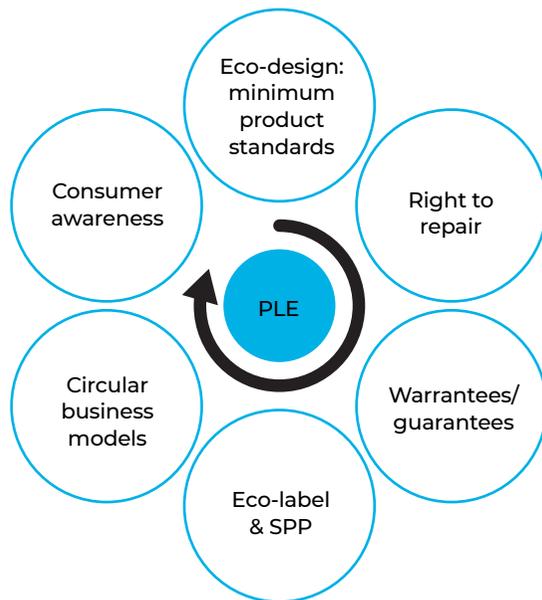


THE ROLE OF EACH PLAYER

Extending product lifetime

Did you know?

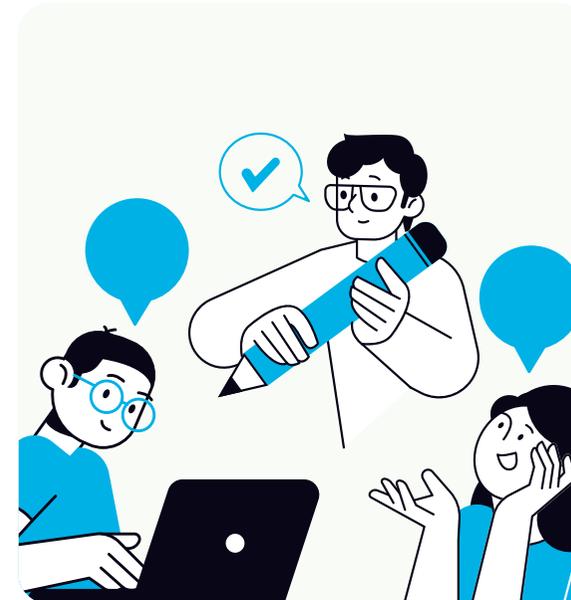


The extension of products' lifetime makes a compelling case for circularity as it enables a radical decrease in the use of natural resources and in waste generation while preserving the economic value embedded in the products. To be put into practice and accelerate sustainable and circular economies, it demands action from businesses, governments, and consumers.

What can be done

By governments

Developing circular economies demands action from the public sector to address the issue of product lifetime extension. Recommendations and opportunities available go from establishing requirements and standards to providing incentives for companies or small businesses and investing in educational initiatives for consumers.



- ▶ **Provide legal standards** and certifications to regulate the commerce of remanufactured, refurbished, and upcycled items
- ▶ **Set laws against planned obsolescence** and establish design

- requirements for circularity to prioritize longer lifetimes of different types of products
- ▶ **Establish minimum durability criteria** for different types of products

- ▶ **Introduce a product lifetime labeling** to inform and guide consumers during purchases

- ▶ **Establish an extended product warranty** or extend the period for the existing one

Promoting consumer education

Awareness campaigns

Consumers must understand the importance of product lifetime extension and be engaged in adopting better consumption habits through multi-channel and innovative approaches.

Consumer information

Not only about product durability and extending its lifetime, but also related to energy efficiency labeling, and life cycle based eco-labels to educate consumers to look for high-quality, longer lasting, and energy-efficient options.

What can be done?



► **Protecting the products:** taking good care of products is a way to lengthen their lifetime, avoiding damage that could affect their use and, therefore, reducing demand and expenses with a new purchase

► **Giving an item a second life:** products that are not in use anymore can be rented, sold, or donated to someone that needs them, to charities, or to recycling facilities that will value their structure

► **Valuing used items:** second-hand buying means extending the lifetime of items that are still usable. It is also a possibility to find unique products and to help change the idea of being considered “poor” items (already used/worn alternatives)

► **Engage with reverse logistics:** returning products to producers after use or giving a proper destination to a no longer useful item are ways to contribute to reverse logistics programs and a circular economy

By consumers

A more conscious lifestyle begins with a mindset that is based on buying only what is necessary, choosing preferably sustainable options, and taking good care of what you have. In the same way, addressing product lifetime extension can mean adopting new habits during purchasing, using, and disposal. It's fundamental to let go of the concept that reused, repaired, refurbished, and remanufactured items are inferior to new ones, as well as to see the benefits they bring to the environment and society.

► **Valuing easy-to-repair products:** while buying an item, consumers can prefer brands that provide repair instructions, products whose parts can be easily removed, or access to repairing services and spare parts. They can also attend to repair cafés, where people repair things together, building a community that values the product lifetime extension and enriching the neighborhood

► **Renting and sharing:** the concept of products as a service. The consumer doesn't need to own the item, instead, it's possible to access it when necessary, through renting and sharing. That way, the same product can satisfy many users along its lifetime

Get to know and be part!



Right to Repair Movement

 repair.org

Based on the concept that everyone should have the right to use, modify, and repair what they own whenever, wherever, and however they want, the movement's goal is to advocate for repair-friendly policies, regulations, statutes, and standards at the national, state, and local levels.



HOP Stop Planned Obsolescence

 stopobsolescence.org

The association acts together with citizens and helps decision-makers by proposing systemic solutions regarding planned obsolescence, defending consumers by giving information (on product repairability, life cycle, or legislator's warranty), and helping them defend themselves against fraud, particularly with legal actions.



By businesses

Products should be designed to serve their original functions longer and preferably with their circulation in mind, in order to prevent unnecessary substitution and to allow the reduction of natural resource use. Adopting product lifetime extension strategies is an opportunity to improve business models, generate job opportunities, promote conscious consumption and contribute to a sustainable and circular economy.

► Design for reparability:

invest in products designed to be easy to repair, easy to take apart, and made of modular components that can be replaced and can facilitate upgrades. Also, provide repair information and spare

parts so consumers can try to repair on their own, making the process quicker and not depending only on the manufacturer. This can increase customer satisfaction and loyalty to the company or brand

► High-quality products:

look to manufacture with higher quality, providing durable products and processes. It can be an opportunity to increase profitability by working with higher added value materials

- **Service provider:** one long-term change would be to move from a product seller to a service provider, offering services to guarantee the optimization of product usability and achieving customer loyalty
- **Adaptation:** adapt the business models to enable reuse, refurbishment, and remanufacturing, considering the whole value chain. It can be a market expansion opportunity, addressing also the roles of warranties to boost the market of those business models

► **Communicate properly:** use advertisements and campaigns that help educate the consumer regarding the importance of circularity

5 principles to communicate with consumers



Reliability: ensure the message reflects the evidence you have. Consumers' trust is a prerequisite for ensuring that they purchase and use products in a more sustainable manner, and are trying to extend their lifetime



Relevance: talk about major improvements, highlight product characteristics that really make a difference to extend its lifetime or overall sustainability performance



Clarity: make the information useful and easy to understand. For example, provide simple guidance on how consumers can repair the product or replace its components



Transparency: satisfy consumers' appetite for information. With sufficient information available, they can evaluate options and make more sustainable decisions



Accessibility: let the information get to the consumer, through a visible message preferably on the product itself and other channels, covering all aspects from purchase to proper use (maintenance, good care) and disposal

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