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FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE: LEVERAGING PUBLIC PROCUREMENT FOR A LOW-CARBON AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Proceedings Report:
Sustainable/Green Public Procurement Webinar Series 2024-2026

Acknowledgements

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ABBREVIATION AND SYMBOLS

ACE	ASEAN Centre for Energy
EIB	European Investment Bank
EPD	Environmental Product Declaration
ACE	ASEAN Centre for Energy
EIB	European Investment Bank
EU	European Union
GGP	Government Green Procurement
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GITA	Green Investment Tax Allowance
GITE	Green Income Tax Exemption
GPP	Green Public Procurement
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ITCILO	International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization
LCA	Life Cycle Assessment
LCC	Life Cycle Costing
LCR	Low Carbon Ratings
MRT	Mass Rapid Transit
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PACT	Partnership for Carbon Transparency
PCF	Product Carbon Footprint
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEI	Stockholm Environment Institute
SPP	Sustainable Public Procurement
WBCSD	World Business Council for Sustainable Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sustainable/Green Public Procurement Stakeholder Platform Webinar Series, delivered under the EU SWITCH-Asia Policy Support Component, brings together a set of practical insights on how public procurement can be used more strategically to advance sustainability objectives. Across the four sessions, a consistent message emerges: procurement is not only an administrative function, but a powerful policy lever capable of shaping markets, accelerating innovation, and supporting the transition to low-carbon and resource-efficient economies.

The discussions illustrate how governments can use their purchasing power to send clear and sustained signals to the market. When aligned with broader policy priorities, such as climate targets, circular economy strategies, and sustainable development agendas. Green public procurement (GPP) can stimulate demand for greener products and services, encouraging industries to adapt production processes and invest in new technologies.

At the same time, the experience shared across countries suggests that implementation remains uneven. While policy frameworks and targets are increasingly in place, translating these into day-to-day procurement practices continues to present challenges. These challenges often relate to institutional capacity, availability of data and tools, and varying levels of market readiness.

The webinars also highlight the growing importance of lifecycle thinking, carbon transparency, and circularity in procurement decisions, particularly in sectors with high environmental impact such as infrastructure and construction. These approaches allow public authorities to move beyond short-term cost considerations and better capture long-term value.

Taken together, the series points to the need for a more coordinated and systemic approach. Strengthening the procurement workforce, improving policy alignment, and fostering collaboration across stakeholders will be critical to ensuring that GPP can deliver on its potential as a driver of sustainable and inclusive economic transformation.

INTRODUCTION

Public procurement accounts for a significant share of government expenditure and plays an increasingly important role in advancing public policy objectives. In recent years, there has been a clear shift in how procurement is understood, moving away from a narrow focus on compliance and cost minimization toward a broader, more strategic function that incorporates environmental and social considerations. Within this evolving landscape, Green Public Procurement (GPP) has gained significance as a practical tool to deliver and wider policy commitments, including climate mitigation, resource efficiency, and circular economy.

The webinar series explored how GPP is being positioned within wider sustainability efforts, particularly in relation to innovation, market transformation, and the transition toward net zero. Bringing together experiences from different regions and sectors, the discussions focused on how procurement systems are gradually adapting to incorporate environmental considerations in a more systematic way. A central question running through the series was how far GPP can shape markets by influencing demand for green products and services. The construction sector was used as a practical example, given its scale, the volume of materials it consumes, and its contribution to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Experiences shared during the webinars suggested that, where sustainability criteria are clearly defined and consistently applied, public procurement can contribute to measurable and tangible outcomes, such as reductions in GHG emissions, less resources consumed through circular approaches, and energy savings over the lifecycle of infrastructure.

At the same time, the discussions make it clear that these outcomes do not happen automatically. A number of enabling factors need to be in place, including alignment with broader policy frameworks, access to appropriate guidelines, tools and standards, availability of reliable data, engaging suppliers, competent

procument officials, and a market that is able to respond to new requirements. In many cases, these elements are still developing, which helps explain why progress can be uneven across countries and sectors.

The final webinar turns attention to an aspect that is sometimes less visible in policy discussions: the people behind procurement systems. Strengthening the GPP professionalization goes beyond training alone. It involves building more structured approaches to professionalization, including competency frameworks, certification systems, and ongoing opportunities for learning and exchange. These elements are increasingly seen as important in helping practitioners navigate the growing complexity of sustainable procurement.

