



IMPACT REPORT 2019-20

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THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO ROME

No two cities, supply chains, or businesses are the same. Each comes with its unique context, quirks, and challenges, and each requires a slightly different approach to transition to a circular state.

Because there is no universal blueprint to circularity, we work with changemakers within a wide range of organisations – from SMEs and multinational corporations to municipalities – to identify the right opportunities for them and develop practical strategies to close the circularity gap for their context.

We pride ourselves in our approach, which is anchored in trust, collaboration, and innovation, and always strive to make a difference on the ground.



**SPOT
LIGHT**

**THE CIRCLE
CITY SCAN**



THE ISSUE

While city officials and other urban changemakers find the circular economy promise attractive for their cities and their citizens, they often need guidance as to where to start. Which strategies does it make the most sense to encourage? In which sectors? How?



THE RESPONSE

The Circle City Scan is a visual roadmap that identifies tailored opportunities to foster a circular economy based on each city's context, and presents practical strategies within sectors that have the biggest transformational potential.



OUR ROLE

Through our work with cities and regions, we have developed a collaborative innovation process to collect, analyse, and create easy-to-digest visuals of a city's resource consumption, while bringing together and guiding a community of local businesses and city officials to co-create practical circular strategies for the city.

17
CITIES

have kick-started their circular transition thanks to

245+
PILOT PROJECTS

supported by Circle City Scans, directly and indirectly

700+
STAKEHOLDERS

engaged through Circle City Scan projects, incl. businesses and (non-)governmental organisations

the Circle City Scan



Making the transition to a circular Prague is crucial in creating a competitive and sustainable city. Thanks to the Circle City Scan, we have been able to identify promising areas in the city for the circular economy, and practical opportunities to turn this into reality. It is great that the pilot projects such as the REUSE centres and using biowaste as fuel are moving forward thanks to this project.

Radim Polák

*Director of the Waste
Management Department,
City of Prague*

WHAT'S NEXT?

We continue to refine and standardise our methodology, and are looking forward to working with local partners to bring Circle City Scans to new contexts. **Reach out today** to explore opportunities for your own city!



SPOT
LIGHT

MAKING THE AMSTERDAM DOUGHNUT

How the Dutch are reshaping their post-pandemic economy - BBC REEL





THE ISSUE

The City of Amsterdam wants to ensure a good life for everyone, within the Earth's natural boundaries. This vision is captured by Doughnut Economics, but it's a vision that had yet to be translated into a practical tool to support a holistic transition towards a thriving circular economy at the city level.



THE RESPONSE

The Amsterdam City Doughnut takes the global concept of the Doughnut, developed by Oxford University economist Kate Raworth, and turns it into a tool for transformative action in the city of Amsterdam. The Doughnut is a cornerstone of the Amsterdam Circular Strategy 2020-2025, combining local aspiration with global responsibility.



OUR ROLE

The Amsterdam City Doughnut has been developed in collaboration between Doughnut Economics Action Lab (DEAL), Circle Economy, Biomimicry 3.8 and C40, with support from the KR Foundation.

Together with the City, Circle Economy also actively facilitated the creation of the Amsterdam Circular Strategy 2020-2025. Now, Amsterdam is driving the adoption and implementation of the circular strategies identified. The global awareness of the Amsterdam City Doughnut and the city's Circular Strategy has been hugely supported and this is reflected by its uptake in global media.

IMPACT

AMSTERDAM'S CIRCULAR

STRATEGY 2020-2025 APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL

In mid-May 2020, Amsterdam's Circular Strategy 2020-2025 was **approved and adopted** by the City Council with 40 votes out of 45 in favour. Following the recommendations of the Amsterdam Circular Strategy 2020-2025, the *Innovation and action program Amsterdam Circular 2020-2021* has also been established. This is the direct translation of the ambitions and action perspectives presented in the strategy to support practical implementation.

Our work with Amsterdam has also helped shape Amsterdam's Monitor to track progress towards the city's circular strategy and its ambitions: to find out whether it is on the right track, the City is developing a Monitor to determine the social and ecological impact of the transition. **The Monitor** charts the extent to which Amsterdam's economy has become circular and identifies areas in which more needs to be done.



Photo credit: FastCompany

A TRANSFORMATIONAL PROCESS FOR MUNICIPALITIES

The process of down-scaling the Doughnut in Amsterdam has connected stakeholders from various municipal departments around a common topic and ambition, helping to break down traditional silos.

