



Rialtas Áitiúil Éireann
Local Government Ireland

NATIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

FOR A CIRCULAR ECONOMY 2024-2030
- BRIEFING NOTE



The Waste Management Act 1996 requires Local Authorities to make a waste management plan either individually or collectively for their functional areas. In 2015 local authorities established three Regional Waste Management Planning Offices to develop and implement three regional waste management plans on their behalf. Following an evaluation, it was recommended that a single plan be prepared to replace the existing regional plans.

This Plan seeks to **influence** sustainable consumption and **prevent** the generation of waste, **improve** the capture of materials to **optimise** circularity and **enable** compliance with policy and legislation.

The Regional Waste Management Planning Offices, under the auspices of the County and City Management Association National Oversight Group, have co-ordinated the preparation of this plan which is the first National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy. This Plan sets out a framework for the prevention and management of waste in Ireland for the period 2024 to 2030.

CIRCULARITY
 “Keeping materials in use for longer”

The draft Plan was published for consultation from the 3rd May to the 5th July 2023 and all comments raised in the consultation have been considered in the process of the completion of this final Plan.

Ireland is moving away from the traditional linear ‘take-make-use-dispose’ model towards a ‘circular economy’ regenerative growth model where resources are reused or recycled as much as possible and the generation of waste is minimised. The transition to a circular economy is essential to reduce pressure on natural resources, aid in achieving climate targets, support Sustainable Development Goals and create sustainable growth and jobs.

The Circular Economy Act 2022 is supported by a wider circular policy base which establishes the framework for the national transition to a circular economy. This Plan has been prepared to support and supplement the wider policy base and includes specific targets, policies and actions to enable the waste and resource sector to meet the circularity challenge and accelerate the transition to a circular economy.

The role of the waste and resource sector is central to this national transition and the **National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy** (the ‘Plan’) provides a framework to support this strategy.

This Plan recognises Climate Change as a key driver for both behavioural change and improved waste management practices. The Plan will be evaluated annually for climate impact and annual work plans will be adapted to respond to the climate challenge.

The transition to a circular economy requires a collaborative national response across all sectors of the economy through the lifecycle of products and materials.

The content of this Plan has been created through extensive collaboration with key partners, stakeholders and the wider waste audience and the principle of co-ownership has been embedded into the responses to the challenges identified.

The Plan identifies key deliverables which will unlock the potential of all stakeholders to contribute to the transition to more sustainable practices. Responsibility for key deliverables has been allocated to the key partners for the delivery of waste policy namely the Local Authority Sector, the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Collaboration will continue to be central to the implementation of the Plan and key deliverables have been included on organisation, engagement and monitoring to support this collaborative approach.

PLAN AMBITION
0%
TOTAL WASTE GROWTH

The ambition of this Plan is 0% total waste growth per person over the life of the Plan with an emphasis on non-household wastes including waste from commercial activities and the construction and demolition sector.

This ambition is underpinned with a comprehensive series of targets, policies, actions and a suite of key deliverables. Each of these Plan provisions has been devised to support achievement of the Plan ambition, respond to current and future challenges, and support the transition to a more circular economy with reduced climate impact.

INCREASE RECYCLING RATES

While the ambition of the Plan is to influence sustainable consumption and prevent the generation of waste, increasing recycling rates is also a key priority.

Ireland is currently on track to achieve many of the current European Union waste targets, however, significant challenges remain on the achievement of recycling targets. Performance targets are increasing, and the next generation of targets will present an additional significant challenge.

€40M
 The cost of the transition to circularity

The private waste sector in Ireland is valued at in excess of €1.4bn and provides employment for circa 10,000 people while total Local Authority expenditure on waste functions exceeds €280M annually and involves over 1700 people.

The scale of the financial and human commitment to the continuation of waste services is large and the transition to a circular economy will require an additional minimum investment of €40M by the State to achieve the desired outcomes over the lifetime of this Plan.

Additional resources will be required in key areas including communications, engagement, regulation and infrastructure to enable the local authority sector to make a meaningful contribution to the transition to a more circular society.

THIS PLAN IS PRESENTED IN FIVE VOLUMES AS FOLLOWS:

VOLUME I

Sets out the current situation including policy, the existing waste landscape and financial, human and market resources deployed. It also identifies the **key waste management challenges** facing the State.

VOLUME II

Sets out **the responses** to the waste management challenges identified including the Plan ambition, targets, policies and priority actions. Targeted policies and priority actions are identified for a range of focus areas chosen to align with the challenges.

VOLUME III

Sets out the **delivery roadmap** for the responses contained in Volume II and contains key deliverables required to enable the ambition, targets, policies, and actions identified.

VOLUME IV

Provides the **supporting information** for the Plan in a series of technical appendices.

VOLUME V

Contains the **Strategic Environmental Assessment Statement** and **Natura Impact Statement**.

PROGRESS

Significant progress has been made in the management of waste in Ireland and the previous Regional Waste Management Plans have provided a framework for these advances.

Challenges remain as the State seeks to transition to a more circular economy and this Plan provides a national framework which recognises the challenges, presents responses and sets out a roadmap for delivery over the next six years.

THIS PLAN IN NUMBERS:

1

Plan
Ambition

8

National
Targets

13

Core
Policies

16

Focus
Areas

74

Targeted
Policies

85

Priority
Actions

51

Key
Deliverables

This plan was made on the 22nd of February, 2024, and covers the period 2024 – 2030.



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REGIONAL
WASTE
MANAGEMENT
PLANNING OFFICES