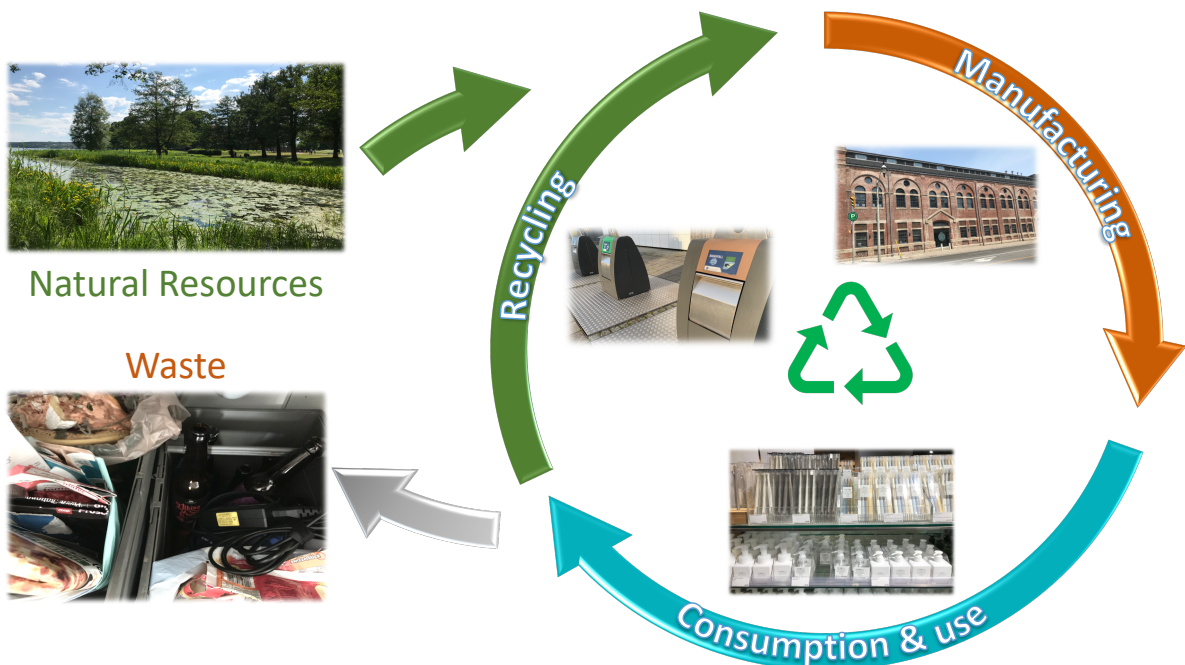




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# Exploring Waste Management in the Circular Economy Concept Trough a Literature Review and a Case Study.



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## Summary

This thesis explores the relationship between Waste Management (WM) and Circular Economy (CE) through a literature review and case analysis. The main focus is on the role of WM in developing the CE concepts. Both concepts are linked to proper waste handling and the move of economies towards attaining a sustainable future. In addition, WM is considered an essential tool in dealing with the increasing global waste challenge. Both WM and CE have been put on the agenda in recent years as a response to the focus on sustainable development. CE especially, has gained momentum in recent years due to the attention of reaching the 17 sustainable development goals. The increasing attention for WM and CE shaped our research questions:

Q1: What role does Waste Management play in Circular Economy?

Q2: How are the two concepts of Waste Management and Circular Economy related?

The research questions have been addressed by applying a literature meta-analysis. A total of 168 abstracts of research articles were pulled through the literature meta-analysis and methodically categorised. This categorisation was then analysed to find similarities and distinctions between the two concepts. The literature meta-analysis revealed a literature gap between CE theory and CE research literature. In CE theory WM have a central role in CE, while in CE research literature was WM almost overlooked. However, the contrast was not as distinct as first anticipated. Our literature meta-analysis also revealed that even though the concept of CE was less present in WM literature, the central aspects of CE was very much present in the form of *reuse, reduce, recycle, and recover*.

The findings of our literature meta-analysis were then compared against operational practice of the regional renovation facility of IVAR IKS. The comparison was done through a case study of IVAR, limited to involve only the new renovated sorting facility at Forus. The case study was then finalized with interview and document analysis. This case study contradicted the findings in our literature meta-analysis, showing a more integrated practice of CE in the waste industry than first predicted. However, both studies showed less focus on the key element of reduce and more or less overlooked the consumers position in WM and CE. Due to the central role of WM within CE, we would then suggest a re-definition of the concept of WM in the context of CE.

## Acknowledgements

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Eva Marie W. Østerhus and Trine S. Brimsøe  
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## List of Abbreviations

CE -	Circular Economy
EE -	Environmental Economics
EU -	European Union
GHG -	Greenhouse gases
LCA -	Life Cycle Analysis
MSW -	Municipal Solid Waste
NEA -	Norwegian environment Agency
NIR -	Near Infrared light
NRE -	Natural Resource Economy
SDG -	Sustainable Development Goals
SE -	Sharing Economy
UN -	United Nations
UNWCED -	United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development
WM -	Waste Management
3 R's -	Recycle, Reuse, and Reduce
4 R's -	Recycle, Reuse, Reduce, and Recover

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## 1. Introduction

The objective of this thesis is to study the relationship between Waste Management (WM) and Circular Economy (CE). The focus of WM lies in that our society today has evolved to be centred around consumption of goods and services. With an annual deposit of 2.01 billion tonnes of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) we are creating a waste generation<sup>1</sup> we are no longer capable of handling. The problem of waste handling is only set to increase as we expect a world population growth and increased living conditions for the entire world population. With a global focus on sustainability, emissions, and 2 degree target, there will be no room for disposing all of our waste in landfills and through incineration. Recognizing these challenges, recycling has become a popular practice in WM. However, the current practice of *recycling* is not recycling the waste at all, but rather shipping our waste abroad, meaning some countries buy high and clean recycling numbers, whilst depositing their waste in *low-income* countries. It is needless to say that today's solution is not sustainable, but on the contrary is making it worse (Kaza, Yao, Bhada-Tata, & Van Woerden, 2018; United Nations (UN), 2017a; UN, n.d-a.; UN environment, n.d.; Zhou & Reimov, 2018).

The waste problem was put on the agenda back in 1960's, and there has been a focus on addressing WM ever since (Wilson et al., 2015). In the developed countries the goal has been to shift the fundamental thinking of waste disposal to WM, and from waste to resources. Through this process, waste becomes economical valuable for recycling and recovery. Although there is a substantial focus on the green shift, and the challenges of global warming and sustainable development, little focus is allocated towards WM within the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). While SDG 12 having some implied focus on WM, our eager to continue our consumption patterns interferes with a potential progress towards a more sustainable future (Wilson et al., 2015). It is suggested by Lenkiewicz (2016) that there needs to be a shift of priority towards WM to be able to meet all 17 SDG's. The subject of waste is immense and will therefore affect every level of the SDG's from greenhouse gases (GHG) to sludge and solid waste (Wilson et al., 2015).

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<sup>1</sup> Waste generation definition: "quantity of materials or products that enter a waste stream before composting, incinerating, landfilling, or recycling" (BusinessDictionary, n.d.).

While WM has an important role in our society today, an increased interest for the concept of CE has emerged together with the fundamental thinking of waste becoming an economic recourse. A resource in which material circulation becomes a closed circle with less input, minimal output and where the materials will be recycled and reused over and over, causing minimal impact on natural resources (European Commission, 2018; Wilson et al., 2015). This global concern is pushing important *actors*, such as politicians, producers, and consumers to embrace the concept of CE, hoping that it will be the solution to our current waste problem and be the answer for a sustainable future.

The subject of WM and CE are clearly interlinked, but for some reason it is not fully comprehended by the literature. However, there is an indication in the literature that there is less focus on consumer responsibility, and lack of proper guidelines for implementation of CE across sectors. To better understand the relationship between WM and CE we formulated the following research questions to be answered in this thesis:

Q1: What role does WM play in CE?

Q2: How are the two concepts of WM and CE related?

The primary focus will be on Q1, while the second question was formulated to build a better base for conducting our analysis for Q1.

The relationship between WM and CE was studied through a qualitative literature meta-analysis of 168 scientific articles abstracts. By applying a literature meta-analysis, we were able to investigate the research gap in the literature, and explore the concepts of WM and CE, as well as the relationship between the two concepts, and WM role in CE. For the purpose of this master thesis we will primarily focus on MSW in our research. The data was collected through a meta-analysis and was selected under the criteria of being scientific publication and searchable through the selected search-engine sciencedirect.no. Recognizing that CE is a modern concept, our search range was set to year 2008-2018. With WM and CE being our main focus, our second criteria for search was either “waste management” in the title or “circular economy” in the title, with the other concept mentioned somewhere in the text. This gave us a result of 186 articles. After “cleaning” the list we ended up with a total selection of 168 articles. We decided to manually read all the abstracts, on the account that the abstracts present “a clear account of the methods, results and conclusions that accurately reflect the core components of the full research report” (Rice, Kloda, Shrier, & Thombs, 2016, p.1). Our process was recorded in a form created

in excel to document and monitor the process. The literature meta-analysis presented a literature gap between CE and WM. However, the use of the main focus of CE; recycle, reuse, reduce, and recycle (4R's), was more frequently used than the concept of CE itself. This indicates that the focus of the 4R's are present in WM, although not directly in the context of CE.

The discussion around the results in our literature meta-analysis needed to be compared against actual implementation and operation of WM. A case study of the regional renovation facility of Rogaland, IVAR IKS, was therefore conducted to give a more valid argument to our discussion. The case study was built on interview and document analysis, and was constrained to only include IVAR's renovated sorting facility located at Forus with the focus on their new automatic recycling system for plastic. The results from the case study contradicted some of the findings from our literature meta-analysis regarding the relationship between WM and CE, illustrating that IVAR has implemented practices and measures compliant with the spirit of CE ideology.

The structure of this thesis is built around four sections. The first section concentrates on presenting the theoretical background of all the relevant aspects tied to subjects of MSW for our research and theoretical position of CE. The second section of this thesis will present our research strategy and method used for our research. The method of literature meta-analysis was selected out from the purpose of explore and analyse the two concepts of WM and CE. The third section of this thesis includes our analysis of the literature meta-analysis and the case study of IVAR. Final section provides a discussion and presents our findings. Concluding with a suggestion of a re-definition of WM through the perspective of CE, and a summary of all our findings.

## 2. Background

CE is a way to organize the economy with a sustainable approach where resources are not being depleted. This is not a new phenomenon, but rather an idea that has been around for centuries. The background will therefore first introduce a general understanding of WM, and why there is a pressing need for a focus within this area. Next, IVAR IKS will be presented as the focus of our case study. Then, introducing the underlying driver of the CE development; from a linear economy, to a chronological exploration of the different environmental economic thoughts, before exploring the concept of CE.

### 2.1 Waste Generation

McCormick (2018) states that “human waste is the most immediate form of waste, since it is produced by everyone” (p.182). We have moved on from a consumerism of *need* to *want*. In the name of production and financial growth we produce high fashion and other products in the pursuit of the latest and most fashionable trends in clothing, electronics, cars, and more. We easily discard well-functioning products as they are “yesterday’s news”. Production is increasing and the pile of waste is growing. The average person is currently producing 0.75 kg waste daily, with a peak of 4.54 kg amongst the biggest consumers, leaving us with an annual 2.01 billion tonnes of MSW (Kaza et al., 2018, McCormick, 2018; Pongrácz & Pohjola, 2004). “*What a Waste*” report of 2018 estimates that “when looking forward, global waste is expected to grow to 3.4 billion tonnes by 2050” (Kaza et al., 2018, p. 3). While the same report calculated South Asia region to generate a total of 334 tonnes of waste in 2016, given an average disposal of only 0.52 kg waste per inhabitant/day. This demonstrates that the South Asia waste generation is lower than that of the peak consumers, and contributes to a lower average waste generation (Kaza et al., 2018).

A prevailing issue of the increased waste generation is the shipment of waste from *high-income* countries to *lower-income* countries. In their 2018 documentary, Nick Martin and Victoria Seabrook address the problem associated with years of dumping plastic waste across the world in “good faith” of being recycled. Instead of being recycled, the plastic occupies vast open areas and the quality degrades as a result of the weather, causing the property of the plastic to not be fit for recycling. This problem created large open dumping areas which are, to this day, still polluting the environment. The same documentary (Martin & Seabrook, 2018) directs a harsh critique towards the municipality and governmental incentives for creating less work places by



going for the less attractive solutions, in order to obtain better recycling numbers. Recycling domestically would force Governments to report the actual recycling rate, while by shipping the waste out of the country they could claim a 100% recycling rate of the waste, thus making it a more attractive alternative (Martin & Seabrook, 2018). WM does not only include the easy measures and quick fixes, there are also various variables that need to be taken in to considerations such as; environmental issues, political matters, global concerns, cost, society, health, and more (Martin & Seabrook, 2018; McCormick, 2018, Kaza et al., 2018).

## 2.2 IVAR IKS

IVAR IKS<sup>2</sup> is the regional municipal facilities that operates and constructs the water, waste water and general wastes for 12 of the municipalities in Rogaland. The Stavanger region has had access to a hydro facility since 1865 which later developed into a regional operating facility. IVAR started out as a municipality water provider in 1952 under the name of “IV”. In 1979 IV developed in to IVAR and became the regional facilitator of water, waste water, and municipality waste (IVAR, n.d.). For the objective of this master thesis we will concentrate our focus on IVAR’s renovation facility for sorting of MSW. Today IVAR plays a central role in the circulation, sorting, and recycling of goods in the regional area of Rogaland. IVAR is also a leading actor for implementation of improved technology towards a more sustainable waste handling (IVAR, n.d.). We therefore find IVAR to be a central source for this master-thesis.

