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Policy Paper | 10.07.2023

Green design: the way forward for a true circular economy

Our current economic model is linear: we mine, use and dump the vast majority of our raw materials without reusing them. 40% of the environmental impacts of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) are due to the depletion of metal resources and the use of fossil resources, mainly to manufacture the devices. This model depletes our resources, pollutes our environment, damages biodiversity and stimulates climate change, as more than half of climate emissions are linked to our material use. It also makes Europe dependent on resources from elsewhere, often from countries with corrupt or unstable regimes. The tech industry needs to fundamentally change and turn to the circular economy.

The production and consumption of textile products also has an enormous impact on climate, water and energy consumption. Global textiles production has almost doubled between 2000 and 2015. The consumption of clothing and footwear is expected to increase by 63% by 2030, from 62 million tonnes now to 102 million tonnes in 2030. In the case of t-shirts alone, it is estimated that between 11 and 32 million new t-shirts are destroyed in the EU each year. This results in up to 220,000 tonnes of CO2eq, 35 billion litres of water use, 12,300 tonnes of wasted cotton and 1.9 million litres of wasted oil. Across the whole textile sector, the carbon footprint of unsold destroyed textiles in the EU is between 1.2 and 3.3 Mt of CO2eq.

A new law (called Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation) will tackle these problems by setting circular design criteria on just about all consumer goods. This will be a gamechanger, because an estimated 80% of the environmental impact of a product is determined at the design stage. Discover how

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Position Paper



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13.10.2025

Responsible MEPs



David Cormand

Member



Sara Matthieu

Member

Contact person



Narmine Abou Bakari

Digital Rights campaigner

Attached documents

Factsheet on Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation

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