PROJECT IMPACT REPORT

WHAT IS CIRCULAR CAFES?

Circular Cafes is an industry based approach to building and supporting the circular economy in the Northern Rivers.

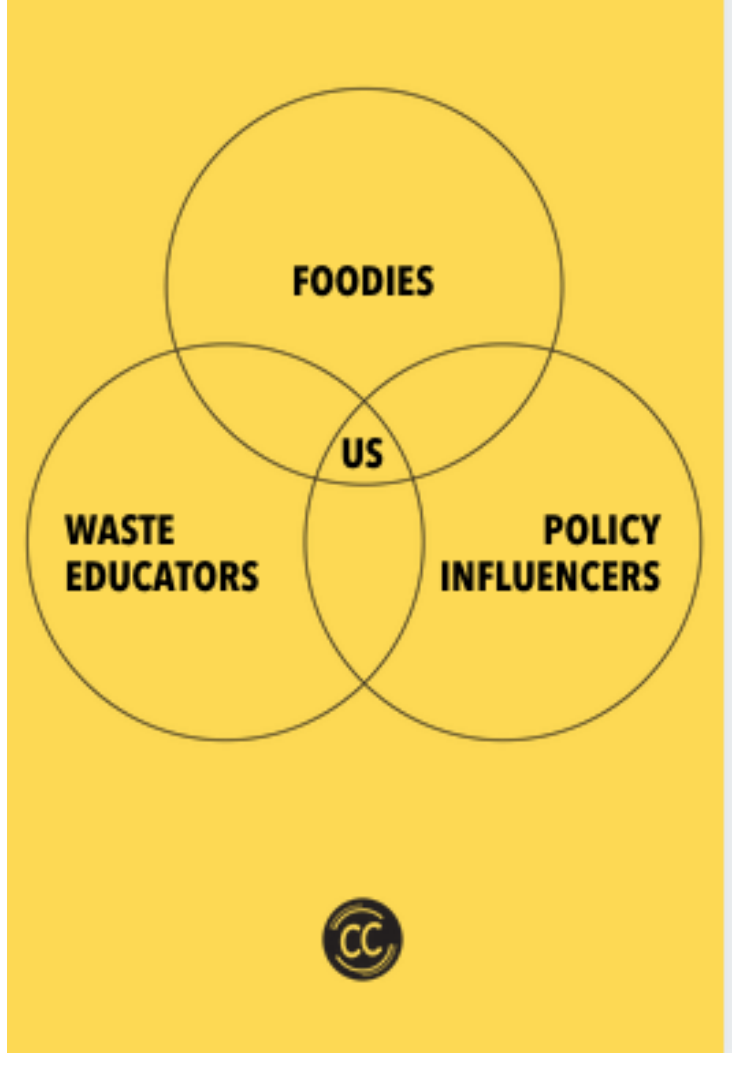
Our aim is to work as a powerful collective to significantly influence how business is done in our region. Helping to redefine the current business model, to one that reaps the benefits of a regenerative circular economy.

WHO ARE WE?

The Circular Cafes project is a collaboration between Tweed Shire, Clarence Valley and Ballina Councils, with North East Waste's Circulate Program.

We worked with stakeholders across the region to deliver the program, drive demand for services and capacity build within our communities.

Stage One of the project was funded by the NSW EPA through the Bin Trim program.



WHY CAFES?

They are close to our hearts

Employing over 8000 people in the Northern Rivers region, food businesses are significant contributors to the regional economy.

One of the most adaptable , innovative and agile industries, cafes are influencers of consumer behaviour and a daily touch point for many people.

Many food businesses are looking to manage their impact, both in their immediate community and also along their supply chains and distribution channels.

BY WORKING TOGETHER
WITH BUSINESS, OUR MEMBER
COUNCILS, AND WASTE SERVICE
PROVIDERS

OUR GOAL

WAS TO DIVERT 726 TONNES OF
FOOD WASTE FROM LANDFILL
WITHIN 12 MONTHS

Circular CAFES

THE OPPORTUNITY:

Make taking action easy

- To support business with effective waste solutions.
- Provide them with waste avoidance education.
- Identify opportunities for circularity.
- Support long term behaviour change and demonstrate the business case for avoiding waste.
- Drive a substantial reduction of food waste to landfill.

THE OUTCOME:

WE WORKED WITH 100 food businesses

KAREN FROM SHINY BREW, HOLDING A REPURPOSED TETRAPAK AS A CUP TRAY WITH HER HUSKEE CUPS.

TO:

SAVE

895 TONNES

OF RESOURCES FROM LANDFILL

RE-CIRCULATE

348 tonnes

OF WASTED FOOD INTO LOCAL COMPOST SYSTEMS

TRIAL

8

CUP SWAP PROGRAMS

IMPLEMENT OVER **100** WASTE ACTION PLANS

CAPACITY BUILDING ACROSS COUNCILS AND WASTE SERVICE PROVIDERS TO BETTER SERVICE BUSINESS NEEDS.

BY PROVIDING PRACTICAL BUSINESS SUPPORT

- **The opportunity for a free 12 month weekly food and organics service.**
- **Source separation bin, compostable liners, signage and point of sale material**
- **Intensive support from Council educators, and circular cafes team.**

Plus the Circular Cafe Toolkit for Food Business, providing education about preferred packaging, single use plastic avoidance, take home leftovers, sustainable purchasing and an introduction to the Your Business is Food project.

IN THE TWEED

We engaged 24 businesses and diverted 76 tonnes of food waste back into compost.

Clive trialed an innovative solider fly method to reduce waste in the business and persisted to access fogo service for his business

Jeanie-Rose took on a new food and organics service and now has close to zero food waste to landfill

Michelle was able to reduce the amount of waste bins needed by her business and trail a new cup swap system

IN BALLINA

We engaged 16 businesses and diverted 50 tonnes of food waste back into compost.

Victoria and Antoine had already implemented sustainability initiatives into their business, but the extra service Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) service delivered as part of the Circular Cafés program, has ensured that 100% of unavoidable food waste and coffee grounds are being recycled, diverting food waste from landfill and into the Council compost program

As Antoine explained, “It feels really good knowing that we are managing our business this way, knowing that we are keeping food waste out of landfill.”

“This has been really easy for us, we think all food businesses should be taking part and taking responsibility”’ Victoria added.

“We also encourage our customers to stay in the café and enjoy their food,” said Victoria. “That way we can avoid the use of single use packaging, and also make sure any leftovers go straight in the FOGO bin.”

IN THE CLARENCE VALLEY

We engaged 41 businesses and diverted 140 tonnes of food waste back into compost.

Robbie implemented Circular Cafes into all of his businesses and is regenerative farming to close the loop on food

Laurence took on a new food and organics service and now has zero food waste to landfill

Sanctus Brewing tapped into the Bintrim rebates to help them create worm farms to manage their food waste.

WHAT DID WE LEARN?

Businesses need a LOT of support to normalise and effectively manage food waste diversion in their business.

For every **60 kilograms** of **wasted food** resources saved from landfill, or approximately 1x 240 litre bin lift, business will save over 3 tonnes of food waste going to landfill every year. This is the equivalent of **5 tonnes of carbon emissions** or 1.45 years of electricity for one household!

Source:https://watchmywaste.com.au/food-waste-greenhouse-gas-calculator/

WALKING THE TALK

Not only did we kick start the circular economy amongst our business community, we also built it into this project!

How?

Kitchen bins were sourced from recycled buckets where possible.

Our point of sale signs were created from recycled timber.

Team uniforms were made from 100% recycled cotton, with un-pickable stitching so that they could have another life beyond this project.

WHAT OUR PARTNERS SAID

The things that matter

Circular Cafes are providing a wonderful conduit of inspiration between each other and with Council. The opportunity to connect and support in an exciting, innovative and contemporary project has been of huge benefit to our Council and our community. The relationships we are building around food extend well beyond our usual business models as we celebrate the milestones together.

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Contact Us

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This is a Waste Less Recycle More initiative funded from the waste levy.