In the response to the attention towards SDGs and EU directives, IVAR MSW facility at Forus was renovated and became the first facility in the world that assembles both processes of cleaning- and production of recycled plastic into granulates within the same facility. The investment in new machinery and renovation makes it possible to do the sorting of recycle materials direct from the assembly line. This new process means, as of January 1<sup>st</sup> 2019, there is no longer need for the individual household in the regions to do the sorting of plastic and metal. All is to be processed at the facility by advanced machines with Near Infrared light (NIR) that will separate plastic and metal from the general waste to be sent for reuse or recycling. The rest of the waste is being sent to the incinerators for combustion to produce district heating. The advanced machinery is regulated to identify five different types of plastic: PET, PP, HDPE, LDPE, and PS. However, the facility only has the capacity to recycle three of the plastic types

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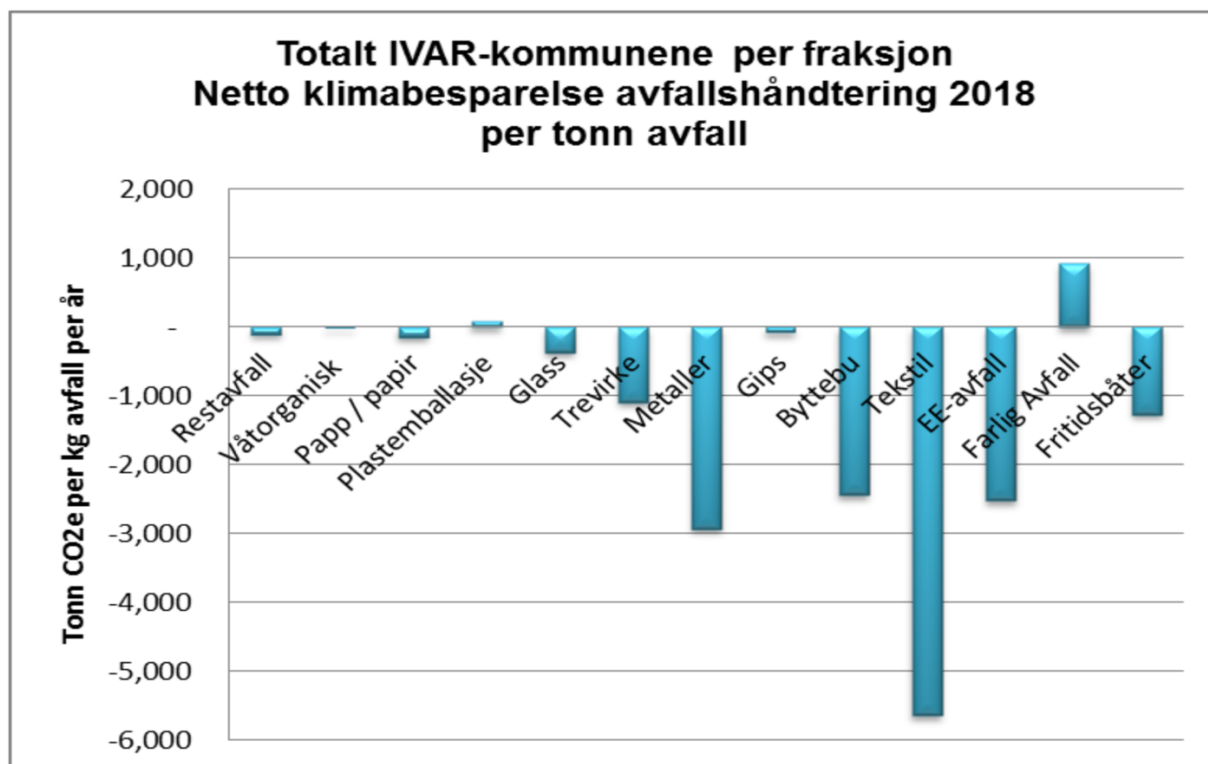
<sup>2</sup> IVAR: *Interkommunalt Vann Avløp and Renovasjon* (Source: IVAR, n.d.)

so far; HDPE, PP, and LDPE. Whereas PET and PS will continue being sent to a German sorting facility (Informant, 2019; IVAR, n.d.).

IVAR's new facility has become a stepping-stone in the shift towards a CE within its region in Norway, especially when it comes to plastic. Norway has long been a leading country for their established recycling program of plastic (PET) bottles. All disposable plastic bottles sold in Norway are included in the incentive with a prefixed recycle-tax, where the recycle-tax will be returned to the customer when the bottle has been posted back at a recycling station. The recycling stations are strategically placed around local areas, such as in convenient stores. The incentives also impose all sellers to accept these bottles to be returned in exchange for the recycling-tax. This is also a financial incentive for producers to retrieve back bottles, and will continue separately from the new sorting facility. Historically, there have been no similar recycling incentives for the rest of the MSW. In the 1990's, the municipalities around in Norway would implement different sorting procedures to increase the incentives for recycling materials. Although there were no financial benefits, the increased awareness for recycling and climate change were motivations enough to continue the recycling programs in individual households. Today IVAR is responsible for having accessible recycling stations around the region. IVAR also provides reuse and recover stations, such as "Byttebuå"<sup>3</sup> for the convenience of reuse and recover still functional goods to be picked up by other consumers (Grønt Punkt Norge, 2019; IVAR, n.d.; Kvitrud, 2019).

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<sup>3</sup> "Byttebuå" is the recycling centre of IVAR IKS. Here people can donate well-functioning products which has served its intended purpose for the consumer, to the centre in order for others to pick it up for free or purchase at a lower price.



Graph 1: “Net climate savings for IVAR municipalities per tonne of waste 2018” (Kvitrud, 2019, p. 10).

IVAR’s “climate-account report” of 2018, states that the measures completed for recycling products have a positive outcome of reduced emissions (see graph 1). The high climate benefits for textiles and “Byttebuå” is due to the reuse of products, and the savings of emissions costs of new productions. From this, IVAR highlights the core argument of waste hierarchy that reduction of waste is the most sustainable and environmental friendly solution (Kvitrud, 2019).

## 2.2 Historic Development of Environmental Focus in Economics

Our society has long been practicing a linear economy which is generally considered as “converting natural resource into waste, via production” (Murray, Skene, & Haynes, 2017 p. 371). Linear economy becomes a process of use-and-dispose which deteriorates the environment from cradle-to-grave (Lacy & Rutqvist, 2016). The linear economy has long been recognized for its lack of consideration for depletion of natural resources as well as the amount of waste generated (Murray et al., 2017). With the lack of focus of economic environmental considerations, and the increasing focus on sustainability, new ideologies and economic theories have emerged. Amongst these are the Malthusian theory, environmental economics, and CE.

Development of environmental economic thoughts begins with the Malthusian theory that emerged in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (Kula, 1997). The Malthusian theory reflected a concern of population growth exceeding agricultural growth, through predicting an exponential population growth whilst the food supply would only increase arithmetically. Malthusian argued for a solution where population control was either controlled positively or preventative. Positive in the meaning of famine and war, while preventative would include measures such as abortion and contraception. Neither of these solutions considered the reduction of individual consumption, due to more modest consumption patterns in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Kula, 1997). In 1850s, Henry Thoreau (Thoreau, 1854, in Kula, 1997) built on the economic thought of environmental preservation by being “highly critical of his country’s preoccupation with economic growth and consumerism” (Kula, 1997, p. 47). Thoreau (Thoreau, 1854, in Kula 1997) addressed his concern for the environment in regard to the industrial revolution and the technological progress. Furthermore, the late 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the rise of the American conservation movement and their concern for permanent scarcity. Amongst the notions addressed by the doctrine was the “reckless behaviours towards natural resources such as polluting rivers, [and] excessive reliance on fossil fuel for electricity [...]. Even if these deeds are dictated by the pressure of competition or cost-cutting, they cannot be condoned” (Kula, 1997, p. 48). Although this movement had a strong stance on the relationship of economic growth and the environment, it did not include any “economic analysis to study scarcity” (Kula, 1997, p. 50).

The 20<sup>th</sup> century generated a string of movements and economic thoughts concerning environmental preservation. Amongst these theories was the theory of Environmental Economics (EE). The basis behind all economic theory is the Circular Flow Model (see figure 1), which illustrates the exchange of monetary value and nonmonetary products, in an opposite circular flow. Included in the model is the position of households, firms, a factor market, and an output market, holding all else constant. By holding all these factors constant, some of the factors excluded were technological advances, population growth, and labour productivity (Callan & Thomas, 2013).

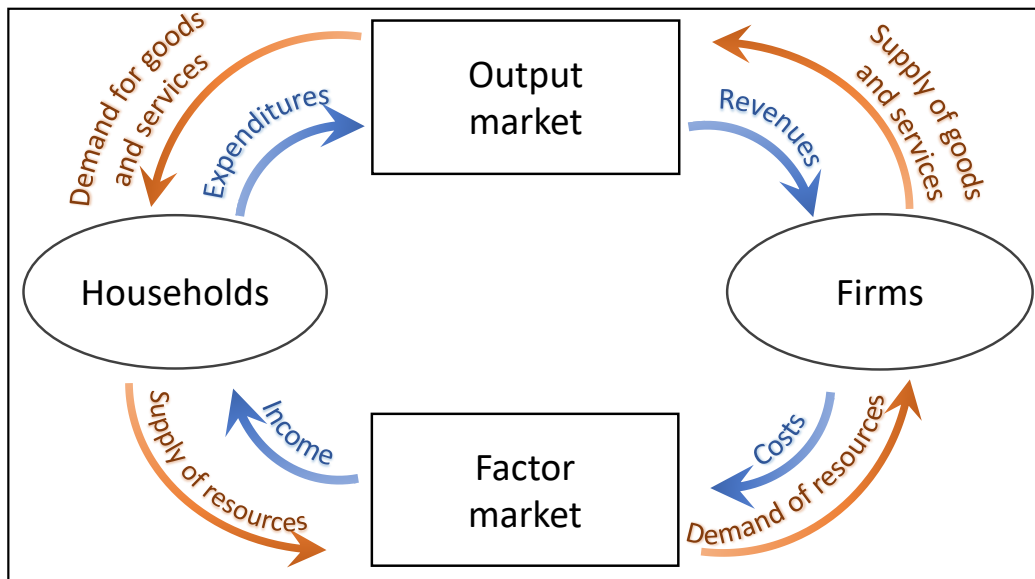


Figure 1. The Circular Flow Model (duplicated from the illustration in Callan and Thomas, 2013, p. 3).

Figure 1 illustrated the circular flow in its simplicity. However, this model excludes the essential role of nature. EE embraces the factor of nature and found it necessary to review the circular flow model. The result of this process can be seen in figure 2, the Materials Balance Model (Callan & Thomas, 2013, p. 5).

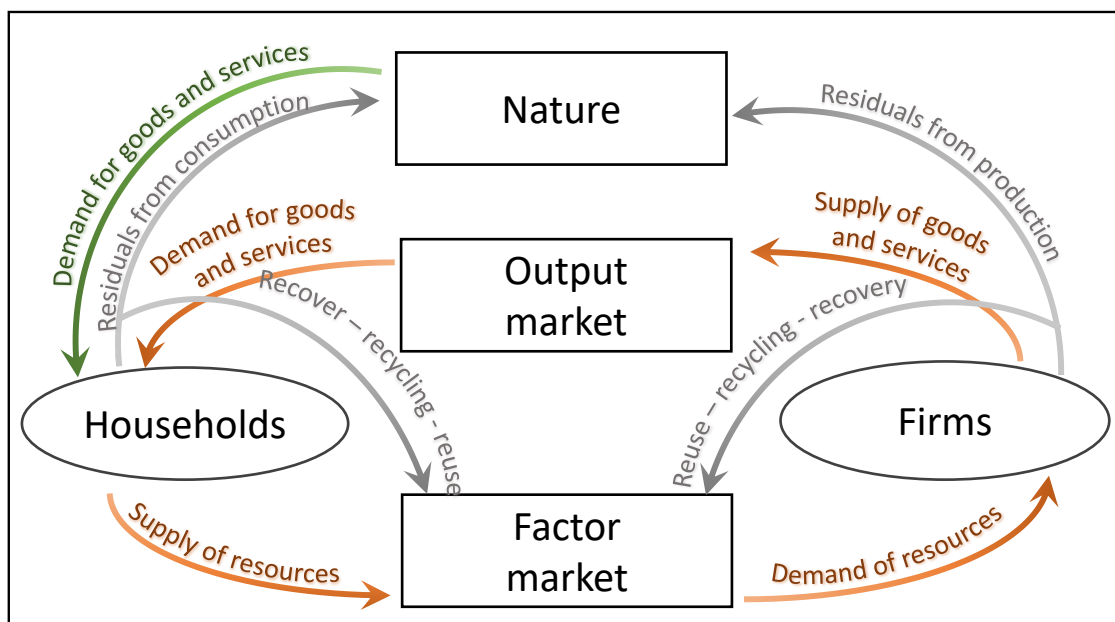


Figure 2. Materials Balance Model (duplicated from the illustration in Callan and Thomas, 2013 p. 5).

The Materials Balance Model includes the extraction of natural resources from nature, where both households and firms return residuals back to nature in the form of gasses, industrial

wastewater, or trash. Additionally, EE recognise that some of the residuals from both households and firms are being reused, recycled, and recovered back to production in the factor marked again. A further expansion and understanding of EE, is the role of the first and second law of thermodynamics. EE takes into account the theory that essentially all matter will eventually be released back into the environment in one form or another, and the energy will be converted and used for something else, although within limits (Callan & Thomas, 2013).

While CE is attentive towards the focus of resource flow, both to- and from the environment, EE is “concerned with identifying and solving the problem of environmental damage, or pollution, associated with the flow of residuals” (Callan & Thomas, 2013, p. 7). The theory classifies two different types of pollutants: either natural pollutants caused by a natural phenomenon (volcano eruption), or anthropogenic pollutants caused by humans (air pollution produced from cars). EE is predominantly concerned with the anthropogenic pollutants because these are the ones that can be accounted for and can be controlled to a certain extent (Callan & Thomas, 2013). The similarity between the two concepts exists in the focus and concern for anthropogenic consequences on nature and natural resources. However, from our understanding CE focuses more on minimizing the influx of materials and products. Environmental economics on the other hand, seems to be more concerned with the optimal utilization and efficient use- and extraction of resources and production, to find an equilibrium between the supplier and the market demand. CE takes a more holistic approach on the importance of residual handling and resource extraction, while EE grasps the anthropogenic residuals from economic growth. Thus, we chose to focus on the concept of CE, and use our understanding of the notion to further explore the role of WM in a new economic setting.

