



Collaborations and synergies for sustaining the implementation of SWITCH-Asia Programme for a more impactful #WeSwitch focused on:

GREEN/SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT



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CONTEXT

Green and Sustainable Public Procurement (G/SPP) is a management strategy to support sustainable consumption and production. Due to the sheer size of public expenditure on goods and services it is regarded as an effective way to lower environmental burdens of products and consumption. Public authority's procurement accounts for 14% of GDP in Europe, 12% of GDP and 29% of total government expenditure in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, and up to 30% of GDP in developing countries. There is growing agreement among public authorities that SPP can be used as a strategic instrument to deliver environmental, economic, and social benefits, with a shift from focusing exclusively on the environmental dimension to achieving a balance between all three fundamental pillars of sustainable development. One of the targets under SDG 12 on sustainable consumption and production patterns focuses on promoting sustainable public procurement, following national policies and priorities. Therefore, SPP practices' advancement is recognised as a key strategic component of the global efforts towards achieving more sustainable consumption and production patterns.

G/SPP is now perceived as a key tool to drive innovation and sustainable development. The *2017 Global Review*¹ conducted by UNEP on the progress of G/SPP across public and private organisations in 62 countries showed that 41 countries have G/SPP commitments and provisions in either sustainable or green procurement policy or in other organisation policies such as general procurement regulations or environmental policies. G/SPP practices are becoming more widespread around the world with interesting examples to share and leverage. Level of enforcement on G/SPP policies are varied in countries. Most national governments in the study of UNEP include G/SPP provisions in overarching or thematic policies and strategies, while a smaller proportion include them in procurement regulations or in policies specifically dedicated to the promotion of G/SPP. A common feature across governments is that the ministries or agencies involved in the design of G/SPP policies are predominantly associated with environmental, economic, and financial affairs. The implementation at a broad scale is often the initiative of an individual department or agency within the government. This leads to disintegrate implementation efforts and results.

¹ UNEP (2017). Global Review of Sustainable Public Procurement 2017. https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/sites/default/files/globalreview_web_final.pdf

Monitoring G/SPP achievement can still be a challenge. Quantitative targets regarding the total value of spending on sustainable goods or services have been set by most of the national governments that monitor and evaluate G/SPP implementation and results. Estimating benefits for environment, economy and society is complex, but of high relevance. Only through coherent monitoring it can be assured that G/SPP is delivering the desired environmental, economic, and social outcomes such as energy efficiency, emission reduction, waste prevention, local economic development, poverty reduction, etc.

Key common barriers to the implementation of G/SPP include the perception that green/sustainable products are more expensive and the lack of expertise on green/sustainable purchasing criteria. Greater application of life-cycle costing will play an important role in helping concerns about costs. Focusing more efforts on trainings and knowledge sharing for vendors and buyers will improve availability and cost structure

of green/sustainable products and services. G/SPP policy and commitment by government is important for its success, but expertise on G/SPP among all stakeholders is crucial. Ecolabels, top-down leadership, and the support of international initiatives can help overcome these barriers and drive the implementation of G/SPP.

The engagement of the private sector is a key success factor for enhancing the uptake of G/SPP implementation. Transforming sustainable consumption and production patterns will require collaboration among all stakeholders along the supply chain in the public and private sector. Engaging private sector actors is important as they are the suppliers of green/sustainable products and services, and they also influence the market through their own procurement practices. In the process of strengthening their own social and environmental responsibility, private sector can also increase the green/sustainable consciousness of other companies within their supply chains.

SWITCH-ASIA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES AND GRANTS ON SUSTAINABLE/GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

The EU SWITCH-Asia Programme provides the platform for partnerships and networks in between Europe and Asia for the implementation of national strategies and action plans and implementation of SCP practices. With the assistance of the European Commission, Asian countries are supported

to transition towards a low-carbon, resource-efficient and a more circular economy while contributing to poverty reduction through technical assistance provided by the SCP Facility and the Regional Policy Advocacy Component and through the Grants Programme.

