



Sachverständigenrat  
für Umweltfragen

# Circular Economy: From Rhetoric to Practice

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## **Environmental Report 2020**

Towards an ambitious environmental policy in  
Germany and Europe



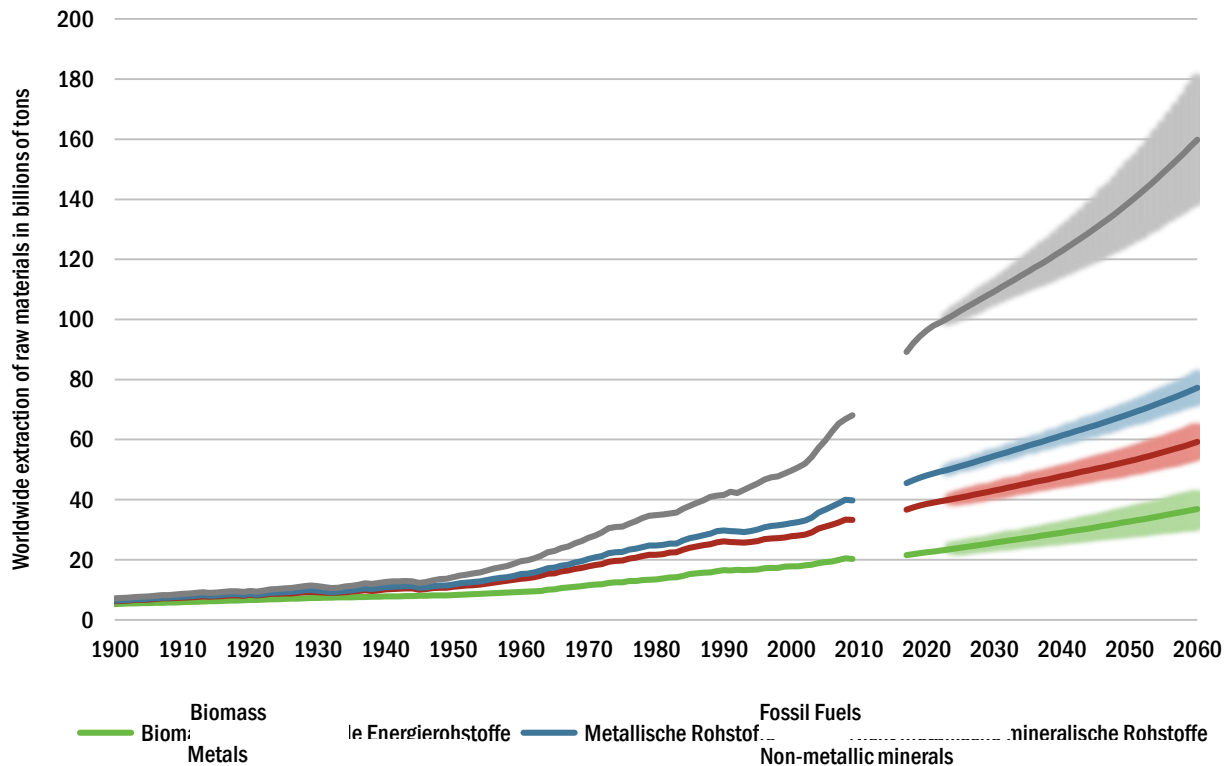
**#Umweltgutachten2020**





What goals and  
instruments does  
circular economy  
need??

# Use of raw materials is far too high

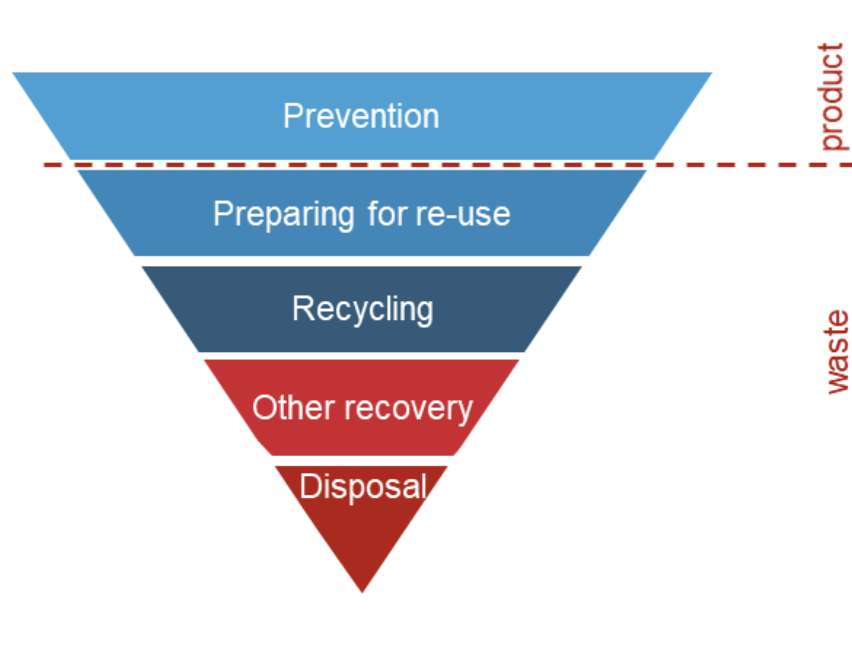


Sources: Data from 1900 to 2009 from Krausmann et al. 2009; data from 2017 to 2060 from OECD 2019; stacked; from 2017 modelled forecast including fluctuation range