The environmental movements and different economic theories have led to the development of the concept of CE. As a step forward in the direction of a green shift, CE is a concept with partial roots in real implementation. It summarizes the previous economic thoughts regarding the concern for the environment, as well as giving the parameters of the R's as a guideline of how to attain a green shift. It is worth noting that this concept is still under construction, and the implementation is yet to be globally included.

### 3. Theory

The theory section of this thesis will present WM and CE, and the relationship between the two. The concepts of sustainability, sharing economy, and consumerism will then also be presented due to their relevance in discussion.

#### 3.1 Waste Management

McCormick (2018) addressing the question for defining waste by saying; “nothing is wasted in nature, presenting the question of how best to define waste, which comes in multiple forms and can be addressed in multiple ways” (p.179). Pongrácz and Pohjola (2004) in their article “*Re-defining waste, the concept of ownership and the role of waste management*” present an interesting discussion of how to define waste. The definition of WM can, from a philosophical approach, be discussed through different characteristics. Although these definitions are relevant, we will for this master thesis use Gillespie’s (Gillespie 2015, p 8-9 in McCormick, 2018) definition of waste: “any solid or liquid commodity or material that is no longer of use or value to the producer or the owner, and that is either discarded or intended to be discarded” (p.182). We find this definition to be the most applicable description of human waste in our modern society.

The waste problem has been in focus ever since the environment was put on the international agenda back in 1960’s (Wilson et al., 2015). With the consumer society we live in today it is even more important to address good practice of WM than ever before. For instance, Norway generated 11.9 million tonnes of waste in 2014, a total of a 60% increase of waste volume since 1995 (NEA, 2016). With increased waste generations, “waste collection [becomes] a critical step in managing waste, [and where] upper-middle- and high-income countries provid[es] nearly [a] universal waste collection” (Kaza et al., 2018, p.4). Pongrácz and Pohjola (2004) also highlight that “the role of waste management [is to turn] waste into non-waste [and that] regulations are necessary for effective waste management. However, the international regulation of recycling through fixed rates may be economically and environmentally detrimental” (p. 148). Keeping in mind that WM was a \$285 billion industry in 2016, and is expected to grow to \$435 billion by 2023 (Redling, 2018), there is a rather important global economic impact where the *high-income* countries are able to pursue recycling incentives and better WM procedures. In contrast, the *low-income* countries are only able to collect 48% of waste generated in the cities and collect only 26% of the waste outside of urban areas (Kaza et

al., 2018). The lack of proper WM in these *low-income* countries creates a huge challenge for the local environment and have a significant impacts on health, economy and the global environment. Normally such a poorly managed WM will have a higher down-stream cost than if managed properly in the first place (Hoornweg & Bhada-Tata, 2012). So, even though “financing solid waste management systems is a significant challenge, [it is] even more so for ongoing operational costs than for capital investments, and operational costs need to be taken into account upfront” (Kaza et al., 2018, p. 6).

Proper WM is imperative due to its impacts within a variety of sectors, economics being one and health being another. Lack of proper WM can cause both indirect and direct health implications, as well as environmental degradation. The surrounding population can face health challenges by “ingestion of contaminated water, soil and food” (Giusti, 2009, p. 2230). Additionally, workers in the waste industry will face a direct exposure to hazardous substances, as well as emissions from landfill and incinerators (Giusti, 2009).

Giusti (2009) highlights that the potential of GHG contribution from disposal activities could indirectly cause health effects. Amongst these are the changes in temperature due to low ozone levels<sup>4</sup> and climate change. This would affect those with cardiovascular problems and respiratory issues, as well as increase the chances of spreading Malaria and other diseases. As found in the research, the indirect impact of improper waste disposal can cause great harm while the direct impact is mostly felt by the workers. Furthermore, there is also the concern for inaccurate disposal of clinical waste which poses a greater threat (Giusti, 2009). Amongst the diseases mentioned by Hossain, Santhanam, Norulaini, and Omar (2011) that can be spread through clinical solid waste are Dysentery, Hepatitis, and Cholera. Further concern for environmental degradation is presented in waste leaking into waters, which can cause toxicity and bioaccumulation in animals. According to Misra and Panday (2005), improper WM can also cause birth defects in both humans and animals. These defects have carcinogenic attributes and can even cause death. The environmental impacts include everything from air-, soil-, and water pollution to the ecological impacts- which calls for a change in current consumption and disposal management (Misra & Panday, 2005).

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<sup>4</sup> Note that Giusti article is from 2009.



The current way of handling waste and recycling is a stepping-stone towards attaining a sustainable development, although it might not actually be as sustainable as one might be led to believe. In order to keep up with the SDG's and take action, countries need to re-evaluate their current consumption and waste handling, consumers need to take action for their production of waste, and producers need to produce products which are designed to last, which all reflects the characteristic of belonging in a CE (Kaza et al, 2018).

Some countries have taken direct incentives towards dealing with the current consumption and production of waste in households. Amongst these countries is Sweden, in which the government did an experiment of charging the households based on their waste production. This was implemented through weight-based tariff for waste collection or volume-based tariffs, depending on the municipalities (Andersson & Stage, 2018). The sorting of food waste separately proved to have a similar impact on the household waste generation as either tariffs: “separated food waste collection indirectly signals to households that recycling is important and desirable, and our research suggest that this signalling effect may be as important as direct incentive effects” (Andersson & Sage, 2018, p. 19). The same article by Andersson and Sage (2018) highlighted a survey stating that the households were motivated by separating waste as it gave them a feeling of contributing to the environment, and the public felt a sense of moral responsibility to do so. The same article also noted that individuals felt a sense of improved self-esteem by recycling their waste, as well as increased well-being (Andersson & Sage, 2018). This example from Sweden demonstrates that governmental measures for controlled WM procedures in households made the general consumer more aware of other sustainable activities.

### 3.2 Circular Economy

The background section highlighted the societal shift over time towards a more environmental conscious economic growth. CE is considered a school of thought which is still under construction and is a notable component for attaining a sustainable progression. Rather than approaching goods and materials in a linear process of “cradle-to-grave”, the approach of CE is to manage the goods and materials in the perspective of “cradle-to-cradle”. This means that goods and materials do not lose their value in the end of their life, but will continued to be utilized. The essence of CE is to close the loop by reducing inputs and add an output of resources aiming to keep existing resources in the loop for circulation. Closing the loop would avoid depletion and constraint on natural resources, as well as reduce pollutions, while allowing

us to continue our consumption and utilization of already existing products and materials (Winans, Kendall, & Deng, 2017).

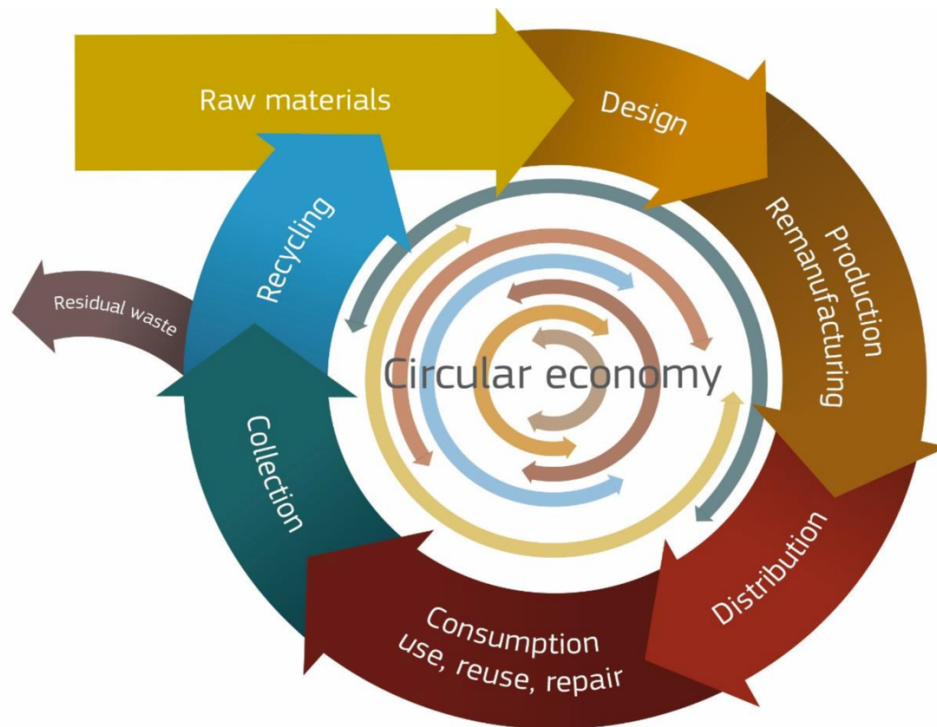


Figure 3: “Conceptual diagram illustrating the Circular Economy in a simplified way” (European Commission, 2018, p. 9).

Figure 3 illustrates the circularity of material flow, where the inputs of raw materials are entering the circulation of design, production, distribution, and consumption. The material will be used, repaired and reused within the consumption stage, before becoming *waste* to be collected. The *waste* is then collected for recycling, limiting the residual waste, and entering the loop again as raw materials. Here, the influx of raw materials will be reduced, while also reducing the residuals exiting the loop (European Commission, 2018). The theory behind closing the loop originates from a belief that there is a more efficient way to utilize already extracted natural resources, and that wasted materials has value (Cobo, Dominguez-Ramos, & Irabien, 2018). Cobo et al. (2018), explain a closed loop to be a process where recycling of a resource is reversible, and explain the concept of “close-loop recycling” with the following example:

A case of closed-loop recycling occurs when a glass bottle is recycled into a glass jar, because the glass jar could be recycled back into a glass bottle with the same functionality as the original one, whereas recycling PET bottle into PET fibres is an example of open-loop recycling; it is an irreversible process. (Cobo et al., 2018, p. 280)

The processes of downcycling and upcycling within CE, can be compared to the open-loop- and closed-loop recycling concepts. While downcycling refers to the process of recycling a “material into a lower valued product, [will upcycling] involve a change in the fundamental properties of the material, like its physical structure or its chemical composition” (Cobo et al., 2018, p. 280).

Central to the concept of CE is the aspect of recycling, in addition to the ability to reduce and reuse resources. According to Ghisellini, Ripa, and Ulgiati, (2018), a CE is promoting recycling and reuse of “materials, goods and components in order to decrease waste generation” (p. 618). Kirchherr, Reike, & Hekkert (2017) continues by explaining that reduce can be done at manufactory level with increased production efficiency, hence reducing consumption. Reuse is a part of expanding the life of a product by transferring it to a new user that finds value in the product. At last, recycle, which is considered to be “process materials to obtain the same (high grade) or lower (low grade) quality” (Kirchherr et al., 2017, p.224). The principles of reduce, reuse and recycled are often referred to as the 3R’s, although much debated, there is the presence of a 4<sup>th</sup> R<sup>5</sup>; *Recover* (Kirchherr et al. 2017). According to Kirchherr et al. (2017), recovery is referred to as recovering material to energy through incineration and is considered to be both a part of a linear economy as well as an aspect within CE. Recycling, reusing, and recovering of materials can all be interlinked by assuming that if a product can be recycled, it indicates that parts of the product can be reused (although perhaps into something different), and this again indicates that the materials which are being reused have also been recovered. The aspect of *reduce* can then be considered separate from the other 3R’s. However, if reduce is not a possibility, the materials can be recovered from waste and recycled into a new product or into

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<sup>5</sup> The 4<sup>th</sup> R will be included in this analysis because we found it to be a re-occurring element, as common as reuse, reduce and recycle in our literature. Thus, it is amongst the most relevant additions to the 3R’s given in the literature.

new development. This leads us in to the essence of CE, which is to close the loop altogether (Kirchherr et al., 2017).

The concepts of reuse, recycle, and recover have long been in focus of EE, however the key component of reduce in CE have been left out of EE. The objective for CE is to reduce the consumption of energy input, waste, and emission output, and close the loop on production and consumption of raw materials (Callan & Thomas, 2013; Cobo et al., 2018; Kirchherr et al., 2017). Korhonen, Honkasalo, and Seppälä (2018) emphasizes the economic aspect of CE and state that there should be an economic incentive and *guideline* behind the notion. The focus should include energy, material, and emission control cost, as well as include public image and environmental taxation risk. This will further employment and efficient use of already existing material through a sharing economy encouraging cooperative use of goods and services. According to Lacy and Rutqvist (2015) it is estimated that \$1 trillion in waste is lost annually. The economic impact of recycling can be highlighted by looking at plastic packaging material; it is estimated that \$80-120 billion is lost to the economy annually of its value. Additionally, 32% of the packaging is estimated to escape collection, and rather drift towards urban infrastructure and the ocean. Only 14% of the collected waste goes towards recycling, where at the end of the recycling process only 5% of plastic packaging is actually recycled (Neufeld, Strassen, Sheppard, & Gilman, 2016). Another economic example illustrating what can be gained in a CE is through the measures done by Walmart. “In 2012 more than 80 percent of its waste was diverted from landfills [...] returned more than \$230 million to the business” (Lacy & Rutqvist, 2015 p. 58).

According to Stahel (2016), there are large benefits of implementing CE, both economic and environmental benefits. The study conducted on seven European nations found that GHG emission would reduce by up to 70 percent for each of the countries as a result of a shift toward CE. Furthermore, the articles stated that it would increase the workforce by 4 percent, and positively influence Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for a country. Not only is it environmentally and economically beneficial for a focus towards CE, it could also be debated to increase quality of life, as we decrease extraction of raw materials and then pollution as a consequence (Stahel, 2016).

