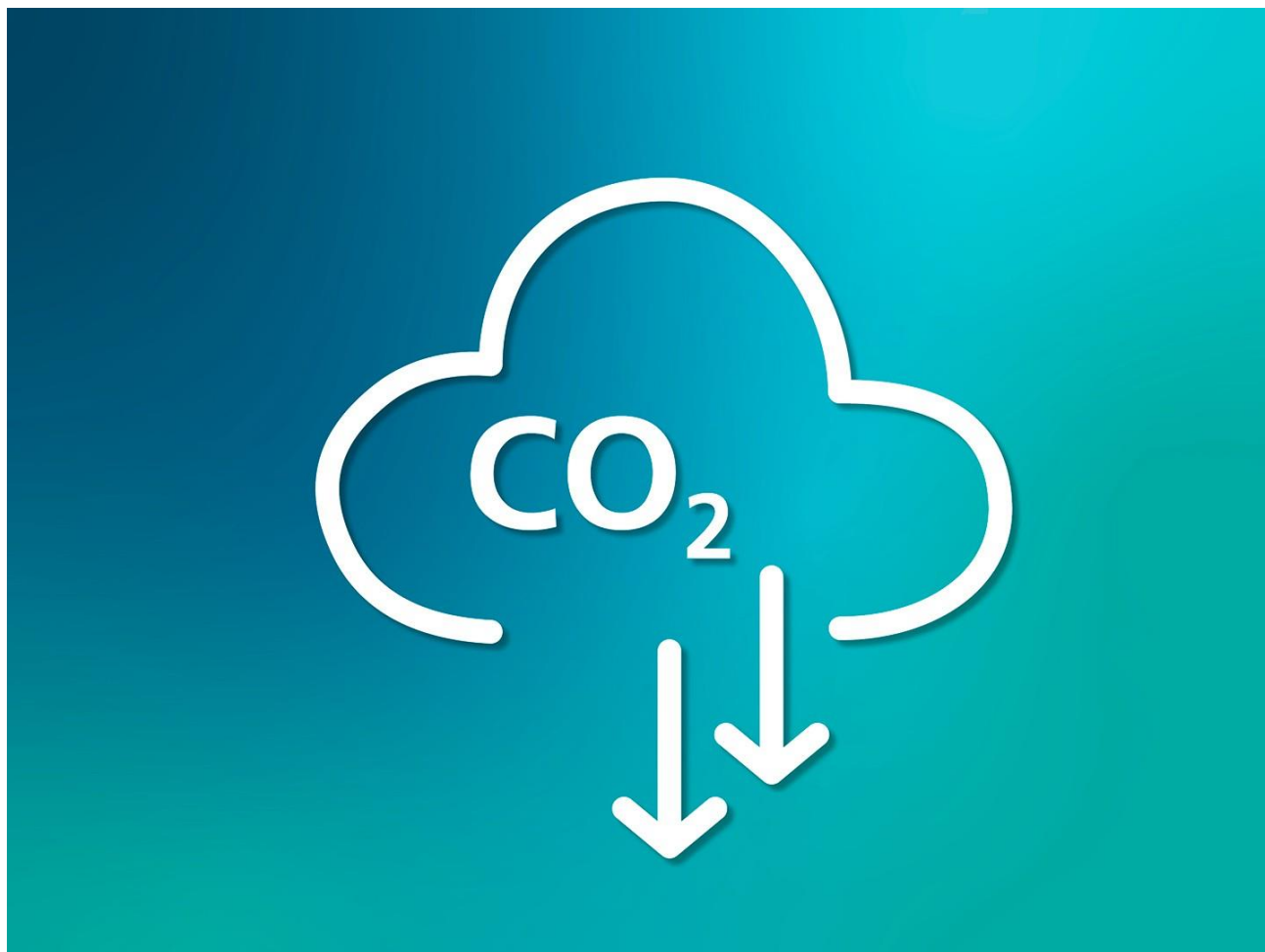




**Recycling protects resources. This is confirmed by the latest study, which Fraunhofer UMSICHT prepared on behalf of Interzero. In 2023, the circular economy service provider avoided a total of 1.2 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions by recycling about 2.5 million tonnes of recyclable materials. At the same time, Interzero, together with its customers, was able to save over 11.1 million tonnes of primary resources.**

To ensure that the transformation to a circular economy is successful, new cycles must also be established for material groups that have so far been given little consideration.



Recycling can avoid large quantities of greenhouse gas emissions. © Fraunhofer UMSICHT

The recycling of raw materials is an effective lever for climate protection and ensures that Germany and Europe remain future-proof as places to live and do business. The study 'resources SAVED by recycling' proves that: Interzero was able to avoid a total of 1.2 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions in 2023 by recycling around 2.5 million tonnes of recyclable materials. At the same time, Interzero and its customers saved over 11.1 million tonnes of primary resources. Fraunhofer UMSICHT has been monitoring the environmental

impact of recycling for Interzero for more than 15 years. The research institute's annual life cycle assessment proves the sustainable impact of recycling. 'On the one hand, our studies provide a strategic basis for decision-making for sustainable action, and on the other hand, we also offer expertise in the process of transformation to a circular economy,' explains Dr. Markus Hiebel, Head of Sustainability and Participation at Fraunhofer UMSICHT.



Francois le Nguyen, unsplash

### **Textile recycling not yet well established**

A complete transformation to a circular economy must include all material groups. Unlike packaging recycling, for example, textile recycling is still in its infancy: around 92 million tonnes of textiles are thrown away every year worldwide. So far, however, only one per cent of the material stream goes into fibre-to-fibre recycling and thus back into the production cycle.

Time is of the essence, because new EU regulations such as the separate collection requirement from 2025 or the planned extended producer responsibility (EPR) for textiles, as well as the German government's National Circular Economy Strategy (NKWS), are increasing the pressure to act.

'When it comes to textiles as valuable materials, it is clear what enormous ecological potential lies in recycling – and why it is imperative to promote the circular transformation of the economy at all levels', says Dr Axel Schweitzer, Chairman and Shareholder of Interzero. 'This applies in particular to recyclable materials that are not yet consistently recycled. We want to work with the industry to close the textile loop and use our experience as an established system service provider to develop a holistic concept for take-back, sorting and recycling,' emphasises Dr. Axel Schweitzer.

Plastics are an important component of textiles. Due to their property profile, plastics in particular are very important for the German economy and are being examined comprehensively in the Fraunhofer Cluster of Excellence Circular Plastics Economy CCPE, which is coordinated by Fraunhofer UMSICHT. Whether bioplastics, additives used for this purpose, compounding, or mechanical and chemical recycling, the Fraunhofer CCPE combines the expertise of six Fraunhofer institutes and industrial partners for the transition from a linear to a circular plastics economy. The entire life cycle of plastic products is considered.



Graphic: OpenClipart-Vectors auf Pixabay

*Sources: Fraunhofer-Institut für Umwelt-, Sicherheits- und Energietechnik UMSICHT / Interzero*