

PLASTIC WASTE PUBLIC FORUM

A Circular Economy Strategy for Canada

April 9, 2026

Paul Shorthouse
Managing Director



Generate
Canada

Generate Canada

**For a strong,
inclusive economy
that thrives within
nature's limits.**



Building roadmaps and catalyzing new technologies, business models, supply-chain efficiencies, and the investments and policies needed to accelerate their adoption.



Diverse multi-stakeholder platforms designed to create, test, and scale innovative solutions to complex problems



Canada is only
6.1% circular

An Opportunity for Canada

"Canada's consumption rates of materials, energy, and water are currently among the highest in the world."

"73% of waste ends up in the landfill or is incinerated, much of which still holds value."

"The circular economy provides an opportunity for Canada to become more economically successful, environmentally sustainable, and socially equitable."

Source: [Turning Point Report](#) (published by the Council of Canadian Academies' Expert Panel on the Circular Economy in Canada)

2025 (version 2.0)



CIRCULAR ECONOMY ACTION PLAN FOR CANADA

[Download CE Action Plan 2.0](#)



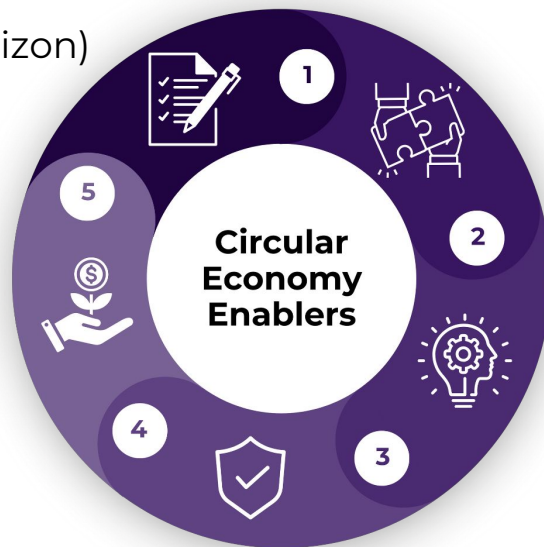
CIRCULAR ECONOMY ACTION PLAN FOR CANADA

5 Critical Enablers

16 Outcome Statements (10-year horizon)

30 Priority Actions (2-year timeline)

- Comprehensive framework for action
- Living document refreshed every 2 years
- Implemented by partners and key stakeholders



INFORMATION

Leveraging data, information, education, and training as a foundation for success.



COLLABORATION

Establishing new partnerships and cultural connections to accelerate change.



INNOVATION

Stimulating circular innovation across industries, sectors, and supply chains.



POLICY

Aligning policy, procurement, and standards to drive accelerated circular economy action and investment.



INVESTMENT

Directing capital and financing to support circularity and address infrastructure gaps.

ENABLER 1 : INFORMATION



**Leveraging data, education,
and training as a
foundation for success.**



Raising awareness will be essential to advancing the circular economy in Canada, including for circular strategies and solutions that bring economic, social, and environmental benefits. Information and knowledge-sharing are foundational components to this, which must be based on defensible, accessible data, proof points, and evidence-based research. Skills training and education will also be essential for enabling action.

Sample of Priority Actions

- **Launch Public Awareness and Engagement Campaign.** Expand national campaigns using behavioral insights. Focus on practical benefits: affordability, waste savings, and job creation.
- **Create a National Circular Data Framework.** Harmonize metrics, data, and measurement formats. Provide open dashboards that track progress by sector and region.



ENABLER 2 : COLLABORATION



**Establishing new partnerships
and cultural connections to
accelerate change.**



Transitioning from current linear industries and supply chains to a more circular economy in Canada will require systems-thinking to break down silos and establish new partnerships (domestically and internationally), while leveraging new approaches and collaborative platforms. Supporting the wide-scale adoption of circular practices will also require engaging across cultures and exploring the opportunities and challenges from various perspectives to embrace an inclusive approach to circularity.

Sample of Priority Actions

- **Strengthen, Support and Expand Pre-competitive Collaboration Models / Platforms.** Support knowledge sharing and problem solving / experimentation that bring together industry, government, and academia to advance circular value chains across sectors / materials (such as the Canada Plastics Pact, Canadian Circular Textiles Consortium, CERIEC's Living Labs, etc.).



ENABLER 3 : INNOVATION



Stimulating circular innovation across industries, sectors, and supply chains.



Innovation is at the core of transforming business practices, industries, and supply chains from their current linear structures to more circular models. Leveraging Canada's applied research knowledge-base while supporting business model innovation can create triple bottom-line benefits that support economic, social, and environmental objectives.

Sample of Priority Actions

- **Support Circular Testbeds & Innovation Hubs for Major Sectors.** Use a 'living lab' approach in strategic sectors (including plastics, construction, agrifood, textiles, and manufacturing) to validate and prove out scalable business models.
- **Use Digital Tools to Scale Circular Design.** Apply and incentivize AI, robotics, blockchain, and other digital solutions to cut waste or track material flows, prioritizing open-source and/or interoperable systems and platforms.



ENABLER 4 : POLICY



Aligning policy, procurement, and standards to drive accelerated circular economy action and investment.



Establishing a comprehensive, harmonized policy framework across Canada, based on established standards of practice, will help provide certainty and drive circular economy activities and investments. Procurement as a tool can further accelerate the scale up of investments by driving the demand for circular products and services.

Sample of Priority Actions

- **Enhance Supportive Policies for Reuse.** Redirect a share of EPR funds and fee modulation to support reuse infrastructure.
- **Expand EPR & Resource Recovery Programs.** Continue engaging with industry to explore where and how to expand provincially-harmonized extended producer responsibility (EPR) policy and/or resource recovery programs in areas of highest impact, including within targeted industrial sectors (e.g., agricultural plastics, construction, etc.).



ENABLER 5 : INVESTMENT



Directing capital and financing to support circularity and address infrastructure gaps.



Finance and investment are critical enablers for the circular economy, mobilizing capital to support business and community efforts while addressing critical infrastructure gaps. Engaging with financial institutions, addressing risks, and improving returns will take a coordinated effort, but must be aligned with business and community priorities.

Sample of Priority Actions

- **Launch a Circular Infrastructure Investment Plan.** Identify critical infrastructure needs and gaps by sector and region, and develop incentives and funding models to operationalize the plan.
- **Expand Blended Finance to Support and De-risk Circular Projects and Infrastructure.** Combine public grants, private equity and debt, and community funding to support circular business models and infrastructure.





Working together to
create a Canada
without plastic waste
or pollution



A Solution Space by
Generate Canada

CPP Partners represent the full value chain

1. Focusing on the root causes and **systems change**
2. Working **collaboratively** across the value chain
3. **Aligning** strategies, standards, and market signals
4. Harnessing collective skills and resources to **advance knowledge, catalyze innovation and develop new solutions**



Guided by Ellen MacArthur Foundation's Vision for a New Plastics Economy

1. **Elimination of problematic or unnecessary plastic packaging** through redesign, innovation, and new delivery models is a priority.
2. **Reuse models are applied where relevant**, reducing the need for single-use packaging.
3. All plastic packaging is **designed to be 100% reusable, recyclable, or compostable**.
4. All plastic packaging is **reused, recycled, or composted in practice**.
5. The use of plastic is fully **decoupled from the consumption of finite resources**.
6. All plastic packaging is **free of hazardous chemicals**, and the health, safety, and rights of all people involved are respected.



THE NEW PLASTICS ECONOMY
RETHINKING THE FUTURE OF PLASTICS

CPP 2035 Roadmap Priorities



Priority 1

Eliminate Waste by Design.

- Reduce virgin plastic use by eliminating unnecessary and problematic plastics
- Scale reuse and refill systems
- Scale design standards for plastic packaging across Canada (that are aligned across North America)



Priority 2

Invest in Infrastructure for a Circular Economy.

- Integrate reuse / refill infrastructure, where possible
- Establish a national recycling system to close gaps in collection, sortation, and recycling infrastructure (household and public), with a priority on films and flexibles
- Stabilize markets for recycled content



Priority 3

Drive Action Through Data & Science.

- Establish national data standards and data sharing platform to improve transparency and reduce administrative burden
- Apply science-based research to guide decisions on health, environment, and climate impacts of plastics



Priority 4

Engage People & Align Policy.

- Integrate Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into plastics system solutions
- Shape government policy to enable a circular plastics economy
- Build public trust and participation through education, marketing, and storytelling



Generate Canada

www.generatecanada.ca

CONTACT

Paul Shorthouse

Managing Director

pshorthouse@generatecanada.ca