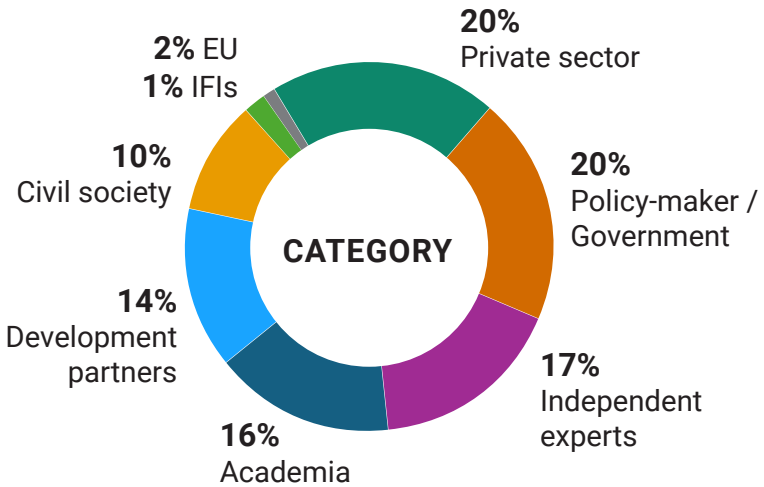
OVERVIEW OF THE WEBINAR SERIES

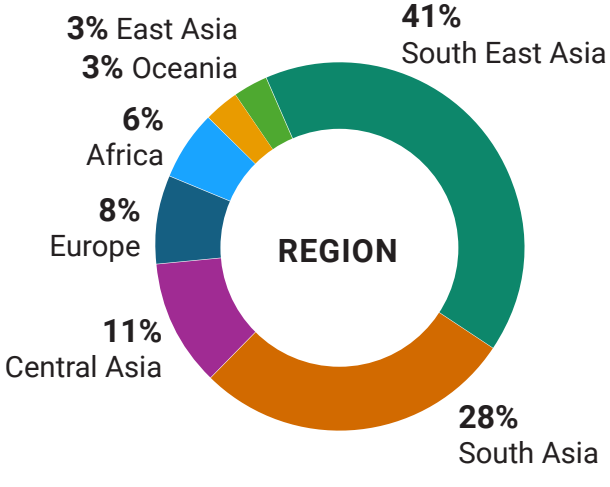
Table 1. Details of the Webinars

Title	No. of Participants	Speakers
Webinar 1: Sustainable Procurement as a Catalyst for Innovation and Market Transformation	59 participants	**Panel I** **Vuttichai KAEWKRAJANG** Director of the Environmental Analysis Center, Pollution Control Department, Thailand **Tanya HARRIS** Sustainable Procurement Expert, Edge Impact Eileen TORRES-MORALES Research Associate, SEI **Lyn TURNER** Assistant Director, Commonwealth Sustainable Procurement Advocacy and Resource Centre, Australia **Panel II** **Benjamin WEE** Sustainable Procurement Pledge Expert, Singapore Branch **Malik ATAN** Green Government Procurement Technical Specialist, Malaysia Green Technology and Climate Change Centre (MGTC), Malaysia **Ruben VAN GAALEN** LCA Specialist, EcoReview
Webinar 2: Enhancing Circularity in Procurement of Infrastructure Projects	38 participants	**Panel I** **Michael STEIDL** Head of the European Investment Bank (EIB), Regional Representation to South Asia Procurement Pledge Expert, Singapore Branch **Jana ŽILKOVÁ** Country Director of Caritas Czech Republic in Mongolia **Xiu Xiu GAO** Senior Engineer at China Architecture Design & Research Group **Panel II** **Natasha KHALIL** Associate Professor, Universiti Teknologi MARA Perak, Malaysia **Rizky ADITYA PUTRA** Programme Manager, Energy Efficiency and Conservation Department – ASEAN Centre for Energy **Jill RAMOS** Chief Sustainability Officer, Holcim Philippines

Title	No. of Participants	Speakers
Webinar 3: Leveraging Green Public Procurement for Net Zero Transition	69 participants	**Panel I** **Ferhat KERACA** Professor, School of Engineering and Digital Sciences, Nazerbayev University, Kazakhstan **Dr. Wonchalerm CHALODHORN** Chair of Working Group TCMA on Sustainability **Helena O' ROURKE-POTOCKI** Procurement Expert at ICLEI Europe **Panel II** **Isabella LOH** Chairman, Singapore Environment Council **Andrew MINSON** Director, Global Cement and Concrete Association **Joe PHELAN** Executive Director Asia Pacific & Member of the WBCSD Extended Leadership Group
Webinar 4: From Capacity Building to Professionalization: Strengthening the GPP workforce for effective policy implementation	43 participants	**Keynote presentation** **Erika BOZZAY** Dupety Head, Infrastructure and Public Procurement Division, OECD **Sanda JUGO** Policy Analyst, Infrastructure and Public Procurement Division, OECD **Panel I** **Esmerina PETUTSCHNIG** Project Officer, International Training Centre of the ILO **Masud AKHTER KHAN** Public Procurement Competency Framework Advisor, Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority **Emilie DOOMS** Community Knowledge & Empowerment, Sustainable Procurement Pledge **Omika BUNKAN** Director of Occupational Standards and Professional Qualifications Bureau, Thailand Professional Qualification Institute

ANALYSIS OF PARTICIPANTS





KEY INSIGