

Flash Report

Regional Policy Dialogue on Circular Economy

“Moving Towards Circular Economy for Plastic Waste Management”



AIT
Asian Institute of Technology



Date: October 20, 2020, 14:00 hrs. (Bangkok Time)

Venue: Live Broadcasting from Asian Institute of Technology

Disclaimer

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List of Acronyms:

AIT	Asian Institute of Technology
CE	Circular Economy
EU	The European Union
SCP	Sustainable Consumption and Production
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SWITCH-Asia RPAC	SWITCH-Asia Regional Policy Advocacy Component
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

Background:

Amidst calls for improved environmental performance, economies are faced with the environmental impacts of a linear approach (take, make, dispose) to production and consumption. Increasing prices of materials, overconsumption and subsequently, a higher volume of waste generated are typical characteristics of the linear economy's path that most countries are taking. Circular economy (CE) focuses on maximizing the life cycle utility of resources. It is designed to efficiently recirculate the raw material in a closed-loop, through minimization of virgin material use and maximization of waste recovery as secondary raw materials and alternative energy sources. Circular economy gives a new perspective of looking at the plastics as a resource rather than waste.

The implementation of circular economy approaches had resulted in societal, environmental and economic benefits across various parts of the world including China, Japan, Europe. The success stories have a stream of processes including top-down and bottom-up approach in their implementation. The "Top-down" approach involves policy intervention and "Bottom-up" approach involves capacity building, people's participation, promotion and use of appropriate technologies and private sector participation. It is the combination of these two approaches and successful implementation of circular economic practices help in realising the vision of a circular economy come true in plastic waste management.

Objectives of the event

The webinar will elaborate on the two aspects:

1. The top-down approach of plastic waste management applying the principles of circular economy and successful implementation in different countries
2. The bottom-up approach focusing on capacity building, people's participation, responsive private sector participation.

Logistical information about the event

The organization of the regional policy dialogue on Circular Economy was organized as a hybrid-event via live broadcasting from Asian Institute of Technology (AIT)

Review on Participants:

More than 350 participants were registered prior to the event, and 9,088 viewers joined online which was accessible through Zoom and Live broadcast on the Facebook's Page of SWITCH-Asia, Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) and their networks.

Summary of Key Messages:

Opening Remarks and Overall Point of View



Dr. Mushtaq Ahmed Memon

Regional Coordinator for Resource Efficiency
Project Manager for SWITCH-Asia RPAC
UNEP Asia Pacific Office

Dr. Memon emphasized the importance of Sustainable consumption and production and highlighted as it forms the core of the SDG. Circular economy is a tool and the key to promote national policies to reduce the plastic consumption. The focus area of the circular economy is that it could take initiative including technology, startups and innovation, policy, and sustainable life cycle for plastic waste management. He talked about the partnership and support received to conduct this webinar.

How the European regulation is shaping the recycling market



Dr. Jerome Le Borgne

Project Development Director South East Asia
Recycling and Recovery South East Asia
Suez Services (Thailand) Ltd.

Dr. Jerome Le Borgne presented the overall plastic pollution issues with an emphasis on plastic packaging. Regulation, Market Drive, Voluntary basis and Technical breakthroughs are the solutions proposed for tackling the issue. European Union (EU) plastic circular roadmap and EU's targets for Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) were discussed.

Dr. Borgne also highlighted the mechanisms in shaping the recycling market by realizing the importance of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) as a key regulatory measure to improve recycling in European and South East Asian countries, subsidizing the recycling materials through EPR and improving its economic competitiveness when compared to virgin materials.

UNEP's work on building circularity in plastic value chain



Dr. Feng Wang

Programme Officer, Coordinator on
Circularity and Waste Economy Division
UN Environment Programme

Dr. Wang delivered a presentation on UNEP's work to build circularity in plastic value chain by exploring a vision to address the pollution as a rethink the system. Dr. Wang highlighted the systemic actions along the plastic value chain that look at gaps to address plastic pollution and provide cross-cutting actions that deliver the enabling conditions to implement circular economy.

Dr. Wang then later gave examples of projects that works on plastic and value chain e.g. GEF-funded project which addressing marine plastics by using a systemic approach and GEF-funded project on Circular Economy for plastics in LAC cities.

SCG's Leadership in Promoting Plastic Waste in Downstream



Dr. Vasimon Ruanglek

Innovative Alliances Manager
Circular Economy Office SCG, Thailand

Dr. Ruanglek presented on SCG's leadership in promoting plastic waste in downstream. She elaborated SCG's role in raising employee awareness, different projects that SCG has carried out in consultation with UNEP and other organizations.

