



Circular Economy: from Indicators and Data to Policy-making

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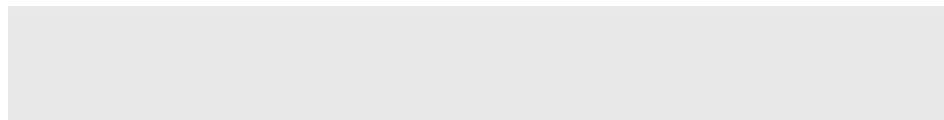
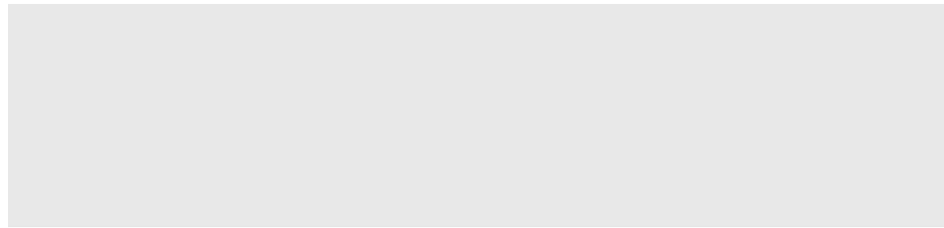
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Conclusions



Shifting from a linear to a circular economy model is a complex, lengthy and challenging process. It requires countries to undergo structural changes and intensive technical support. There is no universal solution to apply due to the varied national economic, political, environmental, social, and cultural conditions of countries. Having information about baselines and progress achieved is key for a successful transition.

Some countries have already adopted national strategies, policies, plans and other regulations to promote the shift to a circular economy. Some of these initiatives contain circular economy indicators for monitoring their implementation, but due to the lack of harmonized methodologies and indicators sets, these initiatives are unfortunately not comparable.

International harmonized methodologies and indicators sets for measuring circular economy are key in this transition. The Guidelines for measuring circular economy (part A) adopted in 2023 is a cornerstone in this effort. It includes sets of circular economy indicators, covering many economic, environmental and social aspects, aiming to measure very simple as well as very complex phenomena, and requiring simple to multi-dimensional data.

Analyzing the current existing data related to circular economy, based on the core indicators proposed in the Guidelines, indicates that some international methodologies are available as well as some international instruments for collecting countries data. Nevertheless, due to the complexity and novelty of the topic, available methodologies and data collecting instruments are not specific for circular economy. Hence, leading to scattered and incomplete data.

Different measures are required to fully populate an international circular economy indicators database. At national level, efforts are needed to increase data availability for circular economy indicators for which methodologies currently exist. Capacity building mechanisms should be set up by international organisations to strengthen national technical skills and support countries in their data production. In parallel, international organizations are encouraged to further collaborate to develop and adopt methodologies of indicators that are not currently available. In addition, including circular economy information in the existing data reporting instruments from countries ensures the reduction of the additional data reporting burden.