Word Count : 1498 words
Task 3_9770386

Introduction

Professor James Clark which is the director of the Green Chemistry Centre Of Excellence once said: “Energy isn’t the issue, there is enough energy reaching us from the sun and we’ll work out how to harness it. The real issue is materials, there aren’t that many meteorites, so we only have what exists in the earth” (The Circular Economy: From the perspective of today's sustainability champions, 2013). Following the traditional linear economy, a product once it is used and gets broken is then disposed of, the thing which leads to a huge increase in the waste levels(Wrap and Circular Economy). Since this became a global issue, the EU started to implement a new type of economy on 2nd of December 2015 which is based on recycling, called Circular Economy(European Commission - Press release, 2017).

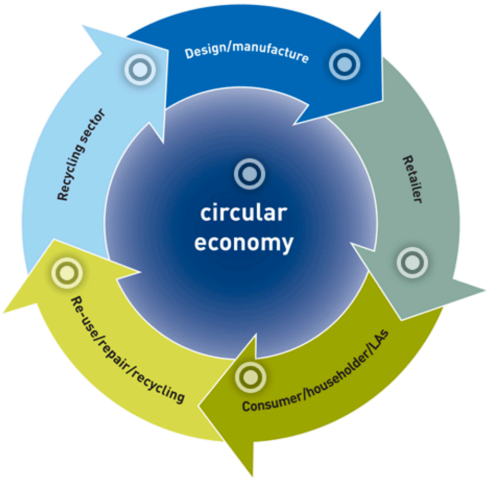
As being part of the senior leadership team of one of the biggest water companies, I would like to represent our interest in following the present global economy direction by implementing the circular economy principle in our system which can lead us to a green future and more reusable resources. The first part will be made out of examples and what does it involve to have a circular economy, followed by challenges and successful companies in this sector. The last part will focus on our product and the different ways it can be part of this new economy.

Understanding Circular Economy

Circular Economy is referring to the resources that can be used as long as possible with the maximum value extracted through the recycling process rather than the make-use-dispose process of the traditional linear economy. In the UK, there are 26.000 tonnes of products thrown away annually for which not even half of them are recycled. Besides those, there are 48.000 tonnes thrown away by companies of which 21% are recycled.

The European Environment Agency is also encouraging the countries and also the United Kingdom to go more on the autochrome market than importing because companies will be able to introduce different promotions for their products and also the control on the process of recyclability will increase(Bocken). The goal here is to increase the products that can be recycled because a company should take care of the product even after it was sold.

After the product is sold, each company can put an offer or make a service to its customers with the condition of bringing the used products to places where can be recycled or sent for recycling. This is a good strategy that can lead to more products recycled and a decrease in the levels of waste.

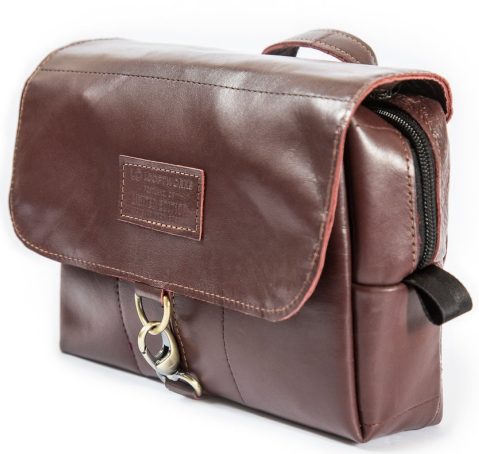


Why Circular Economy

There are certain opportunities when implementing this concept, such as having more work positions, so that means more jobs. Most people do not think about the materials of which their products are made, they only care about the product ability to work as they expect. This thing is true in most of the cases, so if people will need to repair their products, then the replacement will be made out of recycled materials rather than virgin ones.

Examples of Circular Economy

The number of companies that implement the circular economy is increasing and there are ingenious examples which made it possible to reuse the products. The most popular company is Alaska Airlines (Incredible Examples of Circular Economy, 2016) which transform the used leather from the aircraft seats into handbags(Looptworks). Beside the “Carry-On Collection”, the company is searching for more ways to lower the pollution made by aircraft which are one of the biggest factors in the global problems because of their high levels of pollution.