In the presentation, the role of private sector is highlighted through promotion of public-private partnerships, creation of startup companies, dissemination of knowledge gained so far on circular economic practices by SCG.

Creating Plastic Circular Economy through Developing Entrepreneurship



Dr. Atitaya Panuvatvanich
Managing Director
INC Square Co., Ltd., Thailand

Dr. Panuvatvanich delivered a presentation on Creating Plastic Circular Economy through Developing Entrepreneurship by giving an overview of plastic waste recycling in Thailand incorporating various stakeholders in plastic value chain. She then highlighted that mechanism to collaboration, law/regulations, feasibility study in business model, perception of sustainability as a cost are posed as key entrepreneurial challenges

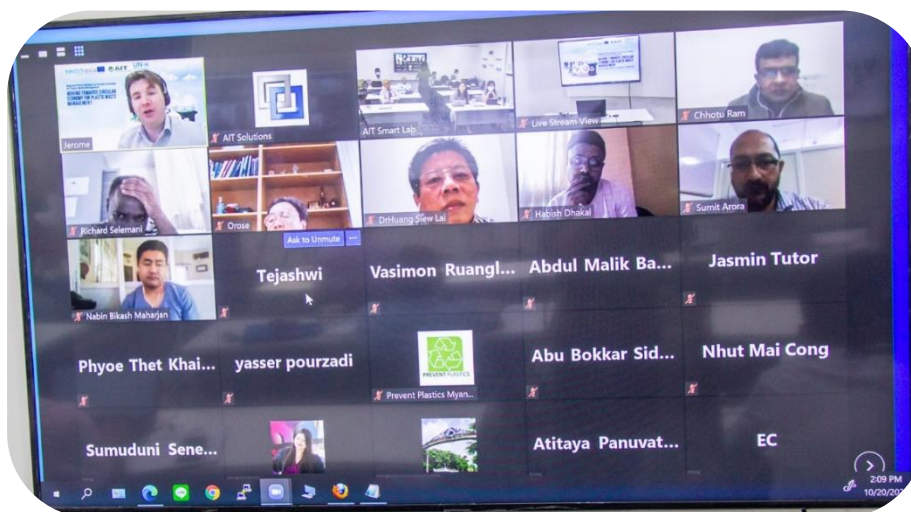
Capacity Building Needs and Means to Promote CE in Plastic Waste Management



Prof. Chettiyappan Visvanathan
Professor, Environmental Engineering and
Management Program, AIT

Dr. Visu gave a presentation on capacity building needs and means to promote circular economy in plastic waste management by elaborating that synergistic skill-development with system thinking approach is needed to drive community capacity for plastic circular economy and strengthen the skills of people and communities in order to achieve their circular economy goals.

Snapshots of the event



Annex:

Annex 1: The Final agenda

Time (IST)	Theme
1400-1410	Opening and overall point of view Dr. Mushtaq Memon Regional Coordinator Resource Efficiency in Asia Pacific United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
1410-1425	How the European regulation is shaping the recycling market – with a focus on RePET Dr. Jerome Le Borgne Project Development Director South East Asia Recycling and Recovery South East Asia Suez Services (Thailand) Ltd.
1425-1440	UNEP's work on building circularity in plastics value chain Dr. Feng Wang Programme Officer Coordinator on Circularity and Waste Economy Division UN Environment Programme
1445-1500	SCG's Leadership in Promoting Plastic Waste in Downstream Dr. Vasimon Ruanglek Innovative Alliances Manager, SCG, Thailand
1500-1510	Creating Plastic Circular Economy through Developing Entrepreneurship Dr. Atitaya Panuvatvanich Managing Director INC Square Co., Ltd., Thailand
1510-1520	Capacity Building Needs and Means to Promote CE in Plastic Waste Management Prof. Chettiyappan Visvanathan Professor, Environmental Engineering and Management Program, AIT
1520-1530	Q&A
1530-1535	Closing remarks Dr. Mushtaq Memon

For more information

SWITCH-Asia event page:

URL: <https://www.switch-asia.eu/event/moving-towards-circular-economy-for-plastic-waste-management/>

Contact SWITCH-Asia Regional Policy Advocacy Funded by European Union

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Mr. Mushtaq Ahmed Memon

Regional Coordinator for Resource Efficiency

United Nations Environment Programme, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
Project Manager

Regional Policy Advocacy Component

(SWITCH-Asia – the European Union funded programme)

Email: memon@un.org