An obvious limitation of looking at CE are the lack of consensus on the definition of the concept. In an attempt to grasp an overall understanding of the concept, and to get an

understanding of areas of development outside of our metanalysis, we went through a number of definitions. The variations in definitions of the term CE will, according to Kirchherr et al., (2017), eventually lead to the collapse of the concept. As we noticed from the definitions mentioned by Kirchherr et al., (2017), few of them included the aspect of consumer responsibility and their consumption of materials, service, and resources. Furthermore, few mention sustainability as a part of the CE vision, as well as disregarded recovery as one of the R's (Kirchherr et al., 2017). Recorded by Ghisellini, Cialani, and Ulgiati (2016) "the promotion of consumer responsibility is crucial for enhancing the purchase and use of more sustainable products and services" (p.19). This implies that there is a need for a prominent focus on consumer processes in the CE, along with concern regarding production and distribution of resources. It is also stated by some authors that reduce is an essential role in CE. If implementations of CE is based on definitions that excludes the part of reduce, reuse, and recycle, then the implementation will be unsustainable and considered "business-as-usual". This is because all of the R's are essential in order for CE to break ground and make a change towards a more sustainable future (Kirchherr et al., 2017).

### 3.3 Central Concepts

WM and CE are two concepts which both are in need of further exploration in order to assess a definition within the context of one another. The following concepts of sustainability, sharing- and service economy, and the consumer, are essential for proper implementation and relevant for our discussion.

#### 3.3.1 Sustainability

Sustainable development was put on the agenda in 1987 by the Brundtland commission in their "*Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*" to raise global awareness of the extraction of natural resources. The Brundtland commission defined: "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (UNWCED, 1987, chapter 2, point 1). This definition is frequently used today and is discussed as a guideline to prevent depletion of natural resources and global warming. Furthermore, there seem to be some kind of scientific consensus across the Scientific fields that a transition into a sustainable development for the future is much needed (Bray, 2010; Grin, Rothmans, & Schot, 2010).

The approach to sustainable development in this study is based on the Brundtland commission's (UNWCED, 1987) definition, which also happens to be the basis of the UN sustainable development goals. There are 17 SDG where all of the goals are important for future development in order to preserve our natural resources. Most of the goals can, in some way, be directly or indirectly related to CE or WM, however only a couple of the goals focus within the area of impact or action of WM or CE. As we detected from an evaluation of the considered relevant goals, number 12 appears the most applicable regarding WM through a CE perspective. The SDG 12 reflects the interlinkage and co-dependency of WM and CE in the pursuit of a more sustainable economic growth and waste handling (UN, n.d-b). "Goal 12" represents a focus which is central in both WM and CE; reduction of "waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse" (UN, n.d-b, target 12.5). Furthermore, the goal augmented for economic growth while reducing consumption of resources, involving "everyone from producer to final consumer" (UN, n.d-b, section 3), reflecting a need for an active participation of all *actors*.

### 3.3.2 Sharing- and Service Economy

The concept of a sharing economy (SE) is based on a somewhat similar ideology as CE and is a stepping-stone in obtaining the ambitions of a CE. It is essentially optimal utilizations of pre-existing resources, materials, and services. Rather than building a hotel, SE promotes that empty apartments shall be rented out so that others can use it while the original owner is not using the accommodation (Korhonen et al., 2018). According to Korhonen et al. (2018) Finland has an average car use of less than 10%, which poses the question of how to rationalize purchasing or producing a product that will stay unused for 90% of the time. SE represents a way to fully utilize these products potential. The function of SE works through technology allowing coordinated use of the shared product in a digital economy (Korhonen et al., 2018).

By furthering the theory of a sharing economy, one would include the aspect of selling functional services. In this scenario the product ownership is shifted where a company sells the service of a product over a period of time. In which case "the consumer is much less concerned with the performance, maintenance, upgrade or replacement of the goods." (Sauvé, Bernard, & Sloan, 2016, p.55). This is a way to ensure good quality of product and maintenance, especially if the producer is also the provider of the service. "[...] the benefits of durability or reparability can be fully internalized at the product's conception stage. In this scenario, the business model

spurs green design and encourages product reuse—clearly falling within the circular economy framework” (Sauvé et al., 2016, p.55). Examples of these services and its green function is “product lease, per-use fees, and offering a take-back service to ensure that material value is maintained when costumers dispose of products” (Heyes, Sharmina, Mendoza, Gallego-Schmid, & Azapagic, 2018, p. 629).

### 3.3.4 The Consumer

There is a global consensus on the pressing issue with current consumption, including depletion of natural resources. The UN has developed a focus on sustainability as a universal goal to preserve our resources for a more sustainable future. The various definitions of CE along with the implementation of CE, presents a lack of emphasis on the consumer’s behaviour and their role within the theory (Ghisellini et al., 2018; UN, n.d.-a, Vergragt, 2017). According to Ghisellini et al (2018) CE is an economic development that aims “to innovate the entire chain of production, consumption, distribution and recovery of materials and energy according to a cradle to cradle vision” (p. 618).

Modern consumption patterns generate most of the waste challenges faced today, although these challenges are met at different levels and in different substance (Vergragt, 2017). To understand the objects of the MSW management challenges we also need to look further into the consumer as an active participator. Vergragt (2017) highlights the importance of addressing modern consumption patterns and the move towards a more sustainable consumption<sup>6</sup>. Sustainable consumption allocates some of the responsibility for waste handling to the consumer and highlights the importance of awareness for sustainable use, much in the same perception as found in CE. This willingness to adjust consumption behaviour based on awareness and environmental concern is essential for proper circulation of materials. The literature regarding consumerism presents concepts such as “green consumer behaviour” that seem to have a more economic approach where consumption and consumer behaviour are

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<sup>6</sup> Sustainable consumption is:

the use of goods and services that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life, while minimizing the use of natural resources, toxic materials and emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle, so as not to jeopardize the needs of future generations. (International Institute for Sustainable Development 1995, in Vergragt, 2017, p. 309)

measured in value. Such consumerism is based on the belief that the consumer reflects on individual or institutional consequence of green consumer behaviour, and presents environmental knowledge and concern within consumption (Pagiaslis & Krontalis, 2014; Zhao, Gao, Wu, Wang, & Zhu, 2014).

Other similar concepts to CE also focuses on minimalizing waste and our impact on natural resources. Amongst these is the zero-waste movement, and concept of minimalism. According to Song, Li, and Zeng (2015), a zero-waste system is concerned with reuse of materials in a circular manner, and includes the aspects of reduce, reuse, and recycling. The concept has gained momentum in some households where the goal has been to have “zero waste”, encouraging the disinvestment from plastic products and packaging and rather focus on conscious consumption (Song et al, 2015).

The concept of minimalism is not new, however the increasing popularity of the movement of *minimalism* is a more modern way of living. Although there is no clear definition of the movement, it is considered as a lifestyle containing limited articles of clothing and goods. It focuses on conscious behaviour, in order to minimize consumption where you only surround yourself with things you need in life (Millburn & Nikodemus, n.d.).



## 4. Method

Both WM and CE have an inherent focus on waste, although the processes of doing so are different in the two perspectives. We therefore found it interesting to look at the two concepts within two different fields of study; literature and practical appliance, to best answer our research questions. By conducting a literature meta-analysis, we were able to study the relationship of WM and CE, and additionally gain a better understanding of WM role in the concept of CE.

The method section will first go over the criteria and limitations of our literature review, before presenting the case study of IVAR. The literature metal-analysis and the case study are both conducted to assess the relationship between the concepts of WM and CE.

### 4.1 Literature Review

We applied different qualitative methodological techniques to gain knowledge and understanding of the two subjects of WM and CE in order to better answer our research questions.

First, we made a general literature review of WM and CE to explore the two subjects and to gather relevant literature for our research. Our general literature review was prepared mainly through a web search in the search engines Google, Google Scholar, University of Stavanger library server; Oria, Science Direct, and YouTube. Following the general evaluation of these search engines, we applied a more methodological approach- through a context review. By applying this, we were able to focus our literature search towards more relevant secondary sources in the form of research reports and publications, public reports, and scholarly books and publications— mainly concentrating on the two concepts of WM and CE. The context review allowed us to investigate the link between the two concepts and study the state of WM in the context of CE. Furthermore, the process of the context review amended to set the boundaries for the literature used in our meta-analysis (Blaikie, 2010; Neuman, 2014).

Our next step was to apply a literature meta-analysis. The meta-analysis, being a qualitative methodological tool for categorizing our research, was conducted with the purpose to study the relationship between WM and CE. Gerco, Zangrillo, Biondi-Soccai, and Landoni (2013) describe a meta-analysis to be a “powerful tool to accumulating and outline summarize the

knowledge in a research field, and to identify the overall measure of a treatment's effect by combining several conclusions" (p.219). According to Neuman (2014), a literature meta-analysis is "a special technique used to create an integrative review" (p.126), and describe an integrative review to be "a common type of review in which the author presents and summarizes the current state of knowledge on a topic, highlighting agreements and disagreements within it" (Neuman, 2014, p.127). Through applying a literature meta-analysis, we were able to explore the correlation between WM and CE by making a bibliometric cataloguing of the selected literature. This was done manually by reading through the abstracts of our selection, and then record our findings into an excel sheet (appendix 3). This cataloguing was then used to analyse and measure the text to identify patterns, common perceptions, and how the scientific community use these concepts. The literature meta-analysis made it possible for us to better observe the development of WM, CE, and the connection between the two concepts. This was used to build a more reflected background knowledge of the current status of the two concepts, while exploring the various theoretical perspectives and challenges (Geissdoerfer, Savaget, Bocken, & Hultink, 2017, Neuman, 2014).

However, there are some limitations of pulling data through a meta-analysis. Countless of meta-analysis can be performed on the same topic by various researches, with a slightly different purpose in each research, producing completely different outcomes. According to Greco et al. (2013) there are small margins for errors when conducting a meta-analysis, as "even small violation of certain rules can [result in a rather] misleading conclusion" (p. 219). In conducting a meta-analysis there will be several decision-making processes to set the design and will therefore require some personal judgments and expertise. The challenge is not to make these decisions out of personal preferences and expectations that will affect the result (Greco et al., 2013). Our advantage for this study, is that we are two Master students (with completely different backgrounds) doing this research, and are therefore able to check in on each other's work, making quality checks for personal bias errors. The entire process was documented in excel (see appendix 3), to monitor the process and to keep control- and checkpoints for clearing out errors.

The selection of literature played an important role for our meta-analysis, to ensure the validity of the study. Hence, the study was conducted based on scholarly secondary sources, through a collection of scientific articles. Scientific articles, or as Neuman (2014) call them: 'Scholarly

Journals' are "peer-reviewed"<sup>7</sup> reports of research" (p.130), which are often cited by other students and in other scientific publications. Focusing on research articles would give a more scientific base to build our analysis and research on, and the preferred search engine was sciencedirect.no, as this gave us the option to restrict our search within scientific articles (Neuman, 2014). Furthermore, we chose to focus on reading the abstracts (and highlights, if enclosed) of research articles. This decision was based on the assumption that "[...] the abstract must be able to stand alone in presenting a clear account of the methods, results and conclusions that accurately reflect the core components of the full research report" (Rice et al, 2016, p.1). However, restricting the reading to the abstracts brought some limitation to our study. The challenges for reading just the abstracts and highlights of the articles in our selection has its limitation in that "the simplified summaries can give an incomplete or distorted picture of a complete study. Researchers must locate the original scholarly journal article to see what the author said and the data show" (Neuman, 2014, p. 129). This presents the challenge of capturing the essence and relevance of the articles whilst reading only their abstracts. The restraint to this is that the relevance is solely determined from the abstract and presents a risk of missing out on fundamental data for our analysis. We still, however have found the abstracts to be efficient and representative enough to conduct a literature meta-analysis for this thesis.

Our findings from our literature meta-analysis will be compared against a real operation of WM. Our next step is therefore to conduct a case study of the regional sorting facility, IVAR IKS.

## 4.2 Case Study

A case study is a form of social science research that stands out in which that the focus of study is to investigate the "contemporary phenomenon (the "case") in depth and within its real-world context" (Yin, 2014, p.16). Our choice fell on the regional waste facility, IVAR IKS. Due to the scope of the study, we set the boundaries to only include IVAR's new waste sorting facility at Forus, with the main focus on MSW and their recycle process of plastic. While plastic is not

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<sup>7</sup> Neuman (2014) argues that only 10% of research articles pull through the "peer-review" and get published by the most Prestigious journals. The rejection rate is higher in the social science than other academic fields and is caused by an increasing rigid review process where standards are raising and the expending of studies (Neuman, 2014, p.131).

the primary focus within our research, we see it as the most assessable example for our discussion.

We were able to secure an informant within the company- which provided us with a primary source of data to our case study of IVAR. Our Informant is the facility manager at IVAR, who has a broad expertise of the waste industry. The Informant works specifically within WM and could provide us with inside knowledge of waste industry outlook on CE, as well as the regional incentives done to implement a CE. The Informant was given the “informant for master thesis” letter and signed the “samtykkeerklæring” (see appendix 2). We conducted a semi-structured interview<sup>8</sup>. The form of a semi-structured interview allowed us, as researchers, to keep a direct focus on the Informant and to direct the subject of the conversation within the borders of WM and CE in guidance of our interview guide (see appendix 1). As our conversation was not bound by structured questions, we were able give our Informant the freedom to fully expand on his reflections and observations of the subjects. However, to keep within the scope of our thesis, we formulated specific questions to acquire more essential point and observations (Galletta, 2013). We were also able to collect important data of IVAR directly from our Informant, such as the GHG budget, and other unpublished reports related to IVAR. We completed our case study with a combination of interviews and document analysis.

