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## **REBus: ProRail pilot launch of circular procurement of office furnishings**

Carpets and furniture in a new traffic management post have been procured based on circular economy principles by the Dutch rail infrastructure management company ProRail.

In June 2015 the new office in Utrecht opened as part of the Green Deal Circular Procurement and supported by the EU project **REBus**.

Facilities project leader Geerke Versteeg of ProRail comments: "We investigated if and how we could procure the carpets and furniture for the office space in a circular manner with high-value recycling of raw materials and products as the most important starting point.

This is a completely new way to procure for us, the sector, even within the Netherlands.

It raises questions over ownership, business models, contracts and trust. How did we ask our suppliers for circularity? On which basis did we choose the suppliers? That is pioneering, as there are no exemplars yet. With the experiences we have gained we hope to inspire other companies to go circular in procurement, or at least to explore the possibilities."

## **New business models**

The transition to a circular economy – from waste to raw material – is a strong ambition of the Dutch government. Procurement is an instrument that can be used to stimulate this [transition], and pilots are the ideal way to gain experience in practice.

ProRail shows with this pilot that circular procurement is not a dream of the future, but can already happen today. Versteeg comments: "Circular procurement can happen at different levels. Simply making a good choice of material can lengthen the lifetime of the product. Circular procurement also requires changes in mindsets."

## **Carpets and furniture**

ProRail finally entered into a ten-year acquisition and maintenance contract with Desso. Versteeg comments: "They are striped carpet tiles – flexible and dust reducing – produced from environmentally friendly material. Desso is responsible for ensuring the quality of the carpet for ten years and that it is either directly reused or recycled to such a high value that the raw materials can be used again. We chose the best value at the time. A lot can happen in ten years."

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Circular procurement of furniture is a greater challenge. “Especially as it is not a uniform product as floor coverings. Also, we did not have the feeling that the selected suppliers could currently offer what we wanted in terms of circular economy. Therefore we did not enter into a long-term contract, but purchased furniture in a one-off contract. However, we based our choices on the circular economy by opting for environmentally friendly materials and modular furniture. We are now investigating how we set up the service to extend the product lifetime.”

## REBus & Green Deal Circular Procurement

This case of ProRail is a pilot of REBus – a European project, which in the Netherlands is delivered Rijkswaterstaat, PIANOo, MVO Nederland and the Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland. The aim of the project is to gain and share knowledge on the potential of resource-efficient business models, and to establish if these models can achieve 15% of resource and cost savings by the end of 2016. REBus pilots are being delivered in Great Britain and in the Netherlands. In the Netherlands there are five sectors within scope of REBus: ICT, office furnishings, construction, textiles and catering.

REBus also collaborates with the Green Deal Circular Procurement. This Dutch initiative has the objective of getting circular procurement on the agenda of governments and companies.

### More information

If you would like learn more about the project or one of the Dutch pilots then please contact the REBus secretariat [at PIANOo]. Or do you want to get started with circular procurement but need support? Do you want to be part of a growing network of leaders: public and private organisations, who want to procure in a more sustainable way as well as inspire others? Do you want to access the knowledge and experience collected over the past years? Then register as a partner of Green Deal Circular Procurement and contact PIANOo.

### Reports

The following reports on this pilot are available in Dutch:

[pilotcirculaireinkoopkantoorinrichtingprorail-juli2015.pdf](#) (Learnings from the pilot)

[pilotcirculaireinkoopkantoorinrichtingprorail-samenvatting-juli2015.pdf](#) (Summary report)

[The English version of the case study will be published in due course on the REBus website.]

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