SWITCH-Asia is currently providing Technical Assistance focused on G/SPP to the following countries:

COUNTRY PROJECT TITLE	OBJECTIVES
INDIA Sustainable Public Procurement for Indian Railways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate effective policy consultations and provide technical support for decision and policy makers, Indian Railways purchasers, industry, and SME/ suppliers on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) and SPP • Strengthen capacities and increase awareness of stakeholders, including vendors on SPP implementation • Translate policies related to SCP into a plan of action with SPP as an effective support tool for delivery • Promote and increase the uptake of SPP by zonal railways, production units and other stakeholders and mainstream and disseminate SPP best practices including to industry, SMEs/ suppliers.
INDONESIA Enhancing SCP through the implementation of Green/Sustainable Public Procurement (G/SPP) and the preparation of a long-term action plan for G/SPP in Indonesia	Joint partnership with GIZ Advance SCP and government partners working on Green/ Sustainable Public Procurement (G/SPP) to deliver the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Led by the SCP Facility, development of a market readiness analysis report on the wooden furniture and paper industries • Led by the GIZ Advance SCP, development of technical regulations for paper and furniture sectors, based on the market readiness analysis report, and initiation of the process for the Long-Term Action Plan for G/ SPP in the paper and wood furniture sectors and other priority sectors in Indonesia

COUNTRY PROJECT TITLE	OBJECTIVES
THAILAND Mainstream Green Integration of Thailand: Transformation from Policy to Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the procurement of the environmentally friendly products and services in Thailand Study all types of environmentally friendly products and services and cluster them for management more efficiently Conduct the environmentally friendly products and services policy and the action plans Provide knowledge and information for raising awareness on the environmentally friendly products and services Share experiences on the environmentally friendly products and services through good practices and lesson learned among ASEAN Member States and other leading SCP countries
MONGOLIA Support SCP Governance and the preparation of an SCP Policy Plan Greening the supply chain in selected sectors through pilot projects and training to strengthen perception of SCP patterns and the potential benefits for SMEs/MSME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Training Workshops on SCP and SPP Review of Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) Action Plan and prepare revised and updated SPP Action Plan Prepare a capacity building assessment and SCP knowledge management plan and conduct of capacity building activities Prepare the first set of SPP criteria for three selected product groups in close cooperation with concerned government agencies and stakeholders

SWITCH-Asia is currently providing Technical Assistance focused on G/SPP, directly or indirectly, in various countries through the following ongoing SWITCH-Asia Grant Projects:

CURRENT GRANT PROJECTS	OBJECTIVES
INDIA SWITCHing India's Consumption to Fair and Sustainable Goods 01/2018-12/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate and engage consumers in urban India with the concept of sustainability - particularly related to food and fashion; Develop a network and active eco-system of institutions and partners including government agencies who promote sustainable consumption and procurement in India; Engage businesses and organisations to produce more sustainable and fair products by switching to Sustainable/Fairtrade supply chains, thus making sustainable products more accessible to Indian consumers. <p>Under the project output 2, there are indicators regarding 4 local authorities supporting sustainable procurement, and 10 corporate businesses doing sustainable procurement</p>
KAZAKHSTAN, TAJIKISTAN, UZBEKISTAN A Model for Sustainable Tourism in Central Asia (MOST) 2020- 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote sustainable tourism in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan through implementation of ISO standards related to green procurement and eco-labeling. Elaborate Guidelines on sustainable consumption, including usage of water, energy and recyclable waste. Promote the sharing of the EU best practices such as legislative frameworks and regulations, while applying needed ICT and marketing tools.
KAZAKHSTAN Implementation of SCP practices and sustainability schemes in the MSMEs of the Tourism Sector in Kazakhstan (SUSTOUKA) 2020- 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance sustainability and competitiveness of the tourism sector through support to MSMEs by developing green business approaches and access to green finance. Contribute to resource efficiency in the tourism accommodation sector and supports implementation of sustainability certification systems.

CURRENT GRANT PROJECTS	OBJECTIVES
LAO PDR Promoting Sustainable Tourism by Integrating MSMEs into Sustainable Supply Chains and Raising Consumer Awareness (SUSTOUR) 2020- 2022	Contribute to the Laos National Green Growth Strategy, 8th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan, and the National Tourism with specific objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lao tourism supply chain is more sustainable having adopted and replicated Travelife certified SCP practices among tourism SMEs by developing greener products for local supplier MSMEs, as well as sustainable settings for host communities; • The economic and environmental value of sustainable tourism in Laos is promoted and consumer awareness is raised creating competitive advantages and incentives for Lao tourism SMEs applying SCP practices; • SCP in the tourism sector is advocated by leveraging existing institutions and structures in Laos as well as relevant regional networks and outbound tour operators

While tourism projects are not of immediate relevance to services procured by governments, the mentioned projects contributed to standards development that can also be used by public procurers, e.g., when planning official events or missions.

GLOBAL AND REGIONAL ACTIVITIES RELATED TO G/SPP

The [One Planet Network Sustainable Public Procurement \(SPP\) programme](#) is a voluntary global multi-stakeholder partnership with the aim to promote and accelerate the implementation of sustainable public procurement globally to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. The SPP programme is a partnership co-led by ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability, the Environmental Development Centre of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management of the Netherlands and the UN Environment Programme. Focused areas include facilitating and support SPP implementation, stimulating change in international sector markets, advocating and mobilising political leadership and support, and demonstrating public value of SPP implementation and measuring impacts and progress. Eighty-eight SPP related projects have been implemented.

The [Asia Pacific Green Public Procurement \(GPP\) Network](#), funded by and co-led with Korea Environmental Industry & Technology Institute, aims at enhancing GPP knowledge-sharing and networking in the Asia Pacific region, with a view to stimulate markets for eco-friendly products and services. The network was launched in January 2021. It has been built on the former Asia Pacific GPP and Eco-labelling Network (2013-2016), the new network will engage a broader spectrum of key stakeholders to ensure a broad dialogue and cooperation. The network is jointly led by the Sustainable Public Procurement team of the UN Environment Programme, Economy Division, and the Korea Environmental Industry & Technology Institute.

The [Asia Pacific Roundtable for Sustainable Consumption and Production \(APRSCP\)](#) is an international, autonomous, non-governmental, non-pro-fit, non-discriminatory organization that is involve in developing and promoting SCP in the Asia-Pacific. It is a multi-stakeholder dialogue that aims to enhance and strengthen regional cooperation in the development and implementation of SCP strategies, and to promote best practices, programs, local initiatives, and lessons learned on SCP related projects in Asia and the Pacific region. Regarding SPP related activities, APRSCP implemented the "ASEAN+3 Sustainable Public Procurement and Eco-labelling (SPPEL) Project". APRSCP along with UNEP's One Planet Network SPP Programme organised a webinar on "Sustainable Public Procurement 2.0 for Accelerating Sustainable Growth in the Asia

Pacific' on 27th August 2020. The webinar aimed to engage with a wide spectrum of participants from the region on the need to move from GPP to SPP, and sustainability of end products to sustainability of entire supply chain of products.

The [International Green Purchasing Network \(IGPN\)](#) is a network that aims to promote the spread of environmentally friendly products and services development and green procurement activities, internationally share information and know-how on green procurement and environmentally friendly products and services, and harmonise the efforts of green procurement and development of green products and services from a global viewpoint. Main activities of IGPN are collecting and delivering information on global green procurement activities, good examples, and trends; organise workshops in regions; hold regular international conferences on a global scale and develop green procurement tools and guidelines.

Two projects in the region implemented by GIZ have been focused on G/SPP and Eco-labelling. [Advance SCP project](#) aims at integration of climate-friendly criteria into the eco-labels (Type I) of the target countries (Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Philippines) and improve mutual recognition of the eco-labels in the Southeast Asian region. The other project on Proliferation of Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) in Asia – the Next 5 Countries ([SCP Outreach](#)) has been carried out in Thailand, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Bhutan. The project aims to contribute to the reduction of GHG emissions by continuing to develop and establish policy instruments and policy frameworks in the area of "Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)" to promote a low carbon economy. Environmental labels, sustainable public procurement as well as other instruments that contribute to a better-informed purchasing decision from consumers are to be strengthened.

As announced in its Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP) in March 2020, the European Commission aims to make products fit for a climate-neutral, resource-efficient, and circular economy through a [Sustainable Products Initiative \(SPI\)](#). The core of this legislative initiative will be to widen the Ecodesign Directive beyond energy-related products to make the Ecodesign framework applicable to the broadest possible range of products and make it deliver on circularity. The review of the

Ecodesign Directive as well as further work on specific product groups, under the Ecodesign framework or in the context of other instruments, will build, where appropriate, on criteria and rules established under the EU Ecolabel Regulation, the Product Environmental Footprint approach and the EU GPP criteria.²

Sustainable/Green Public Procurement aspect varies between countries. Each country has different steps of implementation. G/SPP has been directly focused on policy development and

implementation in the SWITCH-Asia SCPF technical assistance projects in countries. Simultaneously, the G/SPP aspect for SWITCH-Asia Grant Projects is indirectly mentioned as one of the requirements of sustainable certifications or standards. Implementation at the national level could be divided into phases. For example, India SPP has been at the beginning phase of policy development. Mongolia, Indonesia, and Thailand already have G/SPP policies in place, but different in the uptake of SPP and implementation.

INTERNAL THEMATIC MEETING

As result of the SWITCH-Asia Programme Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting held in December 2020, a series of “**Internal thematic cluster consultative and brainstorming meetings**” is now well inscribed in the programme as part of SWITCH-Asia activities 2021-mid-2022 and through joint efforts with partner countries and key organisations in the region.

Objective

For the clustered thematic issues focusing on Sustainable/Green Public Procurement, the objective of the consultation and brainstorming meeting is to strengthen cooperation and partnerships in delivering activities through the three SWITCH-Asia components, involving the Country EU Delegations (EUDs), the National Focal Points (NFPs) within Ministry of partner countries together with SWITCH-Asia implementing Ministry in case different, the Grant projects, and selected regional/international partners, to ensure cross-border exchange of experiences and larger impact.

Output

Results of the meeting can be:

- Increased collaboration between concerned partners;
- Important issues for consideration by the EU in the programming exercise.

Guideline for Discussion

1. How do we improve and consolidate synergies between the 3 Components and with other partners focusing on G/SPP?
2. How can the SWITCH-Asia programme and SWITCH-Asia SCP Facility contribute to advancing the G/SPP in Asia?
3. What are good practices to overcome challenges on G/SPP implementation, and what can grant projects, EU Delegations or the SCP Facility contribute?

Identification of common issues and possible areas for cross-learning and eventual cooperation:

1. The SPP global trends, challenges, and the divide between Asia and Europe;
2. Transformation of the G/SPP policy into practice.
3. Monitoring, reporting and impact evaluation of G/SPP on environment, social and economy.

Challenges

1. Insufficient national level policy commitment
2. Lack of expertise on G/SPP among government buyers and vendors;
3. Availability of green products in the market;
4. Perception that green products are more expensive;
5. Monitoring and reporting system;
6. Private sector engagement.

Opportunities for collaboration and shared experience to guide the discussions

1. Promoting good practice examples and discussion of challenges
2. Development of SPP Action Plan/Policy and pilot testing
3. Application of Ecolabels/sustainability standards for facilitating SPP
4. Engaging private sector actors as suppliers to the public sectors' demand; improving green product offer through SPP practices.
5. Monitoring and reporting system

² European Commission (2020). Circular Economy Action Plan <https://bit.ly/3uskmoD>

PROGRAMME

15:00 (CET+5)	Housekeeping & Welcome Remarks
15:05	G/SPP Global and Regional Trends and Challenges (expected speakers, 2-3: EU, OPN/10YFP SPP, Asia Pacific GPP Network)
15:25	Sharing of Experiences from National Support and Grant Projects (Selected 4-5 speakers) National Support India - , National Support Indonesia – Market Readiness Analysis, National Support Thailand – , 2 Grant projects 45 min: 30-35 min presentation, 10-15min Q&A
16:10	<i>Moderated Roundtable</i> Building on speakers' presentations, the discussion will develop also following participants inputs. (expected panellists, 4-5: GIZ Advance SCP/beneficiary country, UNEP/Farid Yaker, IGPN or APRSCP, City/ICLEI, EBTC, Asian expert from the RPAC recent workshop) 45 min session: 20 min brief presentation, 25 min Q&A
16:55	Main outcomes and conclusion

Regulations/guidelines relevant for supporting sustainable food system transition:

- [EU GPP Criteria](#)
- [EU Buying green! A handbook on green public procurement \(3rd Edition\)](#)
- [EU Directive 2014/24 on public procurement](#)
- [2017 Global Review of Sustainable Public Procurement](#)
- [Green Public Procurement in the Republic of Korea: A Decade of Progress and Lessons Learned \(2019\)](#)
- [KEITI Asia-Pacific Green Public Procurement Partnership Project - Recommendations for GPP Incentive Mechanisms, Thailand 2019](#)
- [Factsheets on sustainable public procurement in national governments \(2017\)](#)
- [A Sampling of Successes in Green Public Procurement: Case Studies of Green Public Procurement Implementation in Asia-Pacific Countries \(2017\)](#)
- [City of Cape Town Green Procurement Action Plan \(2021\)](#)

Proposed Attendees of the Meeting:

Project Managers of Country EU Delegations (EUDs), EU DEVCO, National Focal Points (NFPs) within Ministry of partner countries together with SWITCH-Asia implementing Ministry in case different, SCPF and its consortium members, RPAC, concerned Grant projects, and selected potential partners.

Potential Supporting Partners for future activities on G/SPP:

ICLEI; One Planet Network; Asia Pacific Green Public Procurement (GPP) Network; European Business and Technology Centre (EBTC); South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP); APRSCP; International Green Purchasing Network (IGPN)

