

SUMMARY REPORT

Kick-off Meeting: Transition to Green Economy through Sustainable Consumption and Production in Kazakhstan:

26 April 2021, On-line meeting (Nur- Sultan)

Background

The EU SWITCH-Asia SCP Facility, in cooperation with the Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources (MEGNR) of the Republic of Kazakhstan organised an on-line Kick-off meeting related to the technical support provided, focused on “Transition to Green Economy through Sustainable Consumption and Production” structured around two work streams: “Elaboration of an SCP Action Plan”, and “Enhance and implementation of SCP tools and Circular Economy approach in the food/biodegradable waste management sector”; the event was held on 26 April 2021.

The meeting’s aim was to discuss proposed draft outline for the SCP Action Plan, with a focus on waste and water management and agriculture, and to review first findings and suggested next steps with regards to the efficient management of food/biodegradable waste. More than 50 representatives from government institutions, the private sector, Tourism Associations, civil society, and international organizations attended the meeting.

A welcome speech was delivered by the Director of environmental policy and sustainable development Department MEGNR, Mr. **Akzan SHIRANOV**, who mentioned that Kazakhstan has developed its Voluntary National Report on SDGs in 2020, while working on the integration of SDGs in the state planning system. He highlighted that it was decided to mainstream SCP and circular economy approach into national sectoral projects. A new Eco-code and around 150 by-laws will be acted on July 1, 2021. Ambition goals were set to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060 through greening of the industry, housing, and agriculture sectors.

Mr. **Johannes STENBAEK MADSEN**, Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation to Kazakhstan, recalls that the EU SWITCH-Asia SCP Facility organised a National Dialogue with interested Stakeholders, in Nur-Sultan in November 2019, to identify key priority areas of technical support in order to promote implementation of green economy concept and legal frameworks. The pandemic showed our vulnerability and disrupted Global Value Chains on which most Asian economies have built over the last decades for their economic development. Choices made by governments in recovering from the pandemic should exploit the opportunities offered by changing production and consumption models. If we continue producing at our current speed, the global material use would more than double between 2015 and 2060 putting under stress our resource supplies. Therefore, achieving more sustainable production models and consumption patterns is essential.

Zikrina Zulfira – Key Expert for Central Asia introduced the Non-Key Experts and provided information on the time frame and events which will be held in coming months.

Two presentations were then delivered by the two Non-Key Experts: Senior Expert **Russell Frost** and Junior Expert **Yerbol Orazbekov**.

Russel Frost highlighted the necessity to understand what Sustainable Consumption and Production is about and what SCP can provide for improving the green economy policy and its implementation. Currently implemented policies related to green economy were analysed, while outlining the SCP Action Plan as complimentary to Green Economy Action Plan for the period 2021-2030. To implement the measures that will be stipulated in the SCP Action Plan, there is a need to consider creating a specific Support Unit (SU). The Government of Kazakhstan should consider the governance structure of SU and the institution at which the structure will be established.

Yerbol Orazbekov introduced the preliminary work carried out to assess the institutional framework of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the field of biodegradable waste management and presented some of the findings related to the need to develop personnel, infrastructure and financial instruments, together with suggested recommendations that will be developed. He stressed the difficulty of accurately assessing the real volumes and projections of the formation of biodegradable waste in the Republic of Kazakhstan. When communicating with the regions, he saw the unpreparedness of the infrastructure for the management of biodegradable waste. He also pointed out the need for an additional assessment of the legislation, since some of the regulatory documents are being harmonized with the new code at this time.

Key Observations

More than 50 participants attended at the Kick-off event, showing great interest from the stakeholders. Discussions focused on the need for improving the infrastructure in the field of waste management, preparation of feasibility studies and piloting in some regions of Kazakhstan. Main partners in this case should be municipalities, MSMEs and civil society. With regards to the NAP SCP, the main issue is related to the creation of a support unit for which it is necessary to identify the most appropriate institution for hosting it, so as to ensure the necessary inter-ministerial and multi-stakeholders consultations and coordination process.

