Aktionsplan nachhaltige öffentliche Beschaffung

Federal Ministry
Agriculture and Forestry, Climate and Environmental Protection, Regions and Water Management
Republic of Austria

BBG BUNDES BESCHAFFUNG

Expert Conference: Shaping Circular Procurement: European Perspectives on Effective Implementation

Spotlight Sessions | Circular Procurement in the European Spotlight: Insights from Policy and Practice

Dr. Gerhard Weiner

07.10.2025

www.nabe.gv.at

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The public sector shows the way!

The Austrian Action Plan for Sustainable Public Procurement (naBe-Aktionsplan)

www.nabe.gv.at

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Why procure sustainably?

Public spending on public works, goods and services

EU*

- approx. **€ 2,45 trill.** annual public procurement volume
- 16 % of GDP

Austria**

- approx. € **70 bio.** annual procurement volume
- 17 % of GDP

- Significant contribution of authorities to **achieving sustainability goals**
- Public procurement is a **key driver for the circular economy** → Incentives for the development of sustainable products and services
- The public sector is particularly prominent in **construction, health and public transport**

* European Comission 2023
** WIFO study on the naBe-Action Plan, 2024

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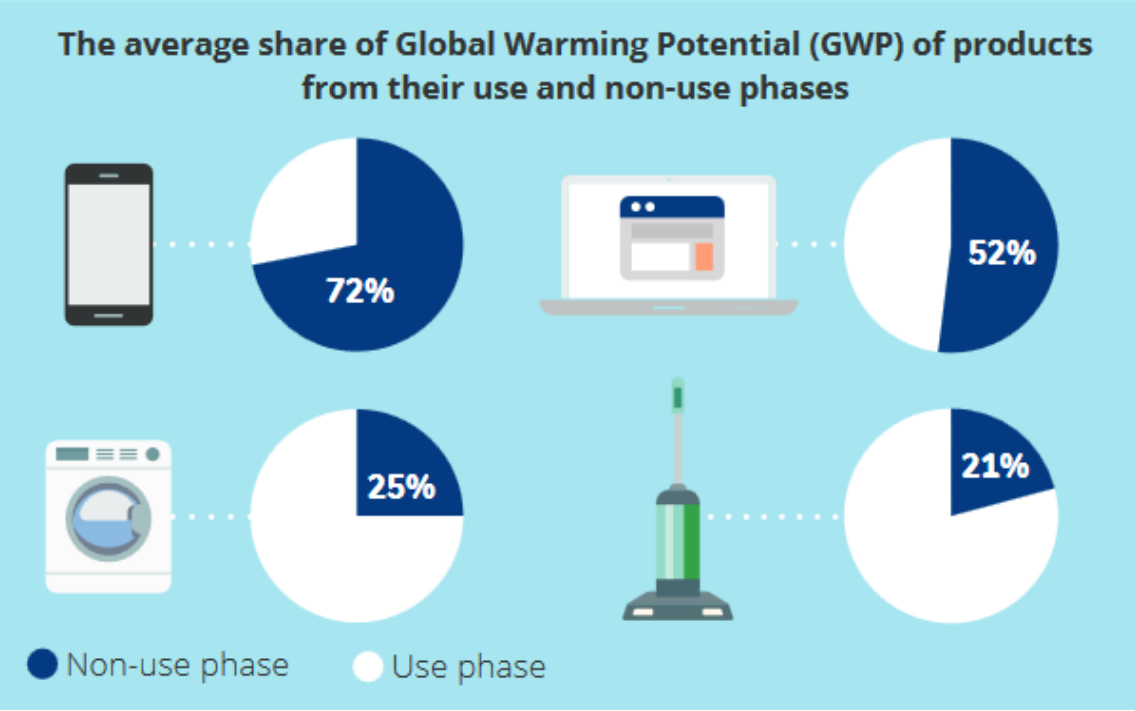
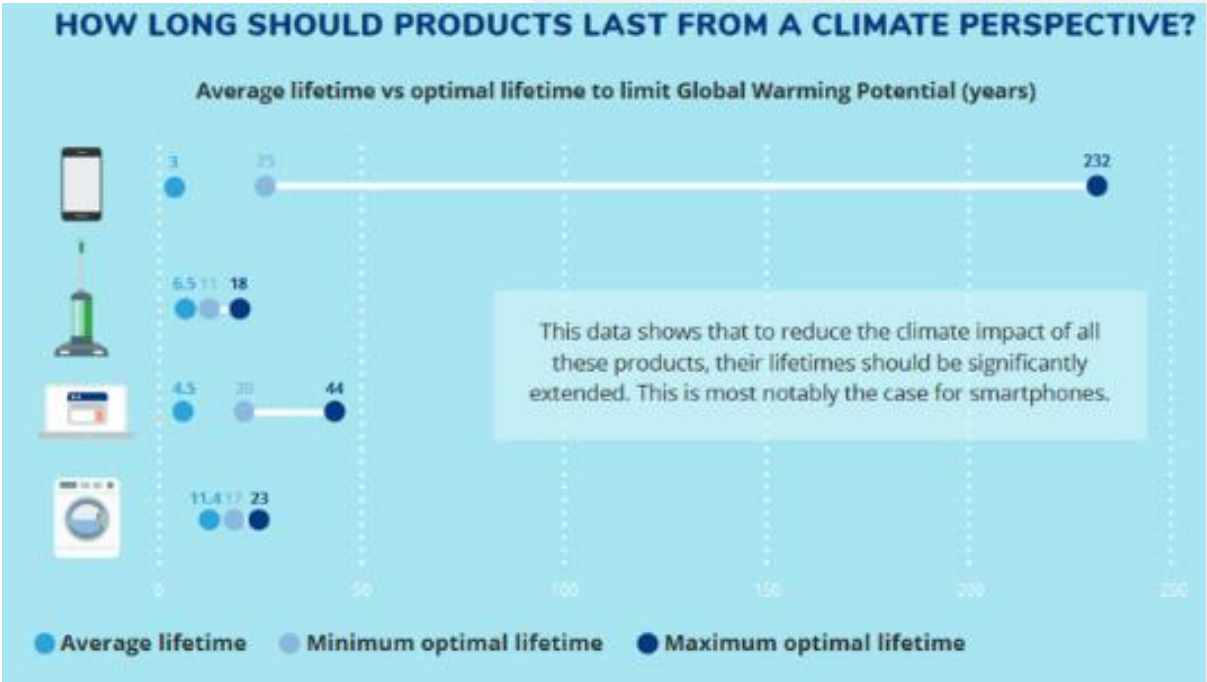
Why green public procurement?





