



# National Recycling Strategy: Part One of a Series on Building a Circular Economy for All

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# Overview

1. Highlights from National Recycling Strategy
2. Overview of Anticipated Recycling Grants
3. Discussion and Polling Questions
4. Sign up to Stay Connected!

# National Recycling Strategy Released on America Recycles Day

November 15, 2021

## National Recycling Strategy

Part One of a Series on Building a Circular Economy for All



November 15, 2021

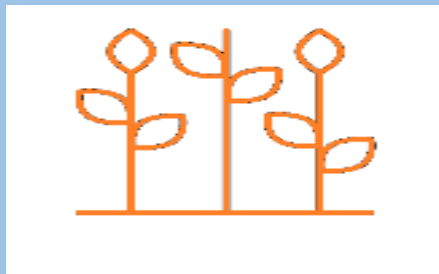
# Natural resource extraction and processing contributes:



**50%** of global climate change impacts



**90%** of global biodiversity loss and water stress



**11%** of global species loss

# The Strategy Series Vision on Building a Circular Economy for All

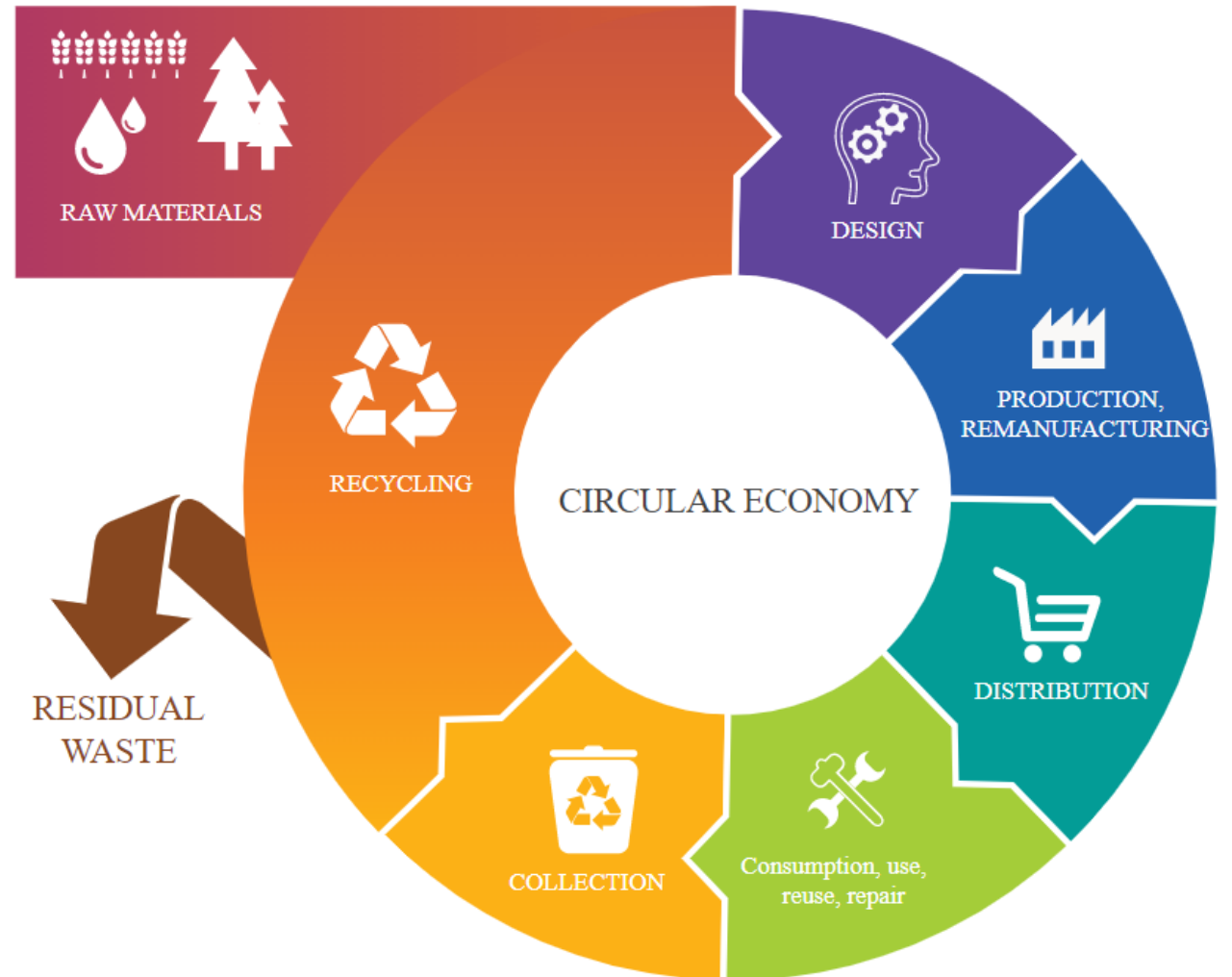
- **Part 1: National Recycling Strategy**
- Part 2: Plastics
- Part 3: Food Waste/Organics
- Part 4: Critical Minerals and Electronics
- Part 5: Built Environment
- Part 6: Textiles

