

Japan Regional Roundtable On Circular Economy

2-3 March 2021

The World Economic Forum, in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment – Japan, will convene the Japan Regional Roundtable on Circular Economy on March 2-3, 2021. This high-level virtual forum will offer a platform for business, government and international leaders to discuss global, regional and national circular economy trends, while specifically identifying priority actions to accelerate progress.

Context

Japan is already playing a leading role globally in building out a circular economy, through a strong focus on resource efficiency. The Roundtable will help spotlight ongoing efforts and put them in context as the event explores global trends, progress in advancing the circular economy for plastics and electronics, as well as the many ways technology is being applied to fast-track circular economy.

Objectives

- Share global, regional and local trends and opportunities for the circular economy transition;
- Identify priority areas to further accelerate the circular economy transition;
- Identify actions to facilitate emerging circular economy innovations and solutions.

Themes

Shaping a Circular Economy: From Ambition to Action

An opening panel will welcome global and Japanese leaders to discuss circular economy trends, as well as priorities to help accelerate progress towards the circular economy. The panel will explore a host of questions, including:

- How can the full circular economy transformation build economic and social resilience?
- In a post-COVID era, what is the role of the public and private sectors, as well as public-private partnership, for accelerating circular economy?

Closing the Loop on Plastics

2019 saw the mass mobilization of commitments from business and government to move towards a circular plastics economy, supported by a wave of collective action partnerships. Groups such as the Global Plastic Action Partnership (GPAP) and Consumers Beyond Disposability Initiatives are advancing global efforts to develop new consumption models and collaborate with governments on the development of national strategies for tackling plastic waste and pollution. Japan is pioneering new ways to tackle the plastics problem and brings an essential voice of experience and expertise.

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Accelerating the Circular Electronics Transition

While digitalization and connectivity are critical to achieving all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, the current system of producing and consuming devices such as electronic goods - from solar mini grids to smartphones - is ready for a reboot. There are vast amounts of wasted resources along the value chain, from mining and manufacturing to transport, retail, consumption and electronics disposal. Each year, approximately 50 million tonnes of electronic and electrical waste (e-waste) are produced, equivalent in weight to all commercial aircraft ever built. Only 20% is formally recycled. If no steps are taken, the amount of e-waste will more than double by 2050, to 120 million tonnes annually.

That same e-waste represents a huge opportunity. The material value alone is worth \$62.5 billion (€55 billion), three times more than the annual output of the world's silver mines and more than the GDP of most countries. Harvesting the resources from used electronics produces substantially less carbon-dioxide emissions than mining in the earth's crust.

Japan is a leader in the manufacture and production of electronics and electronic equipment. Its unique perspective provides the chance for one-of-a-kind leadership in the circular economy transition of the sector. This roundtable will discuss progress and potential for collaboration on new designs, as well as use and business models to support a circular electronics transition.

Circular Innovation and Finance

Fourth Industrial Revolution innovations (4IR), including AI, blockchain and the internet of things (IoT), hold incredible potential to fast-track the circular economy transformation, yet exploration of this potential is still only at its early stages. Building on the report *Harnessing the Fourth Industrial Revolution for the Circular Economy Consumer Electronics and Plastics Packaging* launched by the World Economic Forum in 2019, this roundtable will discuss opportunities for the 4IR – from advanced material innovation through to robotics and AI – to accelerate the circular economy transformation and answer:

- Which areas need innovative actions for the circular economy transition?
- What drivers could accelerate the transition to a circular economy and circular economy technological innovation?
- What measures related to finance are important for accelerating the circular economy?

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Agenda

Part 1: Tuesday 2 March, 18:30-19:30 JST / 10:30-11:30 CET

Shaping a Circular Economy: From Ambition to Action

An opening panel will welcome global and Japanese leaders to discuss circular economy trends, as well as priorities to help accelerate progress towards the circular economy.

Opening speakers

- Shinjirō Koizumi, Minister of the Environment, Japan
- Børge Brende, President and CEO, World Economic Forum

Part 2: Wednesday 3 March, 17:00-19:00 JST / 9:00-11:00 CET

Circular Economy Roundtable Dialogues: From Ambition to Action

The Roundtables will discuss insights into advancing circular electronics and batteries, circular plastics, and opportunities for Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) technology innovations to accelerate the circular economy transition.

Opening speakers

- Yoshiyuki Miyabe, Senior Managing Executive Officer, Panasonic Corporation
- Eiji Makino, President, 4R Energy Corporation
- Ms Tomomi Fukumoto, Executive Officer; Chief Operating Officer, Corporate Sustainability Division, Suntory Holdings
- Mayumi Tsuruyu, Executive Officer, Seven & I Holdings
- Shuichi Ishibashi, CEO, Bridgestone Corporation

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Stay up to date and follow the Circular Economy and Material Value Chains Platform on the [community page](#).