Walt Disney World Resort (The 5 business models that put the circular economy to work, 2015) is having a contract with Harvest Power which will receive from Disney a lot of food waste and cooking oil from their restaurants in order to be used for generating energy that powers the Resort from Florida and some parts of the Central Florida.

In the circular economy there is a concept called collaborative consumption which refers to sharing different products or services such as old clothes through applications like ThredUp, sharing home with people that visit or need a place to sleep(eg. Airbnb) or sharing the transport with companies like Lyft, Uber, Get, etc.(5 Business Models That Are Driving The Circular Economy, 2013).

The UK in the Circular Economy World

The circular economy is an idea which is still uncertain when talking about developing and implementing it at a national level. At a certain point, every nation will implement it for better results in the fight for a healthier Earth.

China is one of the countries that has the highest waste and pollution levels in the world(Circular economy practices among Chinese manufacturers varying in environmental-oriented supply chain cooperation and the performance implications, 2012). In 2011 the Chinese were using 46% of the world aluminium, about 50% of the world steel and 60% of the world cement which lead to 25.2 billions tonnes (Circular economy: Lessons from China, 2016) of raw material used.

China is also one of the nations in the world that implemented the circular economy in such a way that they use certain materials from a part of an industry to another. An example would be Suzhou New District(near Shanghai) which is a 52 square kilometre region mainly based for technological and industrial development.There are around 4.000

manufacturing firms which operate and make printed circuit boards. They use copper in order to make them which is recovered from waste from other parts of the park rather than using virgin copper made by some mining firm.

Challenges and Advantages in our Company

Each day there are over 35 millions plastic bottles used in the United Kingdom, but less than 20 millions of them are being recycled which leads to approximately 16 millions of plastic bottles per day that remain unrecycled. In order to be recycled, the plastic bottles need to be disposed of in special bins which will take them to the place where they will be recycled. The first step is to order the bottles by colour, then heat then cut them into small pieces and then those small pieces will be put in a chemical process based on what is decided to be made out of them(BRITAIN FAILS TO RECYCLE 16 MILLION PLASTIC BOTTLES EVERY DAY, 2016). By recycling the energy used for making new products is less than using new materials(alt. virgin) by 25% and besides that, each plastic bottle can be reused(recycled) for 30 to 50 times(RECYCLING).

Our company will have a better development and better savings if we are going to implement the circular economy. At 30 to 50 times reusability, the raw material need will decrease and a certain amount of money will be saved, which can be then used in implementing other ideas which will be more environmentally friendly and even save more money.

The best strategy in order to make the citizen want to recycle is to inform them and “repaying” their action. There are campaigns for public information about the benefits of recycling and there are more and more people which start to take the bottles and put them in these special bins. Germans started to repay people for recycling by putting special machines in different locations(Pepsi’s Reverse Vending Machine Pays You to Recycle, 2010) in which the person needs to introduce the plastic bottle and based on the number of plastic bottles inserted, the person will receive a ticket with the amount of money they can cash. Another great invention that can be presented to the public is home recycling by using machines which will make a 5x5x5cm cube out of a 2.5L plastic bottle. This machine is available to buy and it is accessible to the public. When a certain person has too many cubes, he/she can go and cash them or get vouchers or promotions based on their number.

Conclusion

The future of the economy is represented by the circular economy which is increasingly replacing the old model, traditional linear economy. There will be new inventions and ideas that will help in making a better use of the Earth resources which are not infinite and have a limit, no matter of which one we are talking. By recycling, we can have these resources for a longer time than just disposing them and then extracting again and again. This process will lead to lower levels of pollution and waste, which will decrease the global environment problems.

Leaders can come up with great ideas to combat the global issues on different levels. The circular economy is one of the components that can be used in producing machines which will produce clean energy from Sun, from waves, from used food products and different other sources. This is the way in which we can have a competitive economy and less global issues.

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