Throughout a series of collaborative workshops over 2019 and 2020, centred around applying circular-, and doughnut- thinking to Amsterdam, we increased the awareness and understanding of municipal stakeholders on the importance of a holistic approach to the circular transition, as well as how the institutional design and governance of the municipality can influence/block its circular ambitions. These workshops brought together more than 40 representatives from the City of Amsterdam, which served to help to break down the walls of the traditional departmental silos.



BUILDING A MOMENTUM FOR OTHER CITIES TO EMBRACE DOUGHNUT PRINCIPLES IN THEIR CITY

Inspired by the work that has been pioneered by Amsterdam around down-scaling the Doughnut, in late June 2020, the City Council of Copenhagen **voted as a majority** in favour of embracing the Doughnut as part of the city's strategy.

28+
**PRESS
MENTIONS**

in global media
and
platforms like
Forbes, the BBC,
and WEF since
April 2020

4,5K+
ENGAGEMENTS

on Circle Economy's
social media channels
alone

INSPIRING A GLOBAL AUDIENCE

The public launch of the Amsterdam City Doughnut has witnessed huge traction internationally, serving as positive inspiration for potential actions towards a sustainable post-covid recovery of cities. This

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publicity has also helped raise awareness of 'down-scaling the doughnut' to cities towards creating thriving cities.



the
guardian



WHAT'S NEXT?

Amsterdam is now set to turn the ambitions set out in the Strategy into action over the coming years. Together with our patterns, we will continue to work with Amsterdam, and other cities, through the **Thriving Cities Initiative** to co-create transformative change towards a thriving circular future.

A large yellow circle with the words 'SPOT LIGHT' in white capital letters inside it.

SPOT
LIGHT

MAPPING
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR
BUSINESSES

THE BUSINESS SCAN

Just as city officials need guidance on which strategies to prioritise, business leaders and other change-makers within companies need guidance as to where to start realising the circular economy promise for their business.

The **Circle Business Scan** supports businesses in identifying, evaluating and implementing opportunities for transitioning their entire business, a specific product range, or a business process to a circular model. The scan uses a systematic, science-based approach to analyse current operations around key circularity indicators and then quickly identify strategic opportunities based on circular principles.

30+
**SCANS TO
DATE**

at business and
value chain level

THE CASE OF ROCKWOOL



THE ISSUE

ROCKWOOL is a stone wool insulation producer that already uses a significant amount of secondary materials in their products. However, once they reach the end of their useful life, materials used throughout ROCKWOOL's value chain are still largely lost to landfills and through emissions.

The construction sector consumes 42 billion tonnes of resources annually, making it the most material-intensive sector. The construction sector also produces about one-third of all global waste, most of which ends up in landfills after first use. Actors across the industry value chain are aware of this problem.



THE RESPONSE

In an effort to better understand the current state of progress on its circular economy initiatives and to validate the initiatives executed thus far, ROCKWOOL commissioned Circle Economy to assess and challenge ROCKWOOL's business model and value chain by identifying circular hotspots and levers to accelerate circular impact.



OUR ROLE

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We applied our Circle Business Scan to identify and evaluate opportunities for transitioning ROCKWOOL to a

circular model. Using a material flow analysis approach, we created a baseline overview of the materials used in ROCKWOOL's activities by tracing their flows from extraction to disposal, or ideally, recovery. Using this baseline assessment, we could then calculate the potential impact that a recommended set of interventions could have and facilitate their prioritisation. Key findings from this process are published in a report, freely available to other actors in the construction sector to learn from and to find inspiration in.

IMPACT



A CALL FOR VALUE CHAIN COLLABORATION

The collaboration with ROCKWOOL uncovered three key levers to improve circularity: (1) Increase the sourcing of non-virgin and regenerative materials for both raw materials and energy supply by sourcing from and beyond the stonewool supply chain; (2)

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Develop more high-value and circular product applications that can be integrated into modular, adaptive building components; (3) Reclaim more waste from the construction sector through ROCKWOOL's internal recycling and partnerships with other players.

The wider publication of these findings of the study (those that did not contain sensitive information) caused ripple effects within and beyond ROCKWOOL. Encouraged by the public affirmation of ROCKWOOL's focus on the circular economy, international subsidiaries reached out to their headquarters to explore opportunities to collaborate on local initiatives. In addition, the ROCKWOOL Group has been able to use findings from the study to reassess and reorient activities towards the circular economy.

NEXT: TOWARDS MASS ADOPTION →