Study by the EEB (European Environment Bureau) from 18.9.2019

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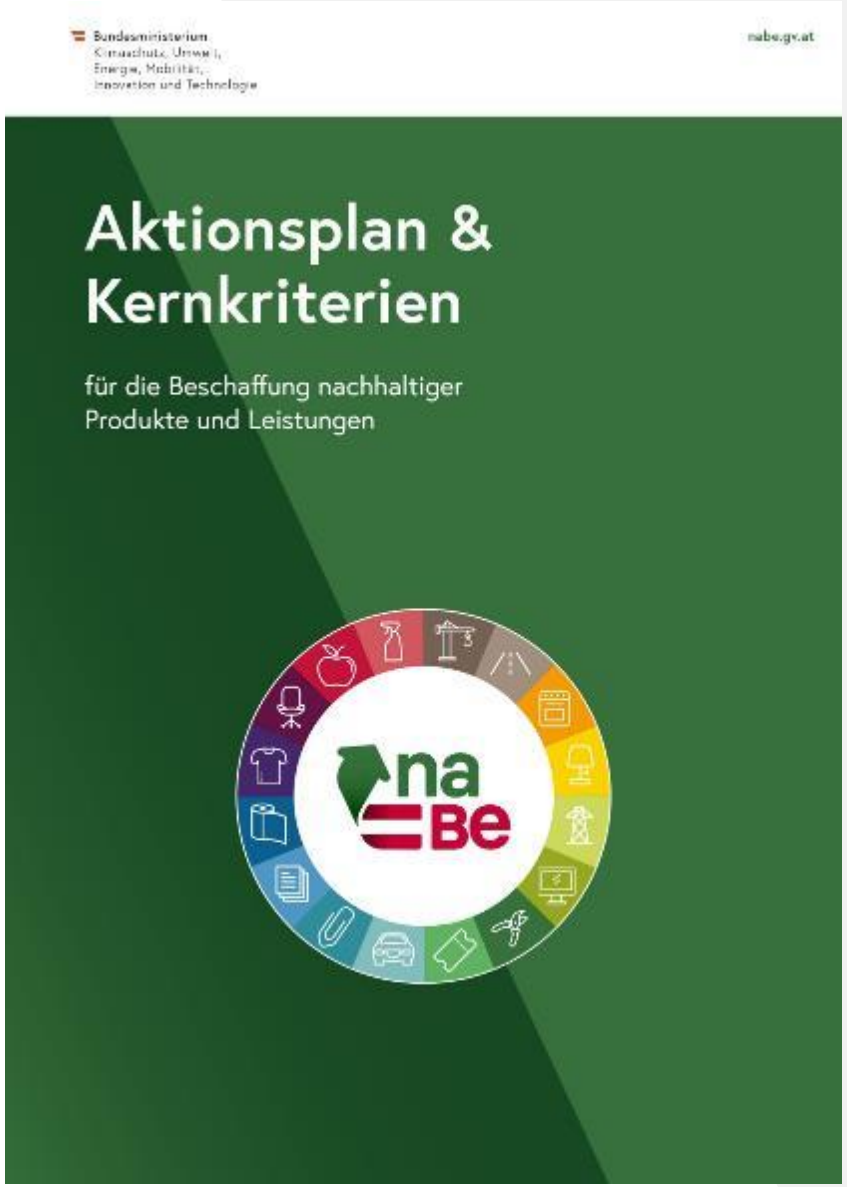
The naBe-Action Plan

- With the **Austrian Action Plan for Sustainable Public Procurement (naBe Action Plan in force since July 1, 2021),** the public administration in Austria is taking important steps towards carbon-neutral administration.
- Specific requirements for environmentally friendly and socially responsible procurement have been defined **for 16 product groups.** This makes it clear for procurers how **sustainability** can be applied in **public procurement procedures.**
- The naBe platform is the first point of contact for all questions regarding the naBe Action Plan
- Contact: **nabe.gv.at | naBe-News | naBe-Plattform**



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The naBe-criteria

Ecological minimum standards for your tenders and procurements

Consumable Products & Events

- Office
- Lamps
- Events
- Food
- Hygiene
- Cleaning
- Paper
- Electricity

Long-lasting Products & Capital Goods

- Electrical appliances
- Textiles
- Vehicles
- Furniture
- Garden
- IT-equipment

Construction

- Structural Engineering
- Civil Engineering

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Bundesministerium
Klimaschutz, Umwelt,
Energie, Mobilität,
Innovation und Technologie

The circular economy strategy

Selection | Procurement references

- Structural and civil engineering:
  - Extending the period of use
  - Reuse, recycling, restoration
- Mobility
  - Battery-regulation
  - Promoting e-vehicles
- Textiles
  - Renewable raw materials, recycled fibers
- ICT
  - Longevity, repairability
- Packaging
  - Reducing volume

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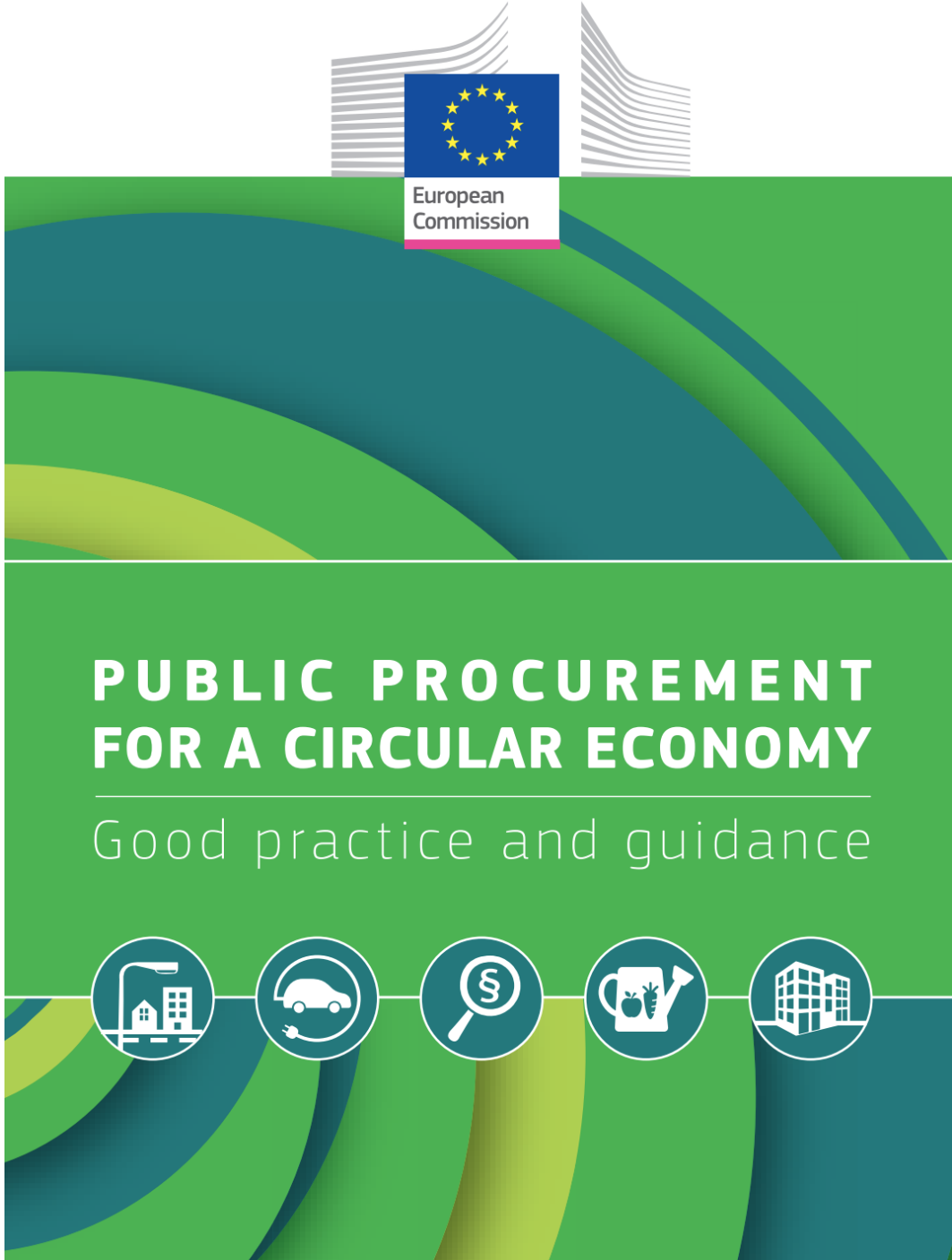
One Definition

‘Circular economy procurement can be defined as the process by which public institutions purchase construction works, goods or services aimed at supporting closed energy and material cycles within supply chains.

The goal is to minimize and ideally avoid negative environmental impacts and the generation of waste over the entire life cycle.’



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(Source: SPP Regions Best Practice Report)

Circular economy procurement models

Contract level	Supplier level	Product level
Product-service-system	Supplier-return-system	Materials in the product can be identified
Public-private partnership/Public-public partnership	Design for disassembly	Products can be disassmbled after use
Collaboration with other organizations for joint use and reuse	Repairability of standard products	Recycable materials
Renting/leasing	External reuse/sale of products	Resource efficiency and total cost of ownership
Supplier return systems, including reuse, recycling, refurbishment and restoration	Internal reuse of products	Recycled materials

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Recycling the 10 Rs into circular criteria

In 2023, the Strategic Procurement Department of Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB) developed a system highlighting how each of the 10Rs can be put into practice through procurement and which techniques can be applied.

News Article - European Commission

Strategies	Description	ÖBB Circular Procurement techniques
Refuse	Make products redundant by abandoning its function or by offering the same function with a radically different, much more sustainable product	Collect information on already existing solutions in the company that can be used instead of buying a new solution
Rethink	Make product use more intense (e.g. by sharing product) or use an innovative product which is more sustainable	• Functional requirement specifications • Trendscouting and market research • Public Procurement promoting innovation
Reduce	Increase efficiency in manufacturing or use by consuming fewer natural resources and materials	Apply criteria referring to the efficiency of the life cycle e.g. Total Cost of Ownership, energy consumption
Reuse	Use products again by handing it on to someone else	• Apply criteria referring to durability of a product to increase the lifespan • Easy to clean and maintain
Repair	Repair defective products so they can be used with their original function	• Apply criteria to evaluate and increase repairability • Set up a service contract • Ensure that property rights allow the production of spare parts, e.g. 3D printing
Refurbish	Restore old products and bring them up to date so they are comparable to new ones	• Buy refurbished products • Install contracts for the refurbishment of existing products • Make sure products can be refurbished, for example if components can be exchanged
Remanufacture	Use parts of discarded products in new products with the same function	• Consider already existing resources in tenders • Ask for separability of components to make remanufacturing possible in the future
Repurpose	Use discarded products or its parts in a new product with a different function	• Consider already existing resources in tenders • Ask for a concept on how the product or parts can be repurposed in the future • Ask for separability of components
Recycle	Process materials to obtain the same (high grade = upcycling) or lower (low grade = downcycling) value	• Include recycled materials or products in tender specifications • Recyclability
Recover	Incineration of materials with energy recovery	• Low residue, chemical-free

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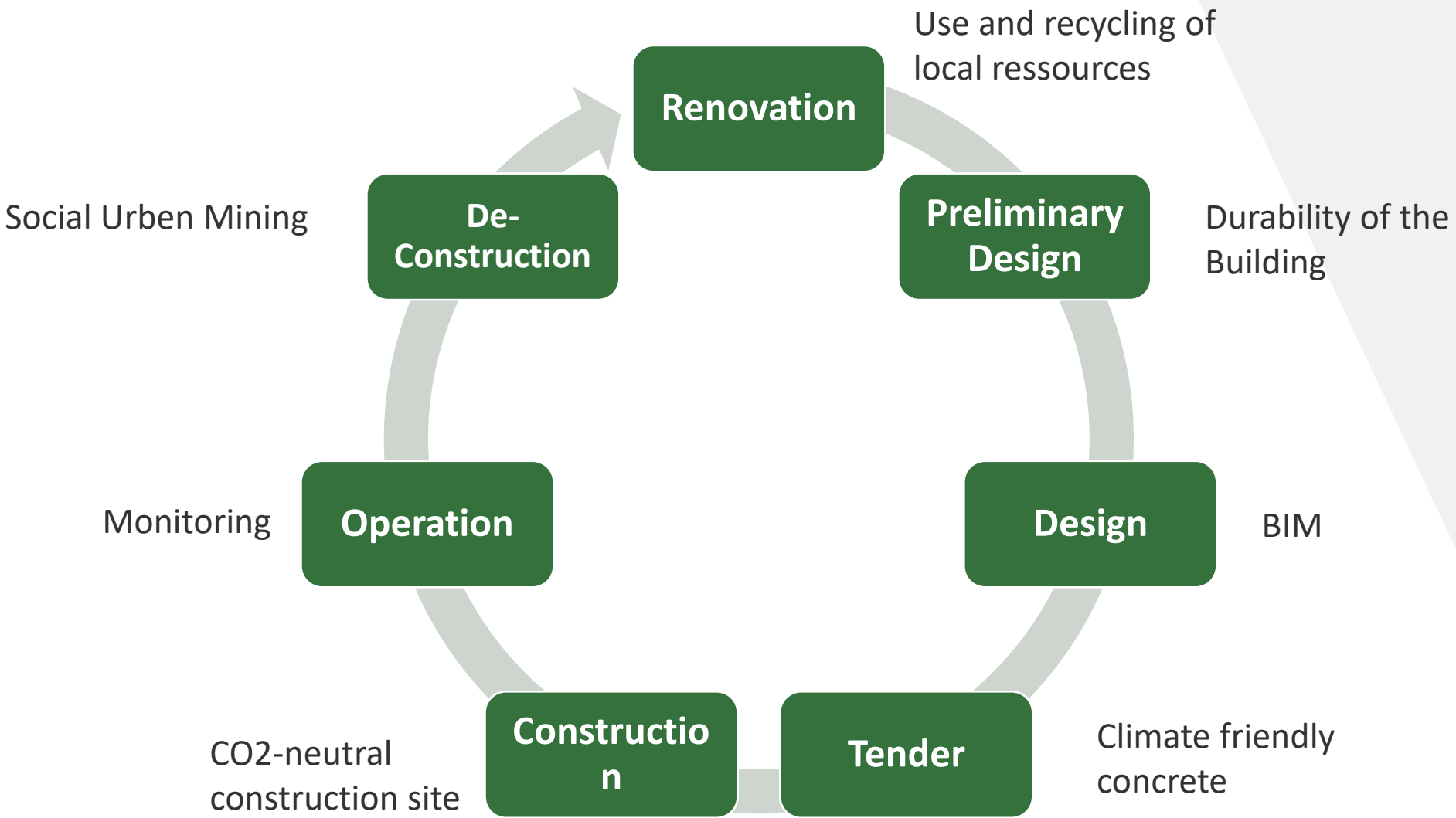
Circular aspects in the naBe criteria

