

Storyline Renewable Materials Conference

- Use of renewable- and secondary materials is more firmly on the agenda than ever. And for good reason: research has shown that secondary materials reduce the carbon footprint by up to 8 times versus their primary or virgin alternatives
- Manufacturing companies, customers and regulators and the waste management sector, are each doing their part to accelerate this transition:
 - We see changes in the waste management market. Where previously, the waste went to landfill or incineration, more and more is being recycled.
 - Customer are becoming increasingly conscious in what they buy. We see that they actively search for more sustainable options for the products they consume.
 - Manufacturing companies select the materials they procure on price, quality and now also on carbon footprint in an effort to reduce climate impact
 - Then, there is a push from the EU and the governments for organisations to become more circular and reduce their carbon footprint
- Today there is no great indicator showing where different countries are in their journey towards a circular economy.
 - This would be beneficial for policy makers so they have a better understanding what countries are leading and lagging, why this is the case, and what best practices can be translated.
 - Renewi's vision is to be the leading waste-to-product company in the world's most advanced circular economies. For us, this indicator is a key input in determining what countries to expand to beyond our core footprint (Benelux and UK)
- For this reason, we developed the RACE Index – the Renewi Advanced Circular Economy Index. It takes into account 6 parameters that together determine the place a country gets in the ranking. They are: Material recycling rate, use of secondary materials, waste-to-energy incineration trajectory, regulation, taxonomy related to material usage, and academic ranking
- Looking at our RACE Index, we see the Benelux, DACH countries, Sweden and Denmark being the frontrunners in the journey towards a circular economy. Countries that are lagging are expected to accelerate their journey towards a circular economy in the next years.
- Research also shows that in EU, the usage of circular materials grew by 7% in one year (from 12% in 2019 to 12.8% in 2020).
- We do see a growing demand for secondary materials and to meet this demand we should consider to start recycling various waste streams which currently go to incineration or landfill. .
- To realise this we need close cooperation in the value chain, including waste producers, recyclers and secondary material customers.
- Examples are the newly formed Joint Venture between IKEA and Renewi to recycle mattresses called Retourmatras, the partnership between Shell, Nordsol and Renewi to recycle food waste into Bio-LNG, the partnership between Peelpioneers and Renewi to recycle orange peels into cellulose and etheric oils.
- Through partnerships we can give materials a new life, even when it concerns waste streams that are difficult to recycle and reuse.

I'd end up the story with the message that we want to inspire organisations to work together to create out-of-the-box solutions. Only this will help us win the 'RACE' (because it has to be said: there is urgency behind it!) to circularity.