

Topic: Circular Economy in Vietnam

Overview

The Circular Economy is increasingly recognised as an important tool to support sustainable development. Globally, countries are developing comprehensive policies and roadmaps to support a circular shift, including in Vietnam. Vietnam has ambitious targets to boost economic activity whilst protecting the environment, with a [goal to reach net zero in 2050](#). The Circular Economy concept is emerging as an important strategy to support these goals by reducing the environmental and social impacts traditionally associated with industrialisation.

In particular, the [National Strategy on Sustainable Consumption and Production of 2021-2030](#) explicitly promotes the application of Circular Economy principles to support a prosperous, resource efficient, and sustainable future. This covers a variety of sectors and focus areas, such as waste management, manufacturing, energy, agriculture, and construction, amongst others. A National Action Plan on Circular Economy is expected to be published in 2024, further augmenting the country's commitment to a circular future.

Despite growing interest in the concept of circularity, there is a plethora of research and evidence gaps. Notably, data availability can be limited, policies may be underdeveloped, and sector-specific insights are lacking. Hence, there is a variety of topics ripe for nuanced exploration under this research call. For CCG, the key themes are energy and transport – both have the potential to benefit from circular transformation. For example, renewable energy is an underlying and cross-cutting principle of the Circular Economy concept; energy efficiency, energy reduction and conservation, and cleaner production and industrial symbiosis are highly relevant to green industrialisation. Circularity can be applied at various stages of the transport value chain: for example, at the manufacturing phase (e.g., through the recycling of inputs); at the consumption phase (e.g., adoption of new business models, such as product service systems); and at the downstream phases (e.g., remanufacturing, battery recycling, etc.). Therefore, there are various opportunities to explore these topics in the Vietnamese context.

Research Questions

The CCG programme seeks to develop interdisciplinary research that can provide evidence to support Vietnam's transition to a Circular Economy, with particular focus on the energy and transport sectors. There are a variety of questions that can be addressed in proposals, including:

1. How can the adoption of Circular Economy strategies and policies help Vietnam achieve its 2050 Net Zero target?
2. What skillsets are required to transition to a Circular Economy in the energy/ transport sectors in Vietnam?
3. How can policy (e.g., industrial, labour, educational) support this shift?
4. How can strategies support equitable development, including for under-represented groups (e.g., women, rural populations, persons with disabilities)?
5. How can modelling tools such as material flow analysis (MFA) and life cycle assessment (LCA) be used to support the transition to a Circular Economy in Vietnam's energy and transport sectors?'

Key Stakeholders

An essential requirement of research funded on this topic is that it is carried out in close cooperation with key stakeholders in Vietnam. This means proposals should also include a clear plan for consultation with stakeholders, working with them from the start to discuss assumptions and methods and to communicating results clearly. Proposals should also include plans for capacity building where appropriate. Stakeholders may include:

- **Government** (e.g., Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment)
- **NGO/ development** (e.g., UNDP Vietnam)
- **Educational institutions** (e.g., universities and scientific institutes)
- **Private-sector** (e.g., local manufacturers and businesses)
- **Private-public** (e.g., Vietnam Circular Economy Hub)