We acknowledge that there lies a limitation in building a case study around a specific area of IVAR. A further limitation within the scope of this study is whether IVAR’s observation of the waste industry, and the role of CE, reflects the same throughout the industry. If the case study was the main purpose of research within this thesis, it would be beneficial to use a “multiple-case design<sup>9</sup>” to confirm our findings. However, the purpose of this case study is to compare and discuss the findings from our meta-analysis. We believe that the case study of IVAR is representative enough for our discussion, but would recommend a broader research for future exploration of the topic.

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<sup>8</sup> “Characteristic of its unique flexibility, the semi-structured interview is sufficiently structured to address specific dimensions of your research question while also leaving space for study participants to offer new meanings to the topic of study” (Galletta, 2013, p. 1-2).

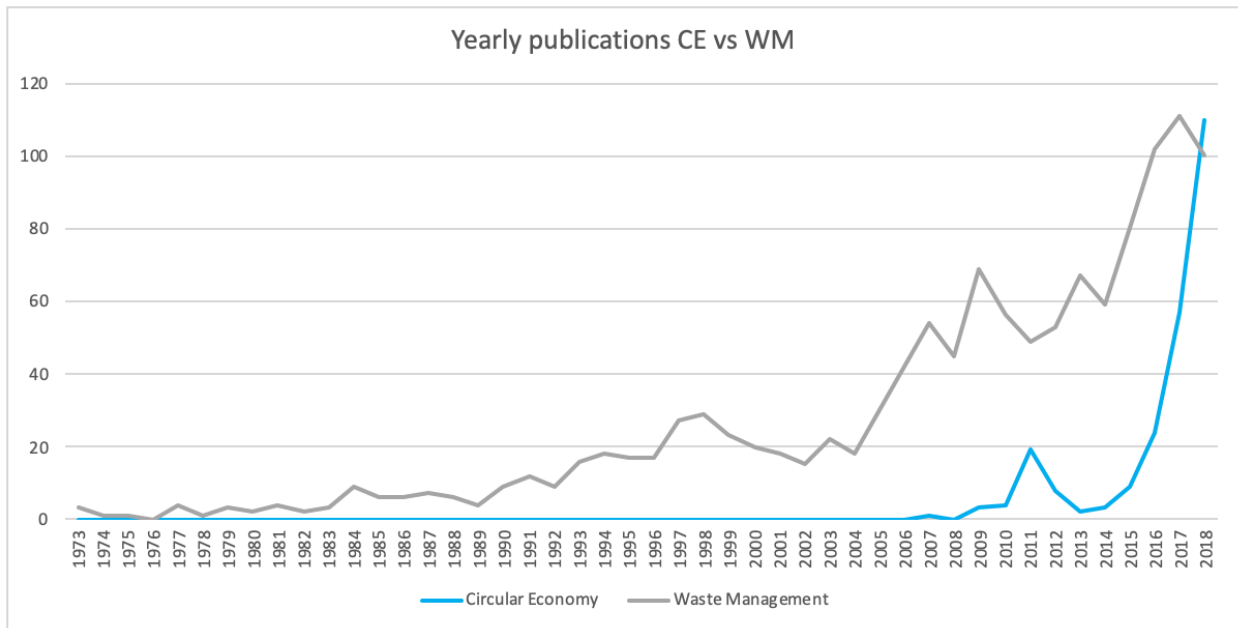
<sup>9</sup> “multiple-case study: a case study organized around two or more cases” (Yin, 2014, p.239).

## 5. Results and Discussion

The following section will first explain the results from our literature meta-analysis and highlight the commonalities between the two concepts of WM and CE. Completed through a statistical- and a frequency appearance of selected keywords, this will enable us to compare the correlations between the two concepts. The results from the literature meta-analysis is followed by the case study analysis of IVAR. The case study contradicted some of the findings in our literature meta-analysis and is discussed in the following section, including the relevance of the 4R's within both concepts. The results, analysis, and discussion from our selected methods will provide a basis for a merged discussion of the findings, which will be discussed in the last part of this chapter.

### 5.1 Literature Analysis

The literature analysis was conducted to explore the relationship between WM and CE. The first search in sciencedirect.no was based on articles with “waste management” in the title, including the publication year of 2018, which provided a result of 1249 research articles. The same search for “circular economy” (in the title) gave us a search result of 240 research articles. When analysing the difference of result for our first search, we recognised the subject of WM to be a practice of history, and CE to be a more recent term. We therefore made a methodological search to document the publication years of the articles to set our range for the search parameter. Graph 2 clearly illustrates that the majority of CE publication ranges from 2008-2018.



Graph 2: Yearly publication of scientific articles with CE/ WM in the title.

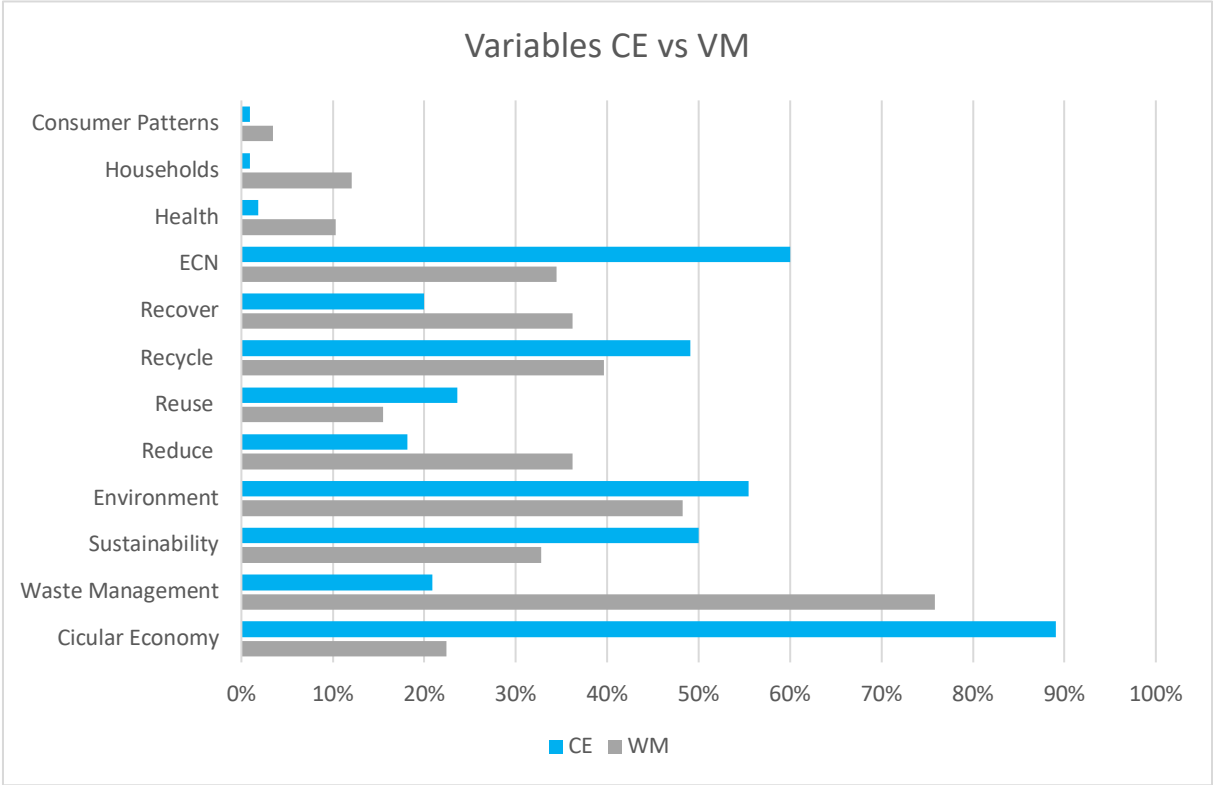
Our next step was to narrow down our search result to only include relevant literature. While both WM and CE are subjects of this thesis, we made two searches with following limiting parameters: 1<sup>st</sup> search: “waste management” in the title and “circular economy” in the text, limited to publication year 2008-2018, and got a result of only 61 articles. 2<sup>nd</sup> search; “circular economy” in the title and “waste management” in the text, limited to publication year 2008-2018, generating a result of 120 articles (see table 1 for details). The total of 181 articles established our selection for our literature meta-analysis.

Search within scientific articles	"waste management" in title		"circular economy" in title	
	Publication date including end of 2018	1249		240
Year 2008-2018	791	63 %	239	100 %
Year 2008-2018 + "circular economy"/"waste management" (respectively) in the text	61	8 %	120	50 %

Table 1: Search for scientific articles with “waste management” in the title, first selection, within the frame of publication year 2008-2018, and second with “circular economy” in the article text.

However, our selection represented some articles which only mention either WM or CE in the reference list and excluded the concepts elsewhere in the article. A total of 3 articles appeared in both WM and CE search result and were included in both results to avoid error. The cleaning of the data left us with a total selection of 168 articles (WM: 58, CE:110) for our literature meta-analysis.

Our selection was then pulled through a methodological bibliometric cataloguing of the frequent use of CE main keywords; reduce, reuse, recover, and recycle. We also wanted to catalogue different variation of sustainability, consumer roles, economics, and health, recognizing these keywords to be: sustainability, environment, consumer patterns, health, and household. The results of the frequent use of the mentioned keywords are recorded in graph 3.



Graph 3 : Result of the frequent use of key-words.

In addition, we also documented the articles mentioning the concept of WM and CE in the abstract (graph 3), to give an indication of how relevant the concepts were for the articles. Through our analysis we noticed some differences between the two searches set for our selection of data for literature meta-analysis. Even though the selection was collected through the same literature meta-analysis, we decided to keep the two search-result divided for our analysis to better understand the dynamics between the two concepts.

By analysing table 1 we can see an indication of a literature gap in our selection. The literature is less focused on CE in WM literature (8%) than WM in CE literature (50%). However, the literature meta-analysis gives us a result of 22% of the articles with WM in the title mentioning

CE in the abstract, whilst 21% of the articles with CE in the title mentions WM in the abstract. This indicates that WM does not stand as central within CE research literature as first predicted (table 1). The literature and ideology of CE highlights the importance of proper WM handling for a more sustainable development. Our literature analysis demonstrates that there is less focus on WM in the study of CE research, emphasising a literature gap between CE theory and CE research literature.

Another surprising finding was the rather low focus on health, households, and consumer patterns within both sectors. Regardless of this outcome, WM should, according to literature, have a central focus on proper handling of MSW, due to issues regarding health and hazards. This aspect has proven to be less relevant within WM or CE according to the research we have conducted. The lack of focus on health within both concepts in literature can be detrimental, as managing and recycling of goods can cause harm if not properly handled. Thus presenting a need for a larger focus on health in CE, especially considering recycling and the reusing of goods which can carry a heavy burden of toxic material or other hazards. Additionally, the lack of emphasis on consumer or household in both WM and CE shows a literature gap regarding the consumer as an active participant within either concept.

The environmental focus differentiated between the two concepts, although not significantly. This focus can be linked with the surge of environmental economics and importance of considering the environmental consequences of economic growth. The publications we looked at, presented different economic and financial concerns. Cost, revenues, financial, tax, and cost efficiency were all included when considering which of the articles mentioned economics in the abstracts, whereas “circular economy” was completely disregarded under economics as it was already accounted for in its separated category. 34% of the WM selection had an economic focus, although this was in regard to cost reduction or economic gain for implementing environmentally friendly WM incentives. Even the result of 60% for CE articles with a focus on economic concepts or any economic indication within the abstract is also relatively low. We expected a higher focus on economics amongst our selection, both due to WM being a \$285 billion industry and CE for being an economic discipline and a criteria for our selection. However, WM, CE, and economics can all be considered interlinked, as our texts indicated that economic incentives have a large impact on behaviour towards waste handling, both from a consumer and business perspective.



The literature review indicated a neglect of WM in relation to CE research literature. Additionally, the analysing results of table 1 indicate a literature gap between CE focus in WM research (8%) and WM focus in CE research (50%). We therefore found it crucial to include the keywords of CE; reduce, reuse, recycle, and recover to our literature meta-analysis to compare if this negligence also applied for the keywords. The sustainable development goal 12 focuses on reduction, recycling, and reuse. It was therefore vital to include the aspect of sustainability in our analysis to assess the concern and attention in literature allocated to future generations through sustainability. The results are illustrated in table 2. The separated table is to demonstrate the correlation between the articles with WM in title and the articles with CE in the title. The frequent use of the key-words recycle, reuse, reduce, and recover present with similar importance in the two concepts.

Key-words	"Waste Management"		"Circular Economy"	
	Abstract	Search in selection	Abstract	Search in selection
Recycle	40 %	97 %	49 %	98 %
Reuse	16 %	75 %	24 %	88 %
Reduce	36 %	98 %	18 %	94 %
Recover	36 %	82 %	20 %	65 %
Sustainability	33 %	80 %	50 %	93 %

Table 2: Appearance of CE key-words. The table provides an overview of articles containing the key concept of CE. "Abstract" is the percentage of our selection containing an appearance of the key-words in the abstract. "Search in selection" is the percentage our selection containing an appearance of the key-words anywhere within the article, not restricted by the abstract.

Table 2 summarises the results of our cataloguing of the key-words for CE. Our finding in our literature meta-analysis presented a higher frequent use of the key-words than the focus of WM and CE in relationship to one another. However, we decided to make a comparison to see if the utilisation of key-words within the articles mirror the same result from our literature meta-analysis. As portrayed in table 2, there is a significant difference in appearance of the key-words through our selection, compared to those only recorded in abstracts in the same selection. This is used as a reference point in assessing the significance of the key-words within the concepts of WM and CE research literature. "Recycle" appears amongst the most popular key-word within both concepts; with an appearance of 97% (WM) and 98% (CE). This signifies a large focus on this aspect within both concepts. Closely followed by "Reduce" with 98% (WM) and 94% (CE). However, the aspect of "Reduce" presents the largest gap between amount of

abstracts mentioning the term and that of articles. This is because reduce is often mentioned in connection with energy reduction, cost reduction, and emissions, which can be excluded from the abstract as it might be considered a consequence of CE as well as in WM. The results from our analysis within WM indicates a large focus within the 4R's; reflecting a focus within the same areas as CE although the concept of CE itself might not be mentioned in the articles.

