The Place of Waste: Changing Business Value for the Circular Economy

Last Modified on 29/03/2019 10:50 am CET

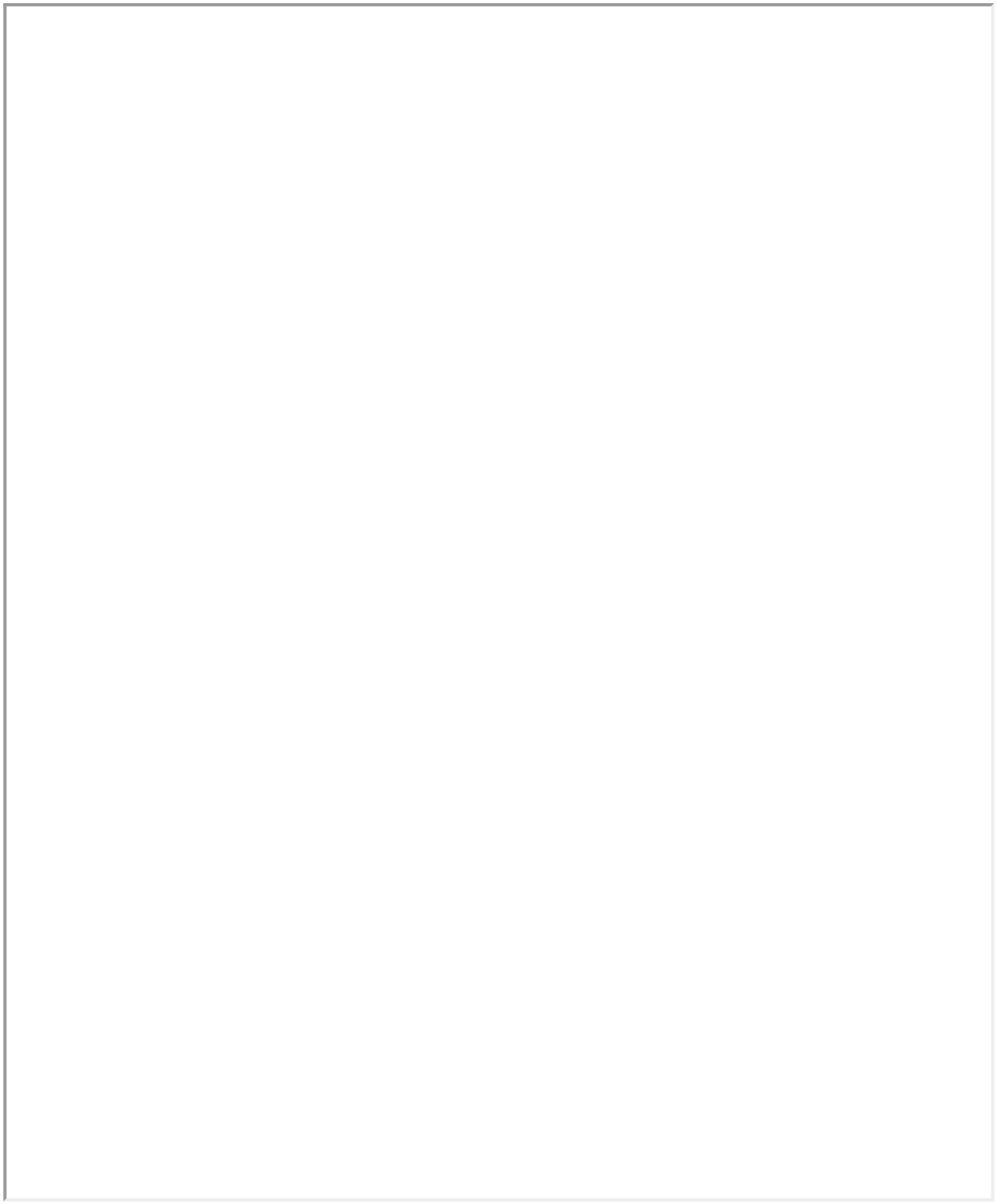
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Date of publish: July 2018

Why did we conduct this research?

This research identifies exemplar business organizations that had each changed their business models to resolve the tension of waste as a burden and/or resource. Synthesizing these cases, the paper found these organizations applied systems thinking to reframe their product and service offerings and developed material circular flows in their business models

Key findings:

- Ecological sustainability principles underpinning the linked discourses of systems thinking and the Circular Economy conceptualized waste as a resource, viewed as intrinsically valuable.
- Waste conceptualized as a burden within the system was simultaneously viewed as a resource as it strategically became a new income-generating stream because firms identified new agents or products in their production and consumption systems for which this waste was now a valuable resource.
- Reconceptualization of waste as a resource triggered explicit strategies of disruptive innovation to existing supply chains in several of our case organizations that consolidated the implementation of their new business models based on Circular Economy logic and in one instance created a new recycling standard of practice for their industry.



Reference:

Perey, R., Benn, S., Agarwal, R., & Edwards, M. (2018). The place of waste: Changing business value for the circular economy. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, *27*(5), 631-642.