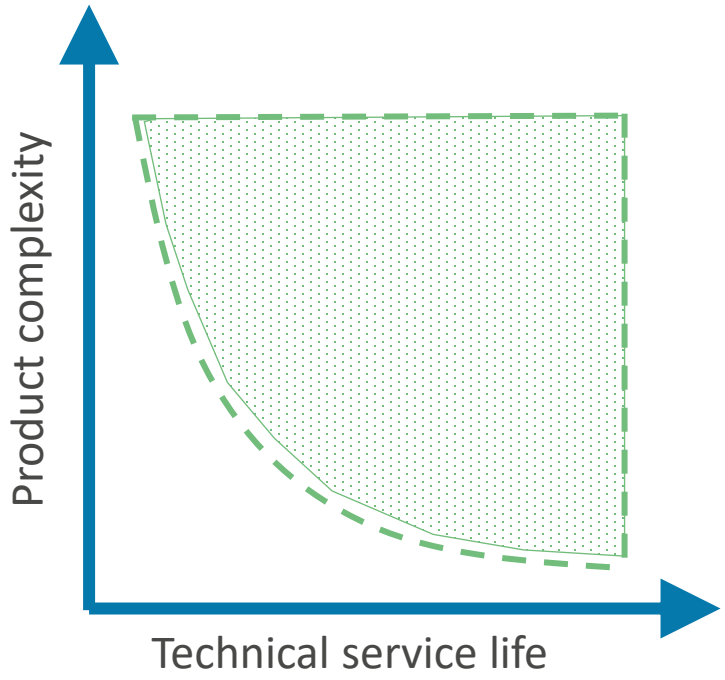
A selection

- **Use of recycled building materials** in construction and civil engineering
- Concepts for the **deconstructability of the building**
- **Reusable packaging systems** for deliveries, e.g., food, furniture, textiles
- Procurement of already refurbished or second-hand products such as **re-use ICT devices**
- **Recycling-friendly design** for ICT devices
- **Repairability and upgradability** of ICT devices
- Passing on old but functional IT devices to recyclers
- **Ensuring the availability of spare parts** for energy-efficient electrical appliances
- Electricity from **renewable energies**
- Measures to **reduce food waste** in community catering
- **Durable** LED lighting
- Copy and hygiene paper made from **recycled fibers**
- **Reusable dishes and containers** for events

Outlook on the Renewed naBe Building Criteria



Which product groups have the greatest potential in your organisation?