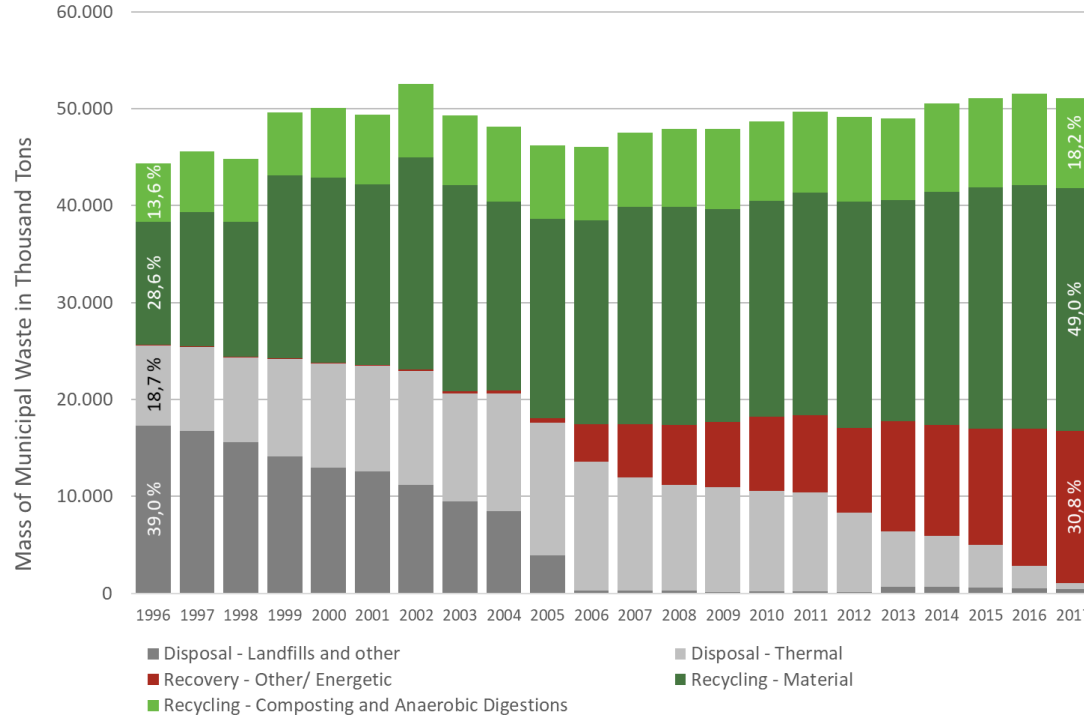
- Raw Material Use in GER in 2017 with 22,8 t/(cap\*a) twice as high as worldwide average of 12,2 t/(cap\*a)
- Only 16% of raw materials used in Germany are secondary raw materials
- No quantitative goals set in national policy to reduce raw material use

Sources: RMC calculated from UNEP 2018 and Statistisches Bundesamt 2020; Share of secondary raw materials calculated via indicator DIERec from Steger et al. 2019

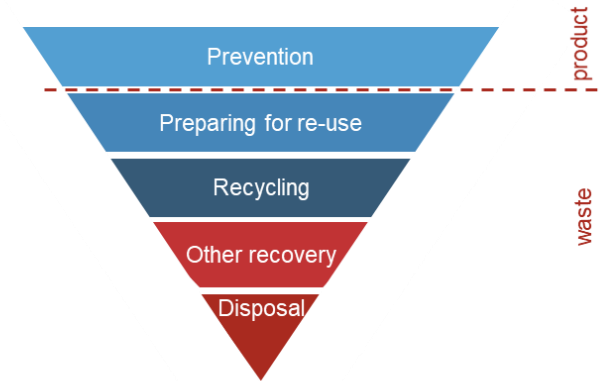
# Abfall wird zu wenig vermieden und im Kreislauf geführt