Ludmila Kuznezova, Director of the GeoData Plus, emphasized the need for a holistic systemic approach in the field of biodegradable waste management and piloting this scheme in a selected region in Kazakhstan. With regards to the Support Unit, she suggested to establish the unit within the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Gregory Weiser, consultant from Germany, proposed to revise customs duties and, if possible, reduce them to support the import of ecologically friendly equipment for the processing of biodegradable waste. He also proposed to conduct a pilot project in the resort areas (based on the results of the 2019 OSCE research project) in order to work out all stages of biodegradable waste management, including the further use of compost.

Tatyana Shakirova and Zafar Makhmudov, from the Regional Environment Centre for Central Asia-CAREC, highlighted that education and communication for target groups are essential to better understand SCP and circular economy, providing training programs for MSMEs and replicate experience among the Central Asian countries.

Rashida Shakenova, from the Grant Project SUSTOUKA, mentioned that the Kick -off event has given a good start not only to Government and private sector and to Tourism industry but also for better understanding and implementing SCP practices on the practical level. Working together is a crucial point.

Recommendations and Next Steps

Among other outcomes, the following could be highlighted:

The **SCP Action Plan** should cover the period to end 2030, in line with the Green Economy Action Plan, the implementation of which and effective delivery should be enhanced by the proposed SCP actions. Phasing of the SCP actions in significant cross-sectoral and sectoral aspects of the economy should be built into the plan to 2030. Relevant set of SCP actions should be prepared for all themes in the Action Plan, while more detailed actions will be developed for four sectors, three cross-sectoral themes (water, waste management, and communication, marketing & dissemination) and one sectoral (agriculture). Other themes to be included in the SCP Action Plan should cover two cross-sectoral (energy efficiency, emission inventories & projections) and six sectoral themes (buildings – residential, institutions, offices; tourism; retail; industry – extraction, processing, production; electricity generation including renewable energy sources; and transport).

