



## **Incubate, Measure and Amplify: The Circulate Initiative Launches Strategy to End Plastic Pollution and Build Thriving Circular Economies**

***The Incubation Network developed with SecondMuse is The Circulate Initiative's flagship program, supporting innovators across South and Southeast Asia and creating the conditions they need to succeed.***

Oslo, Norway, October 23, 2019 – Today at the 2019 Our Ocean Conference, Circulate Capital, the investment management firm dedicated to incubating and financing companies and infrastructure that prevent ocean plastic in South and Southeast Asia (SSEA), introduced The Circulate Initiative (TCI), a new nonprofit organization dedicated to ending ocean plastic pollution and building thriving, inclusive economies. TCI will focus on three areas – the incubation, measurement and amplification of new circular economy, waste management and recycling solutions that will eliminate ocean plastic and create economic and social benefits. The introduction took place at the Our Ocean side-event “Science, Policy and Finance to solve Ocean Plastic”, co-hosted by Circulate Capital, The Circulate Initiative, Ocean Conservancy, and the National Geographic Society.

Circulate Capital founded TCI in response to Circulate Capital's on-the-ground assessment in South and Southeast Asia, which identified several factors that hinder the development of efficient, sustainable and investable circular waste management and recycling supply chains in South and Southeast Asia. These factors include a shortage of investable ventures, fragmented non-profit and community initiatives, and complex policy and regulatory frameworks.

“Investment and philanthropic capital are both needed to build the systems required to turn waste into value and that will attract investors while generating positive environmental and socio-economic impacts. As we defined our investment program, we recognized the need to strengthen the pipeline of opportunities in the circular economy in South and Southeast Asia for all investors.” explained Rob Kaplan, Founder and CEO of Circulate Capital. “The combined efforts of Circulate Capital and The Circulate Initiative and our other partners will increase the quality and quantity of investable opportunities for all investors while also demonstrating that investments in ocean plastic solutions can deliver financial returns. Our common goal is to catalyze the billions of dollars needed to solve the ocean plastic problem.”

Kaplan added: “In addition to fostering more incubation mechanisms, we must develop significantly more accurate ways to measure the amount of plastic going into the ocean as well as the impact of our interventions so we can ultimately attract more investment dollars to the sector. Finally, we need to amplify the success stories and exciting work going on in this space to attract new entrepreneurs and to encourage the development of new investable ventures.”

Backed by philanthropic, government and corporate partners, The Circulate Initiative is a U.S. registered 503(c)(3) organization. Former Managing Director of International Initiatives at Ocean Conservancy, Susan Ruffo, was appointed Executive Director.

TCI's flagship program will be The Incubation Network, an initiative originally launched in the fall of 2018 in partnership with SecondMuse. The Incubation Network is dedicated to accelerating solutions to prevent ocean plastic pollution in SSEA by supporting innovators across the region and creating the conditions they need to succeed. This includes developing, promoting, and investing in innovative technologies, business models and entrepreneurs. The Incubation Network will create a connected network of innovators, investors, civil society organisations, and government leaders across SSEA that will collectively design and deliver programs that drive investment, innovation, and partnerships for inclusive and gender-responsive waste management and circular economy solutions.

"Ocean plastic is a systems problem that requires comprehensive systems solutions. A critical piece of the puzzle is stopping the flow of plastic before it ever reaches the ocean by improving waste collection and recycling. TCI does this by supporting entrepreneurs and ventures and building inclusive economies that drive and support the circular economy, from improving overall enabling conditions to mentoring individual entrepreneurs," highlighted Susan Ruffo, TCI's Executive Director.

Susan Ruffo also announced partners of The Incubation Network. "Today we are proud to announce that some of the best, most innovative business incubators and accelerators in South and Southeast Asia are joining The Incubation Network to help provide better opportunities for startups, entrepreneurs and innovators from around the world to tackle ocean plastic". The Incubation Network's partners include:

- McKinsey.org (Global)
- Impact Hub (Asia Pacific)
- Ocean Plastic Prevention Accelerator (Indonesia)
- InOff Plastic (Indonesia)
- Climate Collective (India)
- xchange (Philippines)
- Circular Design Lab (Thailand)

"We are excited to announce members of The Incubation Network today. Together with a range of other stakeholders from the public, civil society and private sectors, these partners have joined us on the path to support entrepreneurs and innovators to scale solutions aimed at stopping plastic from entering the ocean. Over the next five years we will see a seismic shift in the global narrative from Asia being seen as the source of ocean plastic, to Asia being seen as incubating the solutions to ocean plastic," said Simon Baldwin, Director of The Incubation Network at SecondMuse.

For more information on The Incubation Network, please visit its website: [www.incubationnetwork.com](http://www.incubationnetwork.com)

### **About [The Circulate Initiative](#)**

The Circulate Initiative (TCI) is a charitable organization founded to reduce the amount of plastic leaking into the ocean by incubating, measuring and amplifying solutions that advance the circular economy and improve waste management and recycling systems while promoting equity and economic prosperity. Funded by philanthropic, government and corporate partners, TCI will provide entrepreneurs, policy makers, and investors with the knowledge and skills they need to create and sustainably fund and operate plastic waste-reducing, inclusive, circular economies in emerging markets. TCI's goal is to

support innovative, inclusive and sustainable waste management and recycling solutions through education, capacity building and technical assistance. In addition, TCI works to develop universal methods for measuring the impact of investments in the sector, and to share success stories and lessons learned across all stakeholders. TCI is a U.S. registered 503(c)(3) organization.

#### **About [Circulate Capital](#)**

Circulate Capital is an investment management firm dedicated to incubating and financing companies and infrastructure that prevent ocean plastic. We focus on the prevention of mismanaged plastic waste in countries located in South and Southeast Asia, regions that contribute disproportionately to ocean plastic pollution primarily because they often lack the critical waste infrastructure to manage the problem. We were created in collaboration with Closed Loop Partners and Ocean Conservancy, and our founding investors which include PepsiCo, Procter & Gamble, Dow, Danone, Unilever and The Coca-Cola Company, in addition to our latest investor, Chevron Phillips Chemical Company LLC. We are also supported by a blended finance partnership with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and many other leading consumer product goods and chemical companies, intergovernmental organizations and associations including 3M, American Chemistry Council, Kimberly-Clark, Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA) and the World Plastics Council.

#### **About [SecondMuse](#)**

For the past 10 years, SecondMuse has collaborated with visionary governments, corporations, foundations and startups to build 21st-century economies. Current programs include NYCEDC's [Futureworks](#), the [M-Corps](#) cleantech manufacturing program with NYSERDA, [The Incubation Network](#) with Circulate Capital to battle ocean plastics, and NASA's International [Space Apps Challenge](#). To learn more about SecondMuse, visit [secondmuse.com](http://secondmuse.com) or join SecondMuse on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

#### **Media contact:**

Cindy Stoller  
Confluence Partners  
917-331-0418  
[cstoller@confluencepartners.com](mailto:cstoller@confluencepartners.com)