*We are establishing a 10-year vision and strategic direction that embraces zero waste/circularity, sustainable materials management, addresses climate change, and environmental justice.*



# Goals of the Circular Economy Strategies

- Reduce domestic and international climate impacts and social inequities associated with natural resource extraction and processing
- Increase equitable access to recycling
- Reduce ecosystem loss and destruction
- Stimulate economic development (jobs, businesses) related to circular economy



# Scope of National Recycling Strategy

- Focuses on enhancing the national municipal solid waste (MSW) or “household” recycling system
- Identifies stakeholder-led actions to create a stronger, more resilient, more equitable and more cost-effective MSW recycling system
- Acknowledges recycling is only one part of what is needed to achieve a circular economy
- Commits EPA to developing additional strategies (plastics, food waste/organics, electronics)



# Challenges to the U.S. Recycling System



- Inadequate recycling infrastructure and market demand for recyclables
- Confusion on what is recyclable, leading to contamination
- Environmental justice concerns



# External Stakeholders Engaged

## **Non-profit Organizations:**

- Environmental Research and Education Foundation (EREF)
- GreenBlue Institute
- Keep America Beautiful (KAB)
- National Recycling Coalition
- Recycling Partnership (TRP)
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation (USCCF)

## **Recycling Industry Associations and Private Companies:**

- Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI)
- National Waste and Recycling Association (NWRA)
- Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA)
- Waste Management (WM)

## **State/Tribal/Local Governments:**

- Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials (ASTSWMO)
- Environmental Council of the States (ECOS)
- South Carolina Department of Commerce
- U.S. Conference of Mayors
- National Tribal Caucus
- Tribal Waste and Response Steering Committee

# Federal Partners Engaged

## Federal Agencies:

- Council on Environmental Quality
- Federal Trade Commission
- National Science Foundation
- U.S. Agency for International Development
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Department of Commerce
  - International Trade Administration
  - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
  - National Institute of Standards and Technology
- U.S. Department of Defense
- U.S. Department of Energy

- U.S. Department of State
- U.S. General Services Administration
- U.S. Trade Representative

## Federal Advisory Committee:

- National Environmental Justice Advisory Council



# National Recycling Strategy Objectives

- A. Improve Markets for Recycled Commodities
- B. Increase Collection and Improve Materials Management Infrastructure
- C. Reduce Contamination in the Recycled Materials Stream
- D. Enhance Policies and Programs to Support Circularity
- E. Standardize Measurement and Increase Data Collection



# Objective B: Increase Collection and Improve Materials Management Infrastructure

## Example Action:

- **Increase consideration of recoverability and sustainability in the design of products.**
  - Due to their design, some products cannot be recycled
  - Encourage manufacturers to design products and packages that can be recycled

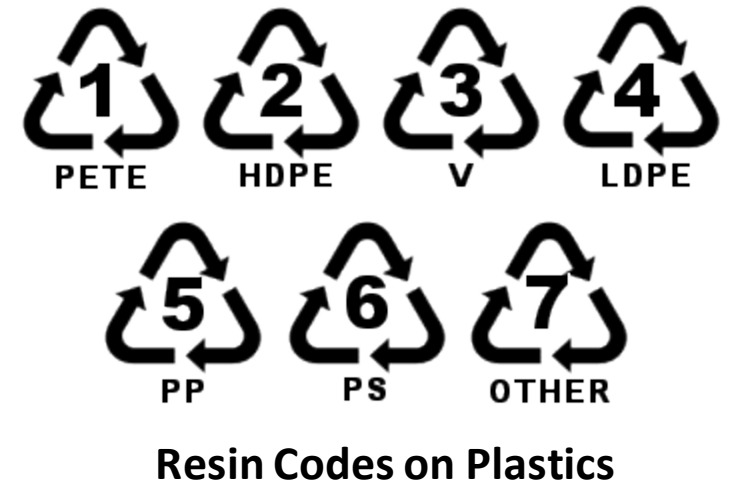




# Objective C: Reduce Contamination in the Recycled Materials Stream

## Example Actions:

- **Improve consistency of labels for recyclable products and recycling bins**
  - Help address consumer confusion about what can be recycled and which bins to use
  - Promote labels that are not misleading
  - Reduce contamination in recycling



# Objective D: Enhance Policies and Programs to Support Circularity

## Example Action:

- **Conduct an analysis of different policies that could address recycling challenges.**
  - Recycled content requirements for products
  - Taxes on virgin materials
  - Bottle bills
  - Take-back programs
  - Extended producer responsibility (EPR) requirements
  - Landfill fees
  - Packaging fees
  - Recycling mandates
  - Minimum quality/contamination standards for MRF outputs
  - Dual stream versus single stream collection
  - Policies/incentives to divert materials from landfills
  - Bans on contaminants in products
  - Bans on producing/using specific materials
  - Bans on certain materials in landfills
  - National recyclability standards