Sustainability had a 50% appearance in CE, and a 33% presence in WM. The different focus in the two concepts can be linked with the increased popularity of CE as a result of the focus points within sustainability. The sustainable development goal 12 focuses on reduction, recycling, and reuse. It was therefore important to include the aspect of sustainability in our analysis to assess the concern and attention in literature allocated to future generation through sustainability.

CE has gained popularity as a response to sustainable development and is a concept that affects all sectors. We therefore recorded which sectors the articles were referring to, in order to assess the focus areas in both WM and CE. We recognised there to be 5 categories<sup>10</sup>:

- 1- Policy, municipal responsibilities, and research
- 2- Energy sector
- 3- Construction, manufacturing, and producers
- 4- E-waste
- 5- Organic waste and chemistry

Sector	WM	CE
Policy, municipal responsibilities, and research	45 %	37 %
Energy sector	9 %	5 %
Construction / manufacturing / producers	17 %	41 %
E-waste	10 %	7 %
Organic waste / chemistry	19 %	9 %

*Table 3 illustrates the allocation of articles within each sector, roughly categorized based on similarities of subject and area of research for each of the articles.*

The first category contained public incentives and research of the concepts itself. The second was the least popular category- concerning energy. This can be explained by its common pairing

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<sup>10</sup> Numbering the categories were used as a guideline for categorized sectors of the excel sheet in the appendix 3.

with sector five regarding organic waste or circulation of bio-waste to energy and was therefore difficult to adjust for. Organic waste was discussed in a circular manner in articles containing WM and CE, reflecting an interest for waste circularity within both concepts. Sector three was the most popular sector within CE, as it contained the major categories of research regarding material recovery. Private business and the production aspect were included in this category, which also incorporated the construction sector and manufacturing. Finally was the category of e-waste (sector 4), another small sector but with a very specific target. Shown in the results, both concepts of WM and CE have a similar distribution of focus; although CE presented a higher focus within industrial production sector. The categorization of the sectors can be considered a limitation within the study, as it was conducted based on similar attributes and focus in the articles, rather than including the widespread variety of sectors.

Although the relationship between the two concepts were not as central within the literature meta-analysis findings, our research showed that the concepts have a lot of commonalities within their focus. Some of the limitations within the relationship of WM and CE are rooted in the undefinable definition of CE, which presented a further challenge of assessing WM role in CE through the literature. This can be explained by the gap in CE theory and CE literature. In CE theory, the aspect of WM is central in implementation, whilst the literature only presents a 21% significance. Furthering the relationship between the two concepts is the focus on certain aspects of CE such as reuse, recover and recycle within the concept of WM. Both concepts presented a lack of consumer or household focus, which we will compare against the applied operation of IVAR, and have a closer look at what role WM plays for implementing CE into the process.

## 5.2 Case Study of IVAR

IVAR's sorting facility practices multiple WM procedures for the different materials collected from our MSW. The implementations of practice appear to have adapted some of the CE ideology, particularly for the process of the mass-flow for plastic. It will therefore be beneficial to look at the plastic process of the sorting facility of IVAR to compare against a CE approach.

IVAR IKS own "flowchart of mass-flows for Forus waste recycle facility" (provided by our Informant at IVAR, 2019) gives a clear overview of how the MSW is sorted at IVAR's waste facility (see appendix 4). We have captured the plastic flow at Forus recycling facility in table 4 below.

Plastic flow at IVAR IKS sorting facility						
Type of plastic	Sorted plastic		Washed granulate for production		Residues back to combustions	
	tonnes	% of total waste 66250	tonnes	% of total sorted type of plastic	tonnes	% of total sorted type of plastic
LDPE	4773	7,2 %	3102	65 %	1671	35 %
HDPE	826	1,2 %	636	77 %	190	23 %
PP	1445	2,2 %	1098	76 %	347	24 %
<b>total recycled at IVAR</b>	<b>7044</b>	<b>10,6 %</b>	<b>4836</b>	<b>68,7 %</b>	<b>2208</b>	<b>31,3 %</b>
PS	288	0,4 %				
PET mix	965	1,5 %				
Mixed plastic 2D	5570	8,4 %			5570	100 %
Mixed plastic 3D	2106	3,2 %			2106	100 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>15973</b>	<b>24,1 %</b>			<b>9884</b>	<b>61,9 %</b>

Table 4: Plastic flow for IVAR IKS sorting facility, a summary of IVAR IKS own “flowchart of mass-flows for Forus waste recycle facility”, see appendix 4 (Informant, 2019).

A total of 66 250 tonnes waste goes through IVAR sorting facility on Forus. 24.1% of the total waste is sorted out and recognized as plastic, see table 4. Looking at the flow-stream for plastic, only 44% (7044tonnes/15973tonnes) of the sorted plastic is LDPE, HDPE and PP, leaving a total of 7044 tons plastic for the recycling process. After it is washed and cleaned, IVAR is left with a total of 4836 tons granulate to commercialize, whereas 2208 tons is sent back for combustion. This means that only 30.3% (4836tonnes/15973tonnes) of all the sorted plastic at IVAR is being recycled at the facility. There are different underlying reasons for this low recycling number, according to our Informant. The first challenge is the mixed plastic; both 2D (foil) and 3D (objects). These plastic products present a challenge due to the lack of a process solution and demand on the market, and are therefore sent to incineration. The second challenge is that even though PET and PS is sent to be recycled in Germany (marked with green text in table 4), the plastic manufacturers will only purchase and use clear PET in their production. An additional challenge to this, is that most of the PET that comes in contains coloured trays. Even though the facility can sort out all the PET, the machines are set to only to sort out the clear PET. Our Informant acknowledges that this challenge creates more awareness for the “upstream” of the process and encourages IVAR to look “downstream” and educate the producers to not use coloured plastic in their products. While the Informant considers the waste industry as only a small part of CE with limited influence, this case shows that the waste industry holds a bigger role in CE. Our Informant contradicted the statement regarding WM role in CE, by stating the waste industry needs to recognize their importance in a CE and learn

to look both “upstream” and “downstream” in their supply chain. The third challenge for the plastic recycling process is the use of the colour black in plastic, as well as use of paper labels on the plastic containers (e.g. yoghurt containers). The colour black and paper labels make it difficult for the machines to detect the plastic and will therefore not be sorted out but rather proceed as regular residues sent to the incinerators (Informant, 2019).

The effect of the measures for recycling plastic can be debated. The industry has allocated large resources for the construction of a proper facility for this handling, as well as the environmental impact of this construction. Additional reasoning’s for the effects to be debated, is that only 30.3% of the separated plastics actually end up as recycled plastic in the form of granulates. A total of 61.9% (containing mixed plastic 2D and 3D, and residues from the recycle process) of the separated plastic finds its way back to the incinerators, while the remaining 7.8% (*PS+PET: 288+965 /15973 tonnes, see table 4*) are shipped off to Germany for recycling.

A continuing limitation of the facility are the buyers of recycled plastics (referred to as Producers). The Producers have specific requirements for what recycled plastic they wish to include in their production. The specifications exclude large amount of eligible plastic that could have been recycled and reused if there was a market for it. For instance, Producers will only purchase granulates from clear PET; creating no marketplace for mixed plastic, the main reason why all 62% of sorted plastic is being sent to incineration. However, the Producers who set the limitations of which plastic can be recycled through their demands for only clear granulates, can increase the recycling rate by agreeing to include coloured recycled granulates in their production; accommodating for more reused and recycled plastics. Furthermore, the Producers can play a more active role in CE by adjusting their production of plastic to hold the attribute of which they are willing to purchase. This will mean producing clear plastic, of which the characteristics of plastic stays recyclable, and can be purchased for reuse.

IVAR’s process of adjusting to demand demonstrates a consumer awareness within the waste industry by only recycling and “producing” plastic granulates which will be reused. In this case, IVAR is being responsible for reducing the waste of material produced, although it still sends fully recyclable plastic to incineration. The process of Producers to adjust to this demand is essential in order for CE to be implemented, as well as it reduces waste and energy used for unnecessary recycling.

Last, but not least in the discussion about IVAR facility and plastic recycling is the representation of technology. In order to maximize recycling of plastic, technology should be developed towards sorting all plastic by both type and colour, to adjust for demand. The development of technology and information regarding waste handling can be shared through information hubs, as proper waste handling will serve to benefit all, including the aspect of cost. Our Informant highlighted that with current technology, everything is possible- but the most important factor is cost and the willingness to pay for that solution. If we were able to adjust the demand for recycled plastic towards being economically beneficial to recycle all plastic, then the plastic loop would be completed in full circulation.

According to our Informant, we are moving towards a change as the EU are working on a new directive for how to report numbers for recycled plastic. For instance today, when the companies deliver sorted plastic to the facilities for recycling, they can report 100% recycling of plastic. However, as can be seen from our analysis of the IVAR sorting facility, only 30.3% of this plastic actually ends up as recycled “raw material” for production and commercialization. If the new directive from the EU is implemented, where reports contains the actual number of recycled plastics, we will then see a large change in reported recycling numbers across all sectors. The pressure for delivering better recycling numbers might push for technological improvements and a higher willingness to pay for recycling plastic, than what is apparent today.

Although IVAR has implemented a variety of measures regarding waste handling and recycling of plastics, there is still room for improvements. The role of WM in CE, in practice, is attempted at IVAR through recycling and recovering of materials, nonetheless the firm has limited control over the aspect of reuse and reduce. However, the company identifies reduce as the best solution to our waste challenges, and has created a “Byttebuå” in an attempt at reducing waste and continuing utilization of functional artefacts (Kvitrud, 2019). Despite their efforts for maintaining “Byttebuå”, IVAR have minimal control over consumer’s exploitation of this opportunity. The role of IVAR in a CE contradicts the findings in our literature meta-analysis, although it builds on the CE theory. We will therefore explore this further in the next section of our discussion, where we will compare the findings from our literature meta-analysis and the case study of IVAR.

### 5.3 Discussion of Literature Review and Case Study

The reduction of waste and awareness towards recycling are amongst the priorities of CE theory and are important for both health and the environment. Making the consumer aware of their responsibility regarding WM is one of the steps within CE that needs to be properly addressed in order for implementation. The example of Sweden demonstrates that governmental measures for adopting consumer responsibility of WM procedures, made the general consumer more aware of other sustainable activities (Andersson & Stage, 2018. p.19). The measure was to improve WM and to “mitigate the scarcity issues of landfills capacity” and GHG emissions (Hoogmartens, Eyckmans & Van Passel, 2016, p. 345). While the governmental initiatives were not directly related to CE, the policies implemented were amongst the key concepts of CE: reduce and recycle.

The literature meta-analysis presented a gap between CE theory and CE research literature, where the theory presented WM to have a more central role within CE than reflected in the CE research literature. This mismatch between CE theory and CE research literature is present in the undefined definition of the concept of CE and the lack of direct guidelines of how to move forward. The explanation and assessments of WM’s role in CE is therefore hard to grasp and varies within CE research literature. However, as can be seen throughout the literature meta-analysis WM and CE shares great deal of commonalities; from focus and concepts, to an ideology for a more sustainable development. We can therefore assess the presence of a significant relationship between WM and CE research literature, which is also reflected between CE theory and WM in practice. There is a mismatch of the case study of IVAR and the research literature. Our case study exposed that the CE research literature does not properly reflect what is actually implemented within the waste industry (at least not in Norway). Instead, our Informant echoed a desire for the WM industry to play a role in implementing CE through WM policies, although the Informant did not consider this feasible under the current conditions. However, both the literature meta-analysis (see table 2) and the case study, verified a central focus on recycling, reuse, recover, and a wish to reduce within the waste sector in order to implement a CE.

#### 5.3.1 Recycling

The literature meta-analysis indicated a great focus within the concept of recycling (WM:40%, CE: 49%), which can be paired with IVAR’s focus regarding recycling of materials at their

facility. Recycling has long been a preferable practice of WM in the work of preventing waste accumulation. However, recycling alone is not enough for circularity, as there are other actors within the system that influences the ability to recycle, as well as the financial and technological obstacles. The concept of CE has a concern for the environmental impact of economic growth and considers the circulation of products as less impactful on the environment than production and extraction of new materials. However, the recycling of products does not necessarily avoid all negative impact on the environment. Recycling of waste can acquire a significant environmental footprint for the production of machinery, construction of facilities, and emissions during the process of recycling. Although the impact might not be as significant as the production of new materials, recycling is one step closer. What is needed is the overall coalition of the R's.

### 5.3.2 Reuse

Sharing- and service-based action can be implemented to reuse resources and reduce the input of new products to the market. One example of this, according to our Informant (2019), is the shift towards a service-based economy in large corporations. For instance, instead of purchasing copy machines which have to be maintained, repaired, and replaced by the cost of the owner, the consumer will buy the service rather than the hardware. This shift in the economic market encourages service companies to invest in quality equipment for an extended lifecycle. These investments in higher qualities generates larger economic investments and make repairs more beneficial. Our Informant (2019) noted that such service-minded development also increased the interest in reuse of materials and parts from scrapped equipment, to repair and maintain functional ones. This circularity of equipment parts contributes to a reduced waste generation. Although the service-based economy is not a direct response to CE, its concept contributes to a CE. Furthermore, our Informant (2019) predicted a shift to a more service-based society; where the service-based economy will merge into other industry fields. The aspect of reuse can also be interlinked with IVAR's implementation of "Byttebuå", where people can bring discarded-, but completely functional goods, to be passed on to a new appreciative consumer.

