

Media information

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Interzero publishes 'resources SAVED by recycling' study for 2022

Recycling instead of wasting resources: hard evidence for contributions to sustainable business

+++ Interzero and its customers reduce GHGs by around 1 million tonnes and primary resource use by 8.7 million tonnes

+++ Study from Fraunhofer UMSICHT underlines positive environmental effects of recycling

+++ Circular service provider among finalists for German Sustainability Prize

Berlin/Cologne. The consequences of global warming are becoming clearer by the week, with policymakers, researchers and entrepreneurs discussing suitable kinds of climate action. What can and should be done to achieve the climate targets we have set? At the same time, how can we make high living standards and successful economies sustainable in Germany and Europe? One answer to this is the systematic recycling of materials. The circular economy has already become a key driver of climate change mitigation.

This is clearly shown by the work of Europe's leading circular service provider Interzero. As is proven by the 'resources SAVED by recycling' study being published today, a total of 2.1 million tonnes of materials were managed in the loop by the company and its customers in 2022. This resulted in the prevention of around 1 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions – equivalent to the annual carbon emissions from heat and power for more than 100,000 four-person households. At the same time, around 8.7 million tonnes of primary resources were saved and did not need to be taken from the natural world.

"In the current debate on climate action, there needs to be a greater emphasis on managing raw materials in the loop," says **Sebastiaan Krol, CEO of Interzero Circular Solutions**. "Our study aims to show that recycling is both an effective and necessary instrument for cutting climate-damaging emissions, protecting valuable resources and therefore countering the overexploitation of our natural environment. We need the transformation into a real closed-loop economy to maintain the quality of life on our planet. Today, this is the most important collective task that we are facing."

Interzero also uses the study data to present its customers with an individual certificate of their annual environmental performance. As one example, Sopro Bauchemie GmbH has worked with Interzero to reduce its primary resource consumption and greenhouse gas emissions by several thousand tonnes. As an integrated consulting partner for circular services, Interzero

helps this customer by handling the take-back and recycling of transport packaging made from paper, plastics and tinplate.

Michael Hecker, Managing Director of Sopro Bauchemie GmbH: “The ‘resources SAVED certificate’ confirms the environmental benefit of our partnership with Interzero and shows that, together, we are on the right track.”

Since 2008, Interzero has been using the scientific ‘resources SAVED by recycling’ study to report on the overall positive environmental impact of recycling. This comprehensive life-cycle assessment report – produced by the Fraunhofer Institute for Environmental, Safety and Energy Technology UMSICHT – is based on a detailed comparison of primary production and recycling, including all of the process steps required. The standardised methodology provides a means to exactly quantify resource and greenhouse gas savings.

“Now in its fifteenth year, this study makes the environmental benefits of recycling both tangible and understandable. Looking to the future, this will be increasingly important to raise awareness about climate action and the sustainable handling of our raw materials among businesses and consumers alike,” comments **Dr Markus Hiebel**, Head of the Sustainability and Participation department at Fraunhofer UMSICHT.

The data from Fraunhofer UMSICHT are also an essential part of the resource protection campaign ‘One World. Zero Waste. Let’s #MoveTheDate’, which Interzero has launched together with the Global Footprint Network (GFN). According to recent calculations from the GFN, the 2023 global Earth Overshoot Day would have occurred 7 minutes and 16 seconds earlier without the recycling activities completed by Interzero and its customers.

In recognition of its deep engagement and successful completion of specific projects relating to waste prevention and recycling, Interzero has been nominated for the 2024 German Sustainability Award. The company is among the finalists in the waste management and recycling category.

About Interzero:

Interzero is one of the leading service providers in the field of closing product, material and logistics loops as well as an innovation leader in plastics recycling with the largest sorting capacity in Europe. Under the guiding principle of “zero waste solutions”, the company supports over 50,000 customers throughout Europe in the responsible handling of recyclable materials, thus helping them to improve their own sustainability performance and conserve primary resources. With about 2,000 employees, the company achieves a turnover of over one billion euros (2021). According to Fraunhofer UMSICHT, Interzero’s recycling activities will save one million tonnes of greenhouse gases compared to primary production and more than 8.7 million tonnes of primary raw materials in 2022 alone. Further information can be found at www.interzero.com.

Please also note our online portal providing information (in German) about raw materials and recycling: www.recyclingnews.de.

Media contact:

Mathias Kreuzmann
Corporate Communications Interzero
Tel. +49 151 72476504
mathias.kreuzmann@interzero.de



For questions and answers on proper waste separation and recycling go to www.muelltrennung-wirkt.de/en/.