**Join the Effort:  
Help Implement  
the Strategy**

# Who can “Lead” and “Support” Actions?

- Anyone can potentially lead or support a Strategy action!
- Leaders and Supports Could Include Representatives from:
  - Federal governments
  - Local/state/tribal governments
  - NGOs
  - Trade associations
  - Private industry
  - Other



# Roles for “Leads” and “Supporters”

- **Action Leads:**

- Help Develop Plan and Lead Team to Implement Action
  - Convene Action Implementation Team
  - Develop Action Implementation Plan with Team
- Provide Periodic Updates to EPA on Progress
  - Report Updates on Milestones (Quarterly?)

- **Action Supporters:**

- Work with Action Leads to Implement Action
  - Support may be large or small

# A Few Reasons to Lead or Support an Action

- Help Create a More Efficient and Effective Recycling System
- Help the Nation Meet the National Recycling Goal
- Amplify Existing Work
- Get Cross-Sector Support on an Effort
- Be Recognized



- Gives EPA new authority to fund improvements to solid waste management programs and infrastructure
- Directs EPA to Develop:
  - Strategy on Post-Consumer Materials Management and Water Management (“Plastics Strategy”)
  - Report on Eliminating Barriers to Recycling
  - Report on Ways to Spur Markets for Recycled Plastic
  - Report on Opportunities for Innovative Uses of Plastic Waste
  - Study on How to Create Less Plastic Waste
  - Support Report on Repurposing Plastics Waste in Infrastructure



# New EPA Efforts on Recycling

- 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
  - Grant funding for FY22-26:
    - \$55M/yr for Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) grant program
    - \$15M/yr for education and outreach on prevention and recycling
  - Battery collection best practices and voluntary labeling program \$25M (FY22)





# Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling Grants

- \$55 million per year for five years (FY22-26)
- **Goals:**
  - Support improvements to recycling programs, post-consumer materials management, and waste management infrastructure
- **Eligible entities:**
  - U.S. States and political subdivisions of states
  - Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands
  - District of Columbia
  - Federally recognized tribal governments
  - Former tribal reservations in Oklahoma (as determined by the Secretary of the Interior)
  - Alaskan Native Villages as defined in Public Law 92-203
  - Intertribal Consortia consistent with the requirements in 40 CFR 35.504(a)
- **EPA's Next Steps:**
  - Host listening sessions to collect stakeholder and public input to inform grants
  - Issue Request for Information
  - Release Request for Applications and/or program guidance

# Education and Outreach Grants and Model Recycling Program Toolkit

- \$15 million per year for five years (FY22-26)
- **Goals:**
  - Support education and outreach on consumer recycling and waste prevention
    - Inform public on what is accepted in community recycling program
    - Increase collection rates and decrease contamination in recycling
- **Eligible entities:**
  - U.S. States, including the District of Columbia
  - Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands
  - Local governments
  - Federally recognized tribal governments
  - Native Hawaiian organizations, Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, Office of Hawaiian Affairs
  - Nonprofit organizations
  - Public-private partnerships
- **EPA's Next Steps:**
  - Host listening sessions to collect stakeholder and public input to inform toolkit and grants
  - Issue Request for Information
  - Develop Model Recycling Program Toolkit for communities
  - Release Request for Applications

# Polling Question

1. What **limitations** do you face in supporting effective and efficient recycling infrastructure and education and outreach programs?
  - staffing
  - equipment
  - markets for recycled commodities
  - contamination
  - curbside vs. drop-off access
  - MRF processing capacity
  - other

**Stay Connected to Learn about Grants and Engagement Opportunities:**

[epa.gov/recyclingstrategy/forms/stay-connected](https://epa.gov/recyclingstrategy/forms/stay-connected)

**Read National Recycling Strategy:**

[epa.gov/recyclingstrategy](https://epa.gov/recyclingstrategy)

**Lead or Support a National Recycling Strategy Action:**

[epa.gov/recyclingstrategy/forms/take-action](https://epa.gov/recyclingstrategy/forms/take-action)

**Ask Questions:**

[EPArecycles@epa.gov](mailto:EPArecycles@epa.gov)





# Discussion Questions

1. How can EPA **maximize the benefits** of these recycling grants for your tribe?
2. What additional actions/investments do you think are needed to better **meet your communities' needs**?
3. What are your **waste management infrastructure needs** to advance your programs?
4. What are some of the challenges your tribe has related to **identifying markets/buyers for recycled commodities**?
5. What **amount of grant funding** would allow you to accomplish something successful?
6. How do you define and **measure success** in your recycling programs or education and outreach efforts for recycling?