



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES
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Inquiry into referred 2018–19 Annual and Financial Reports ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE 13 November 2019

13 November 2019, TCCS Annual Report Hearings, Ms Orr raised questions on notice in relation to the Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment Annual Report:

1. How do you define "measure" as used on page 11?
2. In your circular economy paper, how did you balance competing environmental concerns, e.g. disposable coffee cups vs energy and water use of washing? (pg. 15)

These questions were provided to the Commissioner on 26 November 2019.

PROFESSOR KATE AUTY: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. How do you define "measure" as used on page 11?

The word 'measure' does not appear on page 11 of the annual report. 'Measure' does appear in other places in the annual report and can mean a multiplicity of things including – regulatory responses, policy design, strategic management practices and/or indicators.

To achieve the circular economy, it will be necessary to rely on a number of levers or measures. No specific recommendations as to 'measures' are made in the circular economy issues paper as these will differ from sector to sector and issue to issue.

The circular economy Issues Paper referred to on page 11 and 15 of the annual report, *Circular#CBR*, was released on 14 November 2019.

The report is available at: <https://www.envcomm.act.gov.au/investigations/circularcbr>

The issues paper provides conceptual analysis of the potential of the circular economy in three demonstration systems.

Circular#CBR refers to the Ellen Macarthur Foundation and European Commission for best practice and key resources for Cities and Governments to transition to the circular economy. Key links include:

- <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/our-work/activities/circular-economy-in-cities>
- https://ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy/pdf/report_implementation_circular_economy_action_plan.pdf
- https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/assets/downloads/CE-in-Cities_Policy-Levers_Mar19.pdf
- https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/assets/downloads/publications/EllenMacArthurFoundation_PolicymakerToolkit.pdf
- https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/assets/downloads/Peterborough_-Case-Study_Mar19.pdf

2. In your circular economy paper, how did you balance competing environmental concerns, eg disposable coffee cups vs energy and water use of washing? (pg. 15)

Balancing competing environmental concerns with other socio-economic matters is a fundamental sustainability challenge. Depending on the problem or question posed, the appropriate methodology for quantitative analysis can be very different.

Triple Bottom Line, Cost Benefit Analysis, Multi Criteria Analysis, Life Cycle Analysis, Marginal Cost Curves, are valid approaches.

The Circular Economy takes a value/supply chain, or systems, approach to ensure whole of life implications are considered on their own and environmental impacts are minimised throughout.



Professor Kate Auty