

# EGADE circular economy project gains worldwide recognition



A **circular economy** project from a professor at [Tecnológico de Monterrey's EGADE Business School](#) has been recognized by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International).

The [Sustainable Wealth Creation Through Innovation and Technology \(SWIT\)](#) initiative from emeritus professor **Carlos Scheel** was given a prize as part of the [2021 Innovations That Inspire program](#).

Each year, **AACSB International**, the largest global accreditation body for business schools, recognizes institutions **leading change in business education**.

**Dr. Scheel** explained to CONECTA what this award means for his journey with **SWIT**, a circular economy and systems thinking model.



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*“This **award** gives the **SWIT** group **further visibility** which will help **achieve our goal** of bringing together a **critical mass** of **experts** in the **circular economy** and systems approaches for Latin American countries.”*

*“Right now, we need **methodologies, processes, and human resources** with a **systemic, innovative, disruptive, and high-impact vision**. I believe that we’ve been given this award because of these characteristics,” he said.*

### **What is the SWIT model?**

The **circular economy** aims to **positively impact** society, the environment, and economic reactivation through **increased reuse** and **recycling of materials** in manufacturing cycles.

The **SWIT model**, created in 2007, uses **methods** which take advantage of manufacturing **waste** in the communities where industry happens.

*“SWIT aims to create **economic income** for a region using the **waste** generated there,” explained Scheel.*



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“SWIT started as an **initiative to generate prosperity, mainly in developing countries that don’t have enough resources to develop strategies for innovation,**” Scheel explained about the model.

This **innovative project** is supported by **5 key concepts**:

1. **Sustainable, disruptive innovation inspired by nature**
2. **A systemic view of growth**
3. **Extended circular economy systems**
4. **Grouping industrial ecology systems**
5. **Business approaches to problem solving**

“We developed a **concept** called a **circular value system**. For example, how can we ensure that a plastic bottle never gets into nature? If it’s always in circulation, then it isn’t garbage. As long as I have it and use it, it is re-processed and reused.”

The process consists of **detecting the potential value of waste** generated by the industries in a particular area.

*“First, it **identifies sustainable initiatives and then turns them into businesses**. We found that waste and garbage can form an important opportunity, especially in regions where there is lots of waste to be found,” explained the professor.*

*“The waste is analyzed to determine its value. It’s difficult because there is no quality control for waste or it could be contaminated, and it has to **become something valuable**.”*

*“We developed a concept called a circular value system. For example, how can we ensure that a plastic bottle never gets into nature? If it’s always in circulation, then it isn’t garbage.”*

### **The SWIT model’s impact in other places**

The SWIT model **has already been used in different industries and countries**, the following areas being of note:

- The circular production of **coffee** and **palm oil** in **Colombia**
- A sustainable model for single-use **plastics** in **Mexico** and **Ecuador**
- Various sustainable startups in **British Guyana**.
- A circular economy community in **Higueras, Nuevo León**, Mexico

*“For example, we developed **processes** to transform **nejayote**, waste from **tortilla** production, in many businesses in Mexico; or **glycerin, African palm** waste, in Colombia”, explained Scheel.*

*“(As well as) implementing circular economies in cities or towns such as Higueras, Nuevo León, where the largest industry is **goat’s milk** and **cheese**. The idea was how to transform **whey**, milk waste, into **probiotic foods** for the same population,”*



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*“SWIT has played several roles: it’s been a **Think Tank** that has developed **methodologies**; it’s been a **Do Tank** in which the group has diagnosed and executed **applications** in Latin America; and it has been a **training group for specialists**.”*

*“I think that these concepts show why SWIT was selected for this award, because we cover the three axes: **research, development, and training specialists**.”*

The **SWIT project** received an award, as one of the [Tec research projects that are transforming Mexico](#), at the **49th Tec de Monterrey Research and Development Conference**.

**Researchers, master’s students and doctoral candidates** have worked on the project, carrying out at more than **23 projects in 4 countries**.

### **EGADE as an example of business education**

[Osmar Zavaleta](#), acting dean at **EGADE**, points out how SWIT aims to **promote economic growth without generating waste** or affecting the natural resources of communities in developing countries.

*“It’s a program that is closely aligned with **the Conscious Companies program promoted by EGADE and Tecnológico de Monterrey’s Vision for 2030**,” Zavaleta highlighted.*

*“We want to congratulate Dr. Carlos Scheel and everyone who has participated **in this initiative, which has been recognized for being the most innovative,**”* he said.



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**Caryn L. Beck-Dudley**, AACSB President and CEO, emphasized how the winning schools show that **business education** can be a **“force for good.”**

*“**Business schools** around the world **are defining high-impact objectives and strategies** which are aligned with the **communities they serve,**”* she explained.

The **EGADE Business School** is the only **business school in Latin America** among the 24 institutions from around the world given awards this year by the **international accrediting body** for their **positive contributions to society.**

Click [here](#) to **find out more** about **AACSB’s Innovations That Inspire** program and to see the complete list of 24 winners recognized at the 2021 awards.

**YOU’LL DEFINITELY BE INTERESTED IN:**

<https://tec.mx/en/news/national/education/dean-tec-business-school-named-educator-year>