



EAUC-Scotland Conference

The Elephants in the Room

Tuesday 26 November 2019
The Lighthouse, Glasgow



Reducing Consumption

Michael Lenaghan, Zero Waste Scotland

Supply-side decarbonisation (reducing the carbon intensity per unit of supply) is working but not fast enough so we need to also reduce our demand and that is where circular economy comes in.

If we reduce demand we can achieve savings in lots of different areas. It is best to eliminate a product altogether via sharing, switching to virtual or hiring a service. This is termed demand-side dematerialisation.

Circular economy is about more than climate change. There is nothing that impacts the environment more than our material consumption and waste.

As major consumers public sector organisations can create demand – we need to direct the £11 billion of annual public spend to help get climate emergency solutions over the ‘risk river’ to market.

Step 1: Baseline to measure success

Step 2: Take action - Identify the problem, identify potential solutions, map use journey, implement & monitor.

Step 3: Share your findings - There is so much value in sharing a failure so others don't repeat your mistakes

Alexander Clark, University of St Andrews

We have changed our Waste Plan to a Resources Strategy and are looking at increasing reuse internally & externally.

We have stopped the sale of plastic water bottles and installed free water fountains (still & sparkling) and moved to compostable vegware. We focus on food waste minimisation instead of recycling.

We have installed clothes banks which have increased the rate of reuse from 5 tonnes to 37 tonnes in one year. This has allowed the Transition Team to focus on kitchenware and furniture reuse. Our next challenge is lab plastic