



## What it Will Take to Create a Circular Economy

### Description



As great as the circular economy sounds, getting there will require profound transformations in how we do business. It could start with how we design products, suggested Faith Legendre, a circular economy solutions strategist at Cisco. She suggested that more companies could put leaders in charge of designing for circularity, and that companies should have a plan for and be held responsible for what happens at the end of a product's life. Planning for disposal needs to happen while the product is being conceived, she said, not tacked on afterwards. Achieving circularity will require a combination of both rules and incentives for companies, the panel participants agreed. Legendre suggested that innovation centers and technology incubators could include criteria that judge new product ideas based on what

happens at the end of its lifetime. She'd also like to see circularity incorporated into financial ratings systems. But ultimately she thinks regulation will be needed as well. Until producers are held accountable for the full lifecycle of their products, she said, they will continue to make decisions that contribute to sending those products to the landfill. Anne van Riel, head of Sustainable Finance Americas at ING, said that consumers can also help drive change by choosing to buy more sustainable products and to invest their retirement funds in responsible companies. "I wouldn't underestimate the power that consumers have," she said.

Read the full article at: [news.climate.columbia.edu](https://news.climate.columbia.edu)

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