Expenditure

- What are the expenses for this category?

Risk

- What is the risk in this category?

Scope

- What opportunities do you have to improve sustainability?

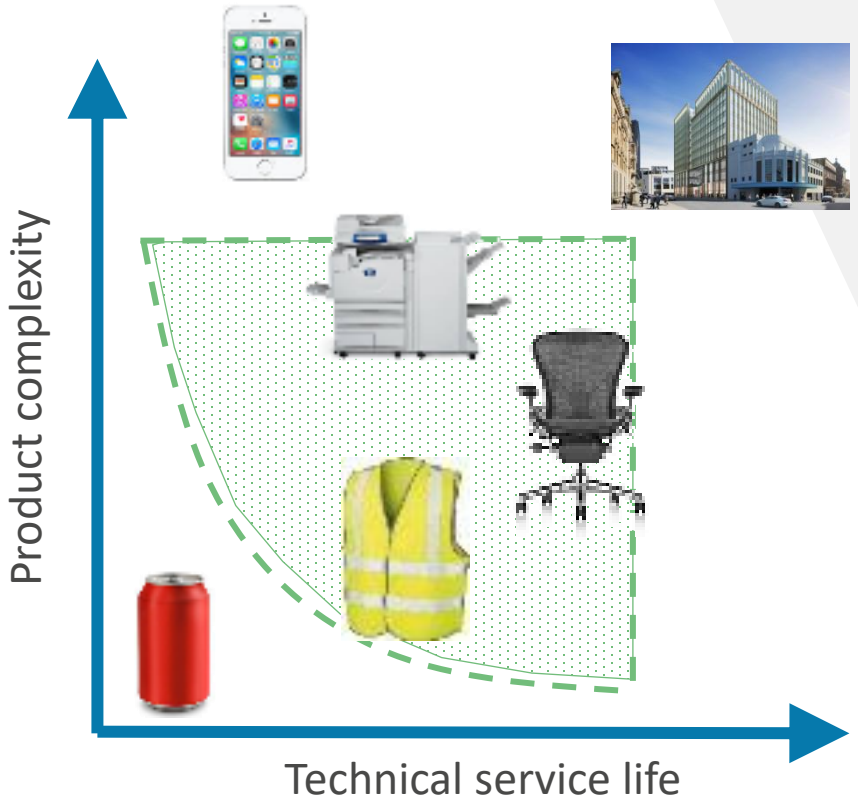
Influence

- What influence do you have on this market and the supply chain?

Use your knowledge you have to evaluate your own product groups with high potential in the table above.

Examples for product complexity vs. technical service life

- Well suited for starting circular procurement:
  - Average product complexity, e.g., furniture
  - Average technical service life e.g., work clothing



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Refurbishment in the equipment initiative – a practical example from the education sector

- Pupils in Year 5 are equipped with digital devices
  Goal: To create the pedagogical and technical prerequisites for IT-supported teaching
- Sustainability is an integral part of the procurement strategy
  Goal: longevity, resource conservation and responsible use of public funds
- Sustainability aspects are systematically considered in procurement, e.g.
  All devices are procured with a four-year guarantee - tailored to school use
  Where technically possible, repairability is an additional criterion
- Refurbished devices were specifically included in the device type catalogue from the outset; procurement procedures are carried out annually
- Appliance exchange - sustainable passing on instead of unused appliances
  Objective of the device exchange: Devices procured by the federal government should remain in the system and continue to be used

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Practical tips: circular IT procurement of the Federal Forestry Office

Four levers for resource conservation and efficiency

- **device selection:** Robust and modular hardware that can be upgraded and repaired is favoured. Standardised device pools simplify internal distribution.
- **needs-based equipment:** standards define which professional groups need which devices. Over-equipment is avoided, saving costs and resources.
- **extend service life:** IT equipment is used for as long as possible by upgrading it and passing it on internally. Conscious use by employees is also encouraged.
- **sustainable reuse:** devices that no longer meet requirements are used as pool or replacement devices or passed on professionally via refurbishment partners.

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