

# Ecology: What nature says from CIRCULAR REPUBLIC Festival 2025

Key Learnings

## Regeneration Rebuilds What Circularity Can't

Circular strategies reduce waste, but they do not reverse ecological damage already done. Environmental damage is compounding fast, resource productivity is declining, and six out of nine planetary boundaries have already been exceeded. The earth needs regeneration to actively rebuild degraded systems rather than just slow their depletion. Sustainability can be achieved by pairing circular models with regenerative practices that restore soil, biodiversity, and resource cycles.

## Inequality Limits Cooperation

The richest 10% take over 40% of income and emit far more than the poorest half, who are responsible for just 10% of lifestyle-related emissions. Material use and emissions remain concentrated in the Global North, while many people in the Global South still lack access to basic resources. These disparities weaken trust, stall climate negotiations, and undermine resource efficiency goals. Designing for sufficiency, reducing overconsumption while improving access where needed, help promoting both circularity and global equity.

## Climate Risks Remain Disconnected From Strategy

At 1.5°C of warming, the global economy is already losing an estimated 3% of GDP annually. This number rises to over 10% at 3°C, with some countries facing even greater losses. Yet climate and resource risks are still treated as a side topic in business planning. Incorporating climate risk into long-term planning through investment cases, material sourcing, and operational decisions, can help reduce exposure to escalating costs that comes with climate change.

## Circularity Needs Structural Support

Many circular businesses have already done what is feasible under current conditions, but further progress stalls when incentives, regulations and systems continue to reward linear operations. In 2022, 7% of global GDP was allocated to fossil fuel subsidies, which is nearly twice the estimated 2-4% of global income needed to invest in a better future. To shift direction, those shaping policies and budgets need to be held accountable for what they're incentivizing, and what they're not.

**Listen to the full episode here:**

<https://circularity.fm/ecology-what-nature-says-circular-republic-festival-2025/>