### 5.3.3 Reduce

Our literature meta-analysis revealed a more substantial focus on 'reduce' than first anticipated (see table 2: "abstracts"- WM 36% and CE 18% vs. "search in selection" - WM 98% and CE 94%), although its significance was mostly paired with reduction of emissions, cost, and



energy. Our results indicated that the aspect of ‘reduce’ in households or on consumer level was mostly disregarded. The literature was predominantly focused on the energy sector when it came to the concept of reduce. The focuses of reduce in both literature and practice can be improved upon. We believe that an increase of focus within reduce in literature, will affect the focus of reduce within production and consumption, seeing as awareness is the key when implementing new concepts and policies. Although IVAR has limited control over the production of waste within industries or households, there are still actions which can be implemented in order to educate the public and influence their behaviours. Furthermore, there are opportunities for policy makers to take preventative actions to regulate industry waste production and influence the consumption of goods.

#### 5.3.4 Recover

The attention on recovery, in our literature meta-analysis, is mentioned in the context of construction and larger operations, or when it comes to recovery of energy. The aspect of “recover” manifests its purpose in recovery of materials for a circularity of resources. By establishing a “Recycling Station”, such as IVAR has done, the large volume of MSW can be consigned against a small fee. The “Recycling Station” is open for the public and the idea behind it is to recover and reuse the obtained materials. Furthermore, agriculture was linked with energy recovery from organic waste in both analysis of WM and CE. On a similar basis, IVAR maintains this aspect of recovery by utilizing the heat from incinerators to provide district heating.

#### 5.3.5 Re-definition of Waste Management in the Perspective of Circular Economy

The ideology of CE is pushed forward by the increasing awareness for a sustainable future, and our research establishes that the concept of CE has been adopted by industries in an attempt to decrease the input-and output of goods in the market. However, a consensus on the definition of the concept remains absent and is therefore challenging to grasp and implement into practice. This is clearly outlined through our literature analysis. The concept of WM on the other hand, which presents more than just a concept, has been implemented in different countries although at different stages and with different approaches. WM is considered a vast concept with undefined parameters, depending on social and geographical perimeters. We would therefore suggest a redefinition of the concept of WM in order to gain a consensus of its responsibility and duty within a CE. Our suggested redefinition of WM build on Gillespie’s (Gillespie 2015

p. 8-9, in McCormick, 2018) definition of waste (as presented under “Waste Management” section). With this in mind we would like to present the following re-contextualized definition for WM:

*The handling of any product or material which has served its intended purpose for the user, in which the used material will be returned back into the loop of circular economy through the processes of recovery, reuse, or recycle. The responsibility of waste management entails all producers of waste, with an aim at reducing the input and output of materials in circulation. The process of waste management includes the aspect of handling; from collection and transportation of material, to redistribution and providing recycled, recovered, or reusable materials to the market at all levels of the supply chain.*

The definition identifies discarded goods to be collected for a recycle-, reuse-, or recover process to continue a function, either in the same shape or in a new form. WM will in this broad definition, be a key factor for material circularity. Although the concept of CE is yet to be unified defined, the general understanding of the concept is the circulation of materials which will reduce the inputs- and output of resources. An important aspect of CE is that all *actors* partake in an operational role, from consumer habits to waste handling policies. CE considers WM to have a central role in the CE process; however, there is a further need for *actors* to contribute in their significant roles to keep the waste disposal to a minimum. If reduction of waste ever happens, then the role of WM does not decrease with the reduction. WM role, however much debated, can increase activity in the case that it would require more managing of materials to uphold the circulation rather than direct disposal. The development of IVAR’s new recycling facility required an increasingly active participation from the waste industry to manage all of the recycling processes. The increased activities at IVAR generated 11 new full-time equivalents (FTE) whilst receiving the equal amount of MSW, (Informant, 2019). As can be seen from this discussion, in addition to the following section, the role of consumer plays a large part in both practice of waste handling and in literature.

### 5.3.6 Role of Consumer

Although a large portion of WM responsibility lies in the hands of the manufacturers, the consumer also plays a significant role. There does however, seem to be a lack in focus on the consumers which are, in an economy setting, the drivers of the market as they set the demand

for goods and services (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2019). The lack of focus on the consumer was found as a literature gap in our literature meta-analysis, as well as in the case study.

The information around IVAR's technological challenges of their new machinery is not being shared to the public. As consumers ourselves, we are not made aware of this inability and unwillingness to recycle coloured plastic or products containing a mixture of plastic types and paper. Our suggestion is to encourage the manufacturers of plastic merchandises to change their production characteristics and design. A further suggestion is to run awareness campaigns to educate the public about good environmental choices and encourage them to become more active players in our economic society of WM. The example of Sweden clearly demonstrated that household incentives for recycling increased the feeling of responsibility of waste handling and this mindfulness transferred into other aspects of daily responsibilities. Households developed a more conscious awareness around their consumption, which lead to more sustainable purchases and a greater care for waste handling (Andersson & Stage, 2018). It is therefore interesting to follow the progression of consumers interest for sustainable consumption, as the new facility of IVAR have reduced the household's responsibility for waste sorting. How this will affect the consumers approach and attitude towards recycling and proper waste sorting is yet to be observed. However, with the example of Sweden in mind, we would like to suggest that IVAR should take more of a leading role towards educating households in pursuit of a more sustainable behaviour of consumption and WM.

Our suggestion is to increase the focus on the consumer, both in literature and in practice, to breach the gap and reach a larger sample group. In increasing consumer responsibility and awareness, the consumer has the information and control needed in order to change their consumption habits and disposal of waste. In addition to this, the main focus should, in our opinion, lie on the Producer to manufacture products that can hold the characteristics of recycling, reuse, and recover.

Even though the theory of a CE is more complex and would involve global participation, the general idea of a CE is not unique. As can be seen throughout the thesis, small movements are evolving amongst the conscious consumers. Minimalism and zero waste movements are amongst these actions which have gained momentum in recent years. Both movements have slightly different approaches for conscious- and sustainable consumerism. However, both movements encourage a reduction of consumption and, as an outcome of this, minimise the

input and reduce the output of recourses to the global market. The existence of these movements indicates that there is a willingness to change consumer patterns in order to better preserve the environment for the impact of consumption and waste. However, humans are creatures of habit and often seek the path of least resistance, the easy solution. Thus, the desire to change habits and spend time on waste handling might not be a priority amongst consumers, which would not provide the outcome one would hope for by increasing awareness and responsibility. The change in consumer behaviour could be influenced by the presence of incentives, either by rewarding good waste ethics, or by disciplining the over-consumers and those who accumulate most waste. The latter of which can be done through taxation or imposing a weight limit on waste. However, the incentive of weight limit can lead to incorrect and illegal disposal of waste in order to avoid the fee, leaving an unclear suggestion on how to move forward. Nevertheless, the example of Sweden clearly demonstrated that the incentives worked within their culture, making us hopeful for a similar WM policy effect in Norway.

The indistinct definition of CE has led to a vague suggestion for a proper implementation of the concept for policy makers and *actors* of society. Despite being optimistic of the implementation of CE in the future, we do recognise that in order for the concept to ever be properly implemented, there needs to be a consensus amongst the scientists and politicians to agree upon a finalized definition of CE. Although WM has not been fully embraced in the context of CE, it has already paved way for the different aspects of CE; reduce, recycle, recover and reuse. However, the emergence of social movements regarding sustainable consumption and green economy shows a willingness to adopt to a CE concept. This willingness to change leaves a hope for a forthcoming implementation of CE, pushed forward by the individual actors.

## 6. Conclusion

The literature meta-analysis revealed a literature gap between the theory of CE and CE research literature. WM is a central part of CE theory, although generally overlooked in CE research literature. The literature gap can be explained through the absence of a unified definition of CE and the uncertain path of how to implement a complete CE practice. These uncertainties makes it challenging to assess the relationship between WM and CE. The literature meta-analysis did however reveal that WM and CE research literature share a common interest for environmental measures and sustainable development. The two concepts of WM and CE are interlinked, as proper WM involves the aspects of recycle, reuse, reduce, and recover on a similar standing as CE. The relationship is also reflected in CE theory and WM practice; where the case of IVAR demonstrated a partial adapted practice of CE in their WM. We found that WM plays an important role in CE, and thus WM can be considered a stepping-stone in attaining proper implementation of CE. There were certain limitations which were met throughout our research; amongst those were the generally low focus allocated to all *actors* responsible for proper WM and guidelines for implementation of CE.

A large area that was left almost unexplored in both the research literature and by IVAR was the consumers ability to reduce consumption and reduce waste accumulation. The discussion mentioned measures of what can be done to influence consumer behaviour as well as increase awareness through weight limits or taxation of waste. The implementation of incentives and measures do not secure improved activities amongst the consumers, although the example of Sweden documented a positive effect for implementation of governmental measures of WM. Additionally, the surge of greener, more sustainable movement indicates that there is a willingness for consumers to change their behaviour, presenting a positive outlook for CE implementation. Our recommendation for future studies is therefore to direct the attention towards consumer role in WM, as well as in CE, to examine the conditions for consumers behavioural patterns for implementation of a CE through proper WM.

WM will be the essential key player within a sustainable system change towards CE, where its role will be more significant than what IVAR is considering themselves to be today. Our research supports the suggestion for a broader definition and re-contextualizing of WM in the perspective of CE, to better integrate WM central role in the implementation of a CE. We suggest the following redefinition of WM in the context of CE:

*The handling of any product or material which has served its intended purpose for the user, in which the used material will be returned back into the loop of circular economy through the processes of recovery, reuse, or recycle. The responsibility of waste management entails all producers of waste, with an aim at reducing the input and output of materials in circulation. The process of waste management includes the aspect of handling; from collection and transportation of material, to redistribution and providing recycled, recovered, or reusable materials to the market in all levels of the supply chain.*

The suggested redefinition of WM in the context of CE will allocate an even distribution of responsibility of WM to all *actors* of society, encouraging more reduction of waste, more reuse of materials, and improved recycling processes.

Our research demonstrates that CE have been embraced by many, both in literature and in practice. However, as our literature review has highlighted, the term CE might not be used as often as its related ideas and concepts of recover, reuse, reduce, and recycle. For the sake of adopting a full CE practice, researchers, scientists, and politicians need to agree upon a unified definition of CE and provide clear directions for how to implement a CE practice.

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## Appendix

## Appendix 1: Interview guide

### **Interview guide for Waste Management in a Circular Economy.**

Areas of interest for the Case study of IVAR facility and carbon budget:

- Carbon budget for IVAR
  - Building plan
  - Waste management
  - Transport within the location
  - Equipment
- Waste management
  - Sorting facility
  - Waste handling
  - Landfill
- Process procedures of IVAR
- IVARS take on Circular Economy

## Appendix 2 : Information letter and “samtykkeerklæring”

### **Informant for master thesis**

### ***”Exploring waste management – a case study of IVAR and a literature synthesis of waste management ”?***

This is a question for you to be an informant for a master thesis in Energy, Environment and Social studies at the University of Stavanger, and to provide necessary information about IVAR for our master thesis. The subject of the master thesis is “Exploring waste management – a case study of IVAR and a literature synthesis of waste management” where the data collected will be used for IVAR’s carbon budget calculations and for this thesis.

Your participation is voluntarily, and you may at any time withdraw from being an informant for this master thesis.

The data collected from you as an informant will be collected and analysed only for the purpose of this master thesis. The data will be collected and processed by the students; [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and supervised by supervisor Gorm Kipperberg (professor at University of Stavanger).

As an Informant, we hope to be able to use (only) your name and title in the paper but will absolutely respect your choice for anonymously if wanted. All data collected will of course be handled with absolute care and in compliance with the guidelines from NSD and “personvenloven”. All personal information will be deleted from our system at the completion and hand-in of this master thesis.

#### **Your rights:**

As long as you can be identified in the data-material, you have the right to:

- Assess which personal information is registered for you,
- be able to update your personal information,
- to have your personal information deleted,
- require a copy of your registered personal information (data-portability), and
- send a complaint to “personvernombudet” or “Datatilsynet” of how your personal information was treated.

#### ***Dine rettigheter***

*Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:*

- innsyn i hvilke personopplysninger som er registrert om deg,
- å få rettet personopplysninger om deg,
- få slettet personopplysninger om deg,
- få utlevert en kopi av dine personopplysninger (dataportabilitet), og
- å sende klage til personvernombudet eller Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger.

#### **What give us the right to handle your personal information?**

We only register information about you if we have your consent.

#### ***Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?***

*Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke.*

Assigned from the University of Stavanger (Institutt for medie-, kultur og samfunnsfag), NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS have decided that the treatment of personal information for this master thesis meets the requirements of “personvernregelverket”.

If you have questions, or wish to apply your rights, please contact:

- Students:
  - [REDACTED]; e-mail: [REDACTED] /phone: [REDACTED].
  - [REDACTED]; e-mail: [REDACTED] / phone: [REDACTED].
- Supervisor: Gorm Kipperberg; e-mail: [gorm.kipperberg@uis.no](mailto:gorm.kipperberg@uis.no) / phone: 476 74 829.
- NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS; e-mail: [personverntjenester@nsd.no](mailto:personverntjenester@nsd.no) / phone: 5558 2117.

Kind regards,

Veileder  
Gorm Kipperberg

Master Students  
[REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

---

## Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om master oppgaven " Exploring waste management – a case study of IVAR and a literature synthesis of waste management ", og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

- å gi data til utregning av IVAR sitt karbon budsjett og aktuell informasjon for oppgaven og temaet
- å delta i oppfølgings spørsmål – ved behov
- at jeg blir navngitt som informant til masteroppgaven. Kun navn og tittel blir oppgitt, andre person opplysninger blir følgelig anonymisert og behandlet sådan.

Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet, ca. 31 Oktober 2019.

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(Signert av informant, dato)

Assigned from the University of Stavanger (Institutt for medie-, kultur og samfunnsfag), NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS have decided that the treatment of personal information for this master thesis meets the requirements of "personvernregelverket".

