A game-changing method of “upcycling” plastics helps clear the path toward a circular economy

Probably the greatest barrier to recycling plastics is that the quality of the end product is far inferior to the quality of the original product, which disincentivizes would-be recyclers from investing time and resources into the process. But what if there was a way to create high quality plastic from the original material?

In the latest installment of video series “Research in 60 Seconds,” UC Santa Barbara chemical engineer Susannah Scott outlines a game-changing method of “upcycling” plastics, creating high-quality plastic molecules that would increase the appeal of recycling, allow us to repurpose existing plastic, and bring us closer to a circular economy.

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