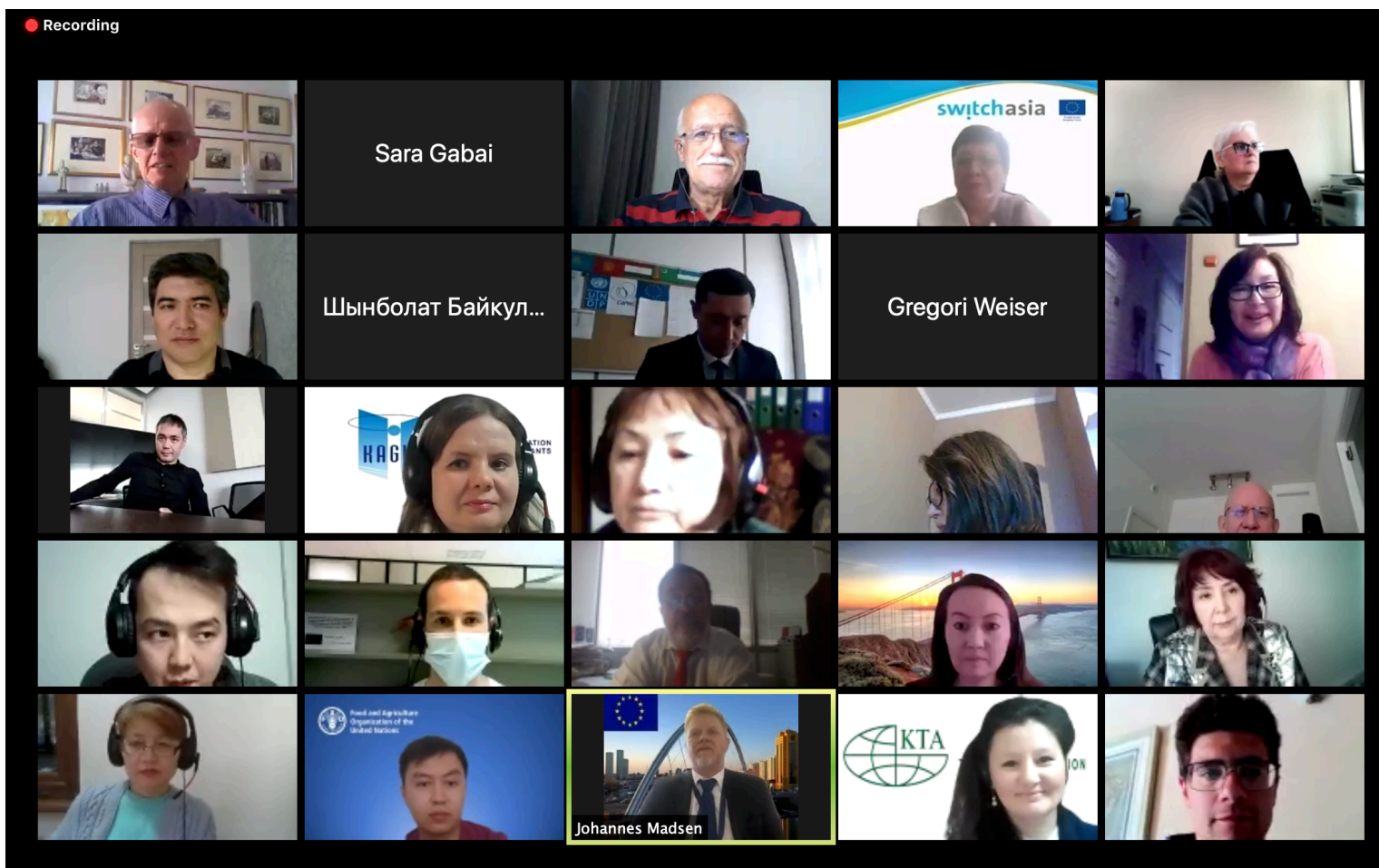
Creation and operation of an **SCP Support Unit (SU)** should be an integral element of the SCP Action Plan. It is strongly recommended to establish such a unit to drive forward the SCP agenda and its implementation. It would provide a powerful mechanism to inform Government in its development of relevant policies and communicate the SCP approach and practice to consumers and producers in Kazakhstan. The SU should be tailored to Kazakhstan's institutional structures, utilising relevant experience from other countries such as in Indonesia and the United Kingdom. It was proposed to consider SCP Action Plan and SU on the Green Economy Council agenda.

Follow-up activities

Follow-up activities might include, but not limited to:

1. Prepare draft SCP Action Plan to 2030 covering all themes identified above - provisionally scheduled for completion by the end of July 2021.
2. Prepare draft specifications and structure for an SCP Support Unit and its role in stimulating SCP activities and supporting Green Economy delivery in Kazakhstan.
3. Stakeholder review of the draft SCP Action Plan and Support Unit specifications – provisionally planned as a virtual meeting to be held in September 2021.
4. Consider the possibility of preparing and implementing a pilot project to develop a model for a waste management system, with a focus on biodegradable waste, for one of the regions of Kazakhstan, taking into account the use of sustainable production and consumption tools and recommendations for the application of a circular economy approach.

Please find the [press release](#) issued at the event in English and in [Russian](#); and coverage of the event on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).



“ The COVID-19 recovery offers us new opportunities to rethink the way we produce and consume. Moving from linear to greener and more circular economies is essential. Our new approach “Reduce, Reuse and Recycle” envisages that not only businesses, but also citizens, regular consumers must act with a more responsible approach to preserve our Planet for future generations, said **Johannes Stenbaek Madsen, Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation to Kazakhstan.**

“ SCP policy will be included in the state planning system to mainstream SCP and circular economy approach into national sectoral projects. The aim is to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060 through greening of the industry, housing, and agriculture, said **Akzan Shiranov, Director of environmental policy and sustainable development Department of the Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan**