

# Sejong Policy Brief



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## *Executive Summary*

### **North Korea's 'circular economy' policy and implications**



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*This article is written based on the author's personal opinions  
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## **Executive Summary**

### **■ Concept of a circular economy**

- A circular economy is an economic structure that reduces natural resource consumption by recycling waste and minimizes environmental pollution. It is a sustainable economic structure that can fundamentally solve various environmental problems while guaranteeing economic growth
- The cycle from procurement of raw materials to the recycling of raw materials consists of production, consumption, management, and regeneration stages. In order to convert to a pure environment system, a comprehensive plan including each stage's challenges is required

### **■ North Korea's circular economy policy and reality**

- Recently, North Korea has shown a high level of interest in a circular economy in line with global trends, and there is an economic reason to ease the shortage of raw materials through the introduction of a circular economy
- A comprehensive plan with a long-term vision has not been confirmed, and the project to collect waste and waste facilities and convert them into recycled materials is focused on recycling policy
- Realistically, it is understood that the issue of securing resources and increasing production will be solved mainly by research institutions and individual production units

### **■ Important implications**

- Construction of basic infrastructure that can solve environmental problems is an option to reduce development costs in the long term, but it is difficult to proceed without development cooperation in North Korea's situation
- The coexistence of the environment and economy is an important issue for

both South and North Korea, and when resuming the inter-Korean exchange and cooperation project, the possibility of promotion as a development cooperation project needs to be considered

*※ Translator's note: This is a third party's unofficial translation of the original paper which was written in Korean. All references should be made to the original paper.*