If you have questions, or wish to apply your rights, please contact:

- Students:
  - Eva Marie Østerhus; e-mail: [evamoste@gmail.com](mailto:evamoste@gmail.com) /phone: 908 30 050.
  - Trine S. Brimsøe; e-mail: [trine.brimsoe@gmail.com](mailto:trine.brimsoe@gmail.com) / phone: 995 00 998.
- Supervisor: Gorm Kipperberg; e-mail: [gorm.kipperberg@uis.no](mailto:gorm.kipperberg@uis.no) / phone: 476 74 829.
- NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS; e-mail: [personverntjenester@nsd.no](mailto:personverntjenester@nsd.no) / phone: 5558 2117.

Kind regards,

Veileder  
Gorm Kipperberg

Master Students  
Eva Marie Østerhus and Trine S. Brimsøe



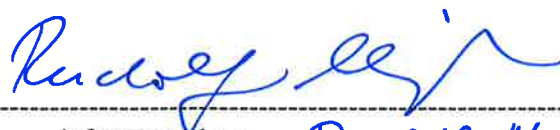
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Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet, ca. 31 Oktober 2019.



10.05.2019

(Signert av informant, dato)

Rudolf Meissner



## Appendix 3 : Data form for literature meta-analysis

1 <sup>st</sup> search : “waste management” in title, “circular economy” in text			
Year of publication	Article Name	Author(s)	HTML
2018	Prioritizing barriers to adopt circular economy in construction and demolition waste management	Mahpour, A.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921344918300260">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921344918300260</a>
2017	Municipal solid waste management and waste-to-energy in the context of a circular economy and energy recycling in Europe	Malinauskaite, J., Jouhara, H., Czajczynska, D., Stanchev, P., Katsou, E., Rostkowski, P., ... Spencer, N.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0360544217319862">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0360544217319862</a>
2016	Waste Management in Germany – Development to a Sustainable Circular Economy?	Nellesab, M., Grünesa, J., & Morschecka, G.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1878029616300901">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1878029616300901</a>
2018	Construction and demolition waste management in China through the 3R principle	Huang, B., Wang, X., Kua, H., Geng, Y., Bleischwitz, R., & Reng, J.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921344917303142">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921344917303142</a>
2018	On the way to ‘zero waste’ management: Recovery potential of elements, including rare earth elements, from fine fraction of waste	Burlakovs, J., Jani, Y., Kriipsalu, M., Vincevica-Gaile, Z., Kaczala, F., Celma, G., ... Klavins, M.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652618307637">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652618307637</a>
2017	An environmental assessment of electricity production from slaughterhouse residues. Linking urban, industrial and waste management systems	Santagata, R., Ripa, M. & Ulgiati, S.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0306261916310145">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0306261916310145</a>
2017	Dynamic visualisation of municipal waste management performance in the EU using Ternary Diagram method	Pomberger, R., Sarc, R. & Lorber, K. E.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X17300181">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X17300181</a>
2017	Expanding roles for the Swedish waste management sector in inter-organizational resource management	Aid, G., Eklund, M., Anderberg, S., & Baas, L.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921344917301064">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921344917301064</a>
2017	Incentivizing secondary raw material markets for sustainable waste management	Schreck, M. & Wagner, J.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X1730363X">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X1730363X</a>
2018	From linear to circular integrated waste management systems: A review of methodological approaches	Cobo, S., Dominguez-Ramos, A., & Irbien, A.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921344917302422">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921344917302422</a>
2017	Collaborative Robots in e-waste Management	Alvarez-de-los-Mozos, E., & Renteria, A.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2351978917303372">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2351978917303372</a>
2017	Greenhouse gas footprint and the carbon flow associated with different solid waste management strategy for urban metabolism in Bangladesh	Nazmul Islam, K. M.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969716327103">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969716327103</a>
2018	Direct and indirect effects of waste management policies on household waste behaviour: The case of Sweden	Andersson, C. & Stage, J.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X18301806">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X18301806</a>
2018	Waste Management of Discarded Cell Phones and Proposal of Material Recovery Techniques	Wansi, E., D'Ans, P., Gonda, L., Segato, T., & Degrez, M.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212827117307783">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212827117307783</a>
2018	The relationship between good environmental practices and financial performance: Evidence from Italian waste management companies	Bartolacci, F., Paolini, A., Quaranta, A. G., & Soverchia, M.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352550918300502">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352550918300502</a>
2016	Landfill taxes and Enhanced Waste Management: Combining valuable practices with respect to future waste streams	Hoogmartens, R., Eyckmans, J., & Van Passel, S.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X16301362">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X16301362</a>
2015	A Danish–Vietnamese partnership for business and technology development in solid waste management	Christensen, D. & Bach, L. T.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921344915301178">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921344915301178</a>
2018	Role of compostable tableware in food service and waste management. A life cycle assessment study	Fieschi, M., & Pretato, U.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X17308760">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X17308760</a>

2017	Life cycle inventory and mass-balance of municipal food waste management systems: Decision support methods beyond the waste hierarchy	Edwards, J., Othman, M., Crossin, E., & Burn, S.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X17305810">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X17305810</a>
2018	Indicator analysis of integrated municipal waste management system. Case study of Latvia	Kavals, E., Klavenieks, K., Gusca, J., & Blumberga, D.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1876610218302431">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1876610218302431</a>
2018	Environmental assessment of microwaves and the effect of European energy efficiency and waste management legislation	Gallego-Schmid, A., Mendoza, J. M. F., & Azapagic, A.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969717331224">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969717331224</a>
2018	Decomposition analysis of food waste management with explicit consideration of priority of alternative management options and its application to the Japanese food industry from 2008 to 2015	Fujii, H., & Kondo, Y.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652618309181">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652618309181</a>
2015	Destined for indecision? A critical analysis of waste management practices in England from 1996 to 2013	Farmer, T. D., Shaw, P. J., & Williams, I. D.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X15001257">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X15001257</a>
2018	Decision making and software solutions with regard to waste management	Burger, C., Kalverkamp, M., & Pehlken, A.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652618328130">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652618328130</a>
2017	Common and Distinctive in Municipal Solid Waste Management in Baltic States	Klavenieks, K. & Blumberga, D.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1876610217321951">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1876610217321951</a>
2018	Assessing factors that influence waste management financial sustainability	Bartolacci, F., Paolini, A., Quaranta, A. G., & Soverchia, M.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X18304823">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X18304823</a>
2018	Modelling solid waste management solutions: The case of Campania, Italy	Di Nola, M. F., Escapa, M., & Ansah, J. P.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X1830360X">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X1830360X</a>
2018	Modular life cycle assessment of municipal solid waste management	Haupt, M., Kägi, T., & Hellweg, S.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X18301776">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X18301776</a>
2018	Environmental and sustainability evaluation of livestock waste management practices in Cyprus	Lijó, L., Frison, N., Fatone, F., González-García, S., Feijoo, G., & Moreira, M. T.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969718310593">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969718310593</a>
2018	Waste management performance in Italian provinces: Efficiency and spatial effects of local governments and citizen action	Agovino, M., D'Uva, M., Garofalo, A., & Marchesano, K.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1470160X18301304">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1470160X18301304</a>
2018	Linking energy scenarios and waste storylines for prospective environmental assessment of waste management systems	Meylan, G., Haupt, M., Duygan, M., Hellweg, S., & Stauffacher, M.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X18305580">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X18305580</a>
2018	Assessment of biowaste losses through unsound waste management practices in rural areas and the role of home composting	Mihai, F. C. & Ingrao, C.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652616317942">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652616317942</a>
2018	Where do islands put their waste? – A material flow and carbon footprint analysis of municipal waste management in the Maltese Islands	Camilleri-Fenech, M., Oliver-Solà, J., Farreny, R., & Gabarrell, X.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652617314853">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652617314853</a>
2017	The role of public communication in decision making for waste management infrastructure	Kirkman, R. & Voulvoulis, N.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0301479716303413">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0301479716303413</a>
2018	The role of environmental organisations on urban transformation: The case of waste management in Esporles (Mallorca)	Weber, G., Calaf-Forn, M., Puig-Ventosa, I., Cabras, I., & D'Alisa, G.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652617319856">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652617319856</a>
2018	SWIMS: A dynamic life cycle-based optimisation and decision support tool for solid waste management	Roberts, K. P., Turner, D. A., Coello, J., Stringfellow, A. M., Bello, I. A., Powrie, W., & Watson, G. V. R.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652618316184">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652618316184</a>
2018	Discourse coalitions in Swiss waste management: gridlock or winds of change?	Duygan, M., Stauffacher, M., & Meylan, G.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X1730805X">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X1730805X</a>
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2018	Moving towards a circular economy: economic impacts of higher material recycling targets	Beccarello, M. and Di Foggia, G.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2214785317323593">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2214785317323593</a>
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2018	The role of energy from waste in circular economy and closing the loop concept – Energy analysis approach	Tomic', T. & Schneider, D. R.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1364032118306750">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1364032118306750</a>
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2017	The need for better measurement and employee engagement to advance a circular economy: Lessons from Biogen's "zero waste" journey	Veleva, V. ScD, Bodkin, G., & Todorova, S. PhD	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652617306315">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652617306315</a>
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2018	Towards a consensus on the circular economy	Prieto-Sandoval, V., Jaca, C., & Ormazabal, M.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652617332146">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652617332146</a>
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2018	Salvaging building materials in a circular economy: A BIM-based whole-life performance estimator	Akanbi, L. A., Oyedele, L. O., Akinade, O. O., Ajayi, A. O., Delgado, M. D., Bilal, M., & Bello, S. A.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652617303609">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652617303609</a>
2018	Exploring the inner loops of the circular economy: Replacement, repair, and reuse of mobile phones in Austria	Wieser, H. & Tröger, N.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652617327798">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652617327798</a>
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2015	A case study of a phosphorus chemical firm's application of resource efficiency and eco-efficiency in industrial metabolism under circular economy	Ma, S., Hu, S., Chen, D., and Zhu, B.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652614011020">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652614011020</a>
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2014	Mode of circular economy in China's iron and steel industry: a case study in Wu'an city	Ma, S., Wen, Z., Chen, J., & Wen, Z.	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652613006719">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652613006719</a>

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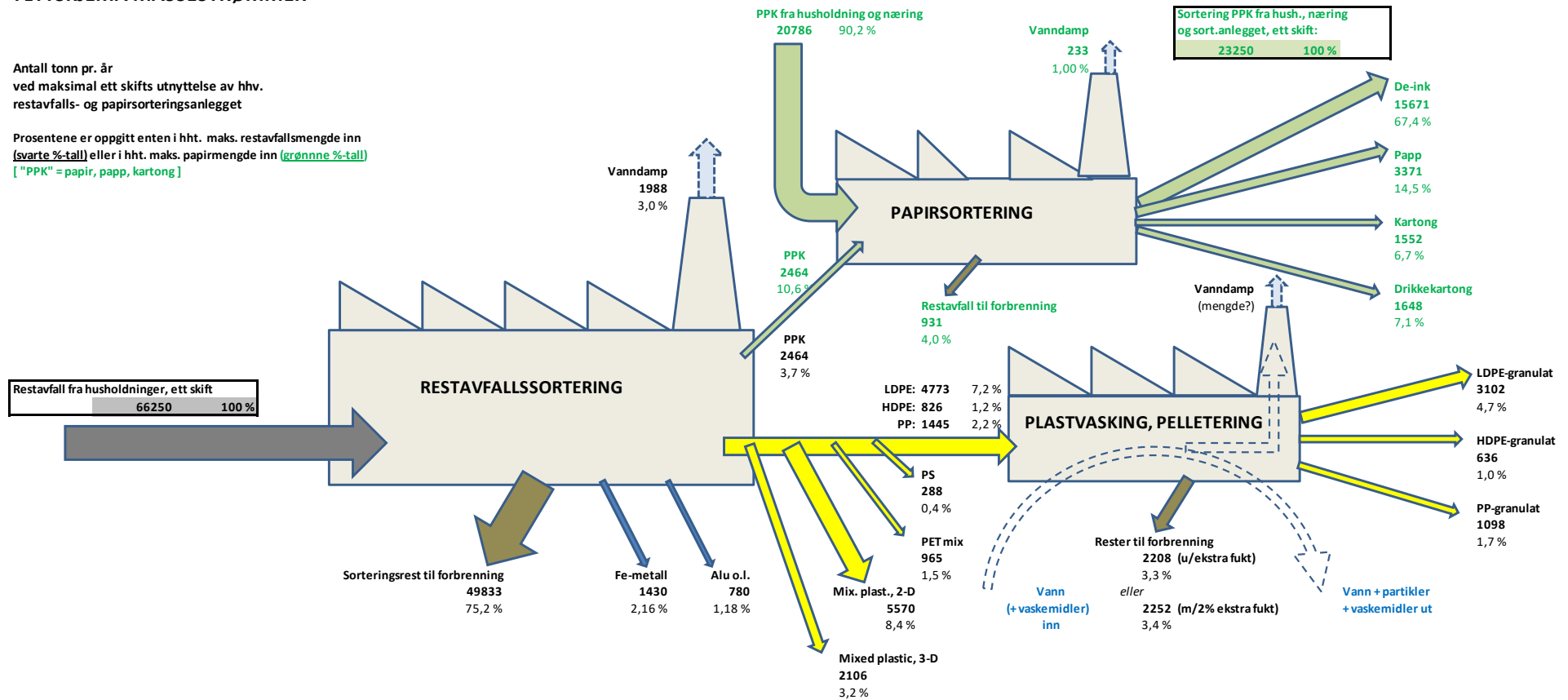


Appendix 4 : IVAR IKS “Flowchart of mass-flows for Forus waste recycle facility”

**IVAR IKS  
FORUS AVFALLSORTERINGSANLEGG  
FLYTSKJEMA MASSESTRØMMER**

Antall tonn pr. år ved maksimal ett skifts utnyttelse av hhv. restavfalls- og papirsorteringsanlegget

Prosentene er oppgitt enten i hht. maks. restavfallsmengde inn (svarte %-tall) eller i hht. maks. papirmengde inn (grønne %-tall) ["PPK" = papir, papp, kartong]



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