# Too little waste is avoided and recycled

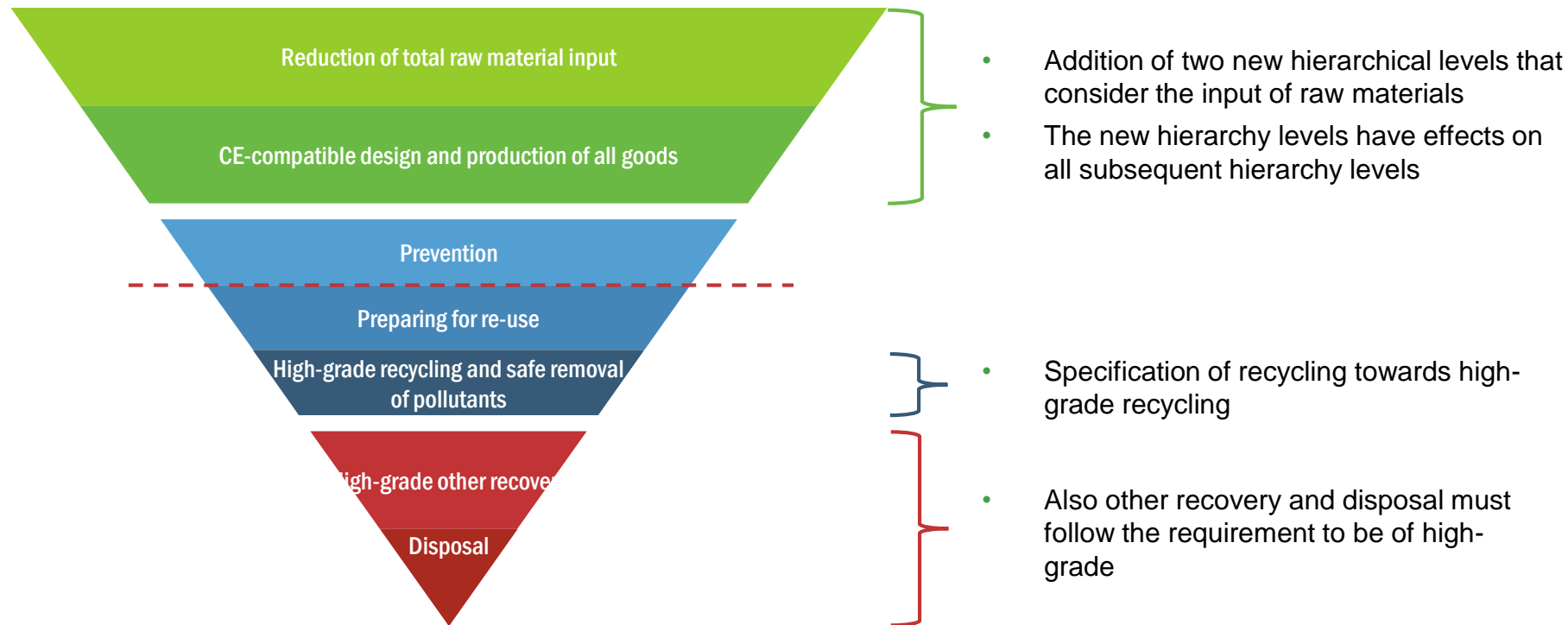


- Mass of municipal waste has increased in relation to 1996
- Recycling has hardly increased since 2005
- Recycling partly not high-grade



Sources: Mass of Municipal Waste according to Statistisches Bundesamt 2019a; Shares of Recycling, Recovery and Disposal according to Eurostat 2020

# Erweiterung der Abfallhierarchie zu einer Kreislaufwirtschaftshierarchie





# Recommendations to implement CE

Circular Economy policy as part of a precautionary environmental policy

Strengthening prevention

Ensure high-grade recycling

- Reduction of material flows as policy goal
- Achieve ecological cost truth through economic instruments
- Comprehensive product policy
- Use of environmental assessments
- Define quantitative goals for prevention
- Life time extension measures
- Define „high-grade“ recycling/ recovery
- Set of material specific recycling rates, treatment requirements, output quality definitions
- Ensure financing

## Cross-sectional recommendations:

More consistent institutionalization of extended producer responsibility

Making public authorities front runners

Monitoring as key to improve the control of material flows

# The New Circular Economy Action Plan



- Comprehensive product policy planned, in particular extension of the Ecodesign Directive
- Greater policy coherence envisaged
- Targets for waste reduction envisaged
- Encouraging the wider use of well-designed economic instruments
- European Data Space for applications such as product passports and inventories



- Reduction of material flows no target
- Continued high economic motivation instead of clear ecological orientation
- No definition and discussion of what high-grade recycling means

The European Green Deal and the New Action Plan for Circular Economy offer an important opportunity for Germany to become a pioneer in Circular Economy and to provide ambitious impulses and knowledge at EU level.



**Full version in German:** [bit.ly/ug20kreislauf](https://bit.ly/ug20kreislauf)

**Summary in English:**

[https://www.umweltrat.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/EN/01\\_Environmental\\_Reports/2020\\_05\\_Environmental\\_Report\\_Summary.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile&v=13](https://www.umweltrat.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/EN/01_Environmental_Reports/2020_05_Environmental_Report_Summary.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=13)

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Thanks for  
your attention!