resource management operate globally.</p>	 <p>17. PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p> <p>2050 – Financial resources for circularity transformation have been mobilized, including taxation reforms, and key technologies for advanced circular industries are rolled out across all countries.</p>			

Levers to achieve the targets

Current SDGs	Proposed circularity targets for 2050	Proposed levers for achieving 2050 circularity targets, by UN-defined category			
		Governance	Economy and finance	Science and technology	Individual and collective action
<p>SDG 1: No poverty – End poverty in all its forms everywhere.</p>	<p>By 2050, circular goods and services provide affordable access to basic services for the poor. Localized circular economy businesses and livelihoods enable community resilience to economic shocks and environmental disasters.</p>	<p>Circular economy initiatives and projects should be actively included in strategies and roadmaps for addressing multidimensional poverty.¹⁴² Governments and multilateral organizations, in particular UNDP and the World Bank, should incorporate circularity in such planning.</p>	<p>Preferential loans backed by governments should be offered to MSMEs and waste entrepreneurs to unlock opportunities and productive resources. This would also help to improve product quality and extend services to underserved populations.</p>	<p>Innovations and ‘appropriate technology’¹⁴³ solutions for circularity (i.e. compatible with local economic conditions) should be developed to improve access to resources and services for minorities and vulnerable groups. This would help such cohorts to maintain and develop sustainable livelihoods.</p>	<p>Multi-stakeholder partnerships should support the development of circular business models that serve poor communities and that provide access to basic goods and services for underserved populations.</p>

Merci beaucoup pour votre attention

Thank you for your attention!