



## Circular Economy Webinar

### Session 5 Summary: Eliminating the Idea of Waste with the TerraCycle Global Foundation

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**Speaker:** James Scott, Executive Director Global, TerraCycle Global Foundation, Thailand

**About TerraCycle Global Foundation:** The TerraCycle Global Foundation is dedicated to addressing waste challenges, particularly in marine environments by implementing solutions for waste prevention, collection, and recycling.

#### Key Takeaways

1. **80% of marine pollution originates in the waterways and canals of cities and towns.** By collecting plastics closer upstream in canals TerraCycle reduces the amount of plastic waste entering the marine environment.
2. **The foundation collects various types of waste from canals in Bangkok, including plastics, bottles, toys, appliances, and clothing.** They employ manual collection methods and use specialized devices to aggregate and trap the waste.
3. **TerraCycle achieves zero landfill waste by recycling 100% of the materials they collect.** The collected waste is meticulously sorted into distinct categories to enhance recycling and maximize material value. Anything categorized as non-recyclable undergoes conversion into Waste to Energy.
4. **The foundation faces challenges in recycling certain materials, such as high-value and low-value waste.** They aim to create more value with recycled materials and improve the logistics and cost of processing. They also aim to change behaviors and promote sustainable waste management practices through community engagement, education, and partnerships with organizations like WWF.
5. **The foundation plans to expand its waste collection system in Bangkok by launching new projects,** such as installing recycling stations along canals to make waste management more accessible to communities.
6. **To address waste-related issues at community level, it is important to engage and involve the community directly in developing and implementing solutions.** TerraCycle works directly with community leaders to design programs that most benefit the community and offer employment



opportunities.

7. **TerraCycle focuses on creating jobs and empowering waste pickers by providing them full-time employment and fair wages.** They aim to demonstrate that sustainable practices can be a viable source of income and encourage positive, environmentally conscious behavior.
8. **TerraCycle collaborates with brands to develop sustainable practices.** For example, they helped Pañpuri, a local company in Thailand, set up in-store recycling and worked with social media influencers to educate customers on recycling their products effectively. Pañpuri experienced a 20-30% increase in e-commerce sales through their partnership with TerraCycle's recycling program. This approach allows brands to maintain customer satisfaction while becoming more sustainable.
9. **Another initiative brands can consider is a voluntary extended producer responsibility (EPR) program.** For every purchase customers make, the foundation commits to recycling an equivalent amount of plastic. TerraCycle strongly advocates for EPR, which entails brands assuming responsibility for the complete life cycle of their products. This approach encourages brands to embrace various sustainable models and empowers customers to make environmentally conscious choices while enjoying their products.
10. **TerraCycle is working towards becoming plastic certified,** which involves third-party verification of their activities. They are registering with Verra to earn plastic offset credits, where companies purchase credits in a marketplace to offset their plastic footprint. These credits will be awarded for their current work in collecting and processing river waste (including plastic) in the Lat Phrao canal communities of Bangkok. The sale of these credits will allow TerraCycle to continue serving the community and also expand its impact. While plastic credits are not a complete solution, they bridge the gap between a brand's current practices and their sustainability goals, eventually pushing them to innovate and reduce plastic usage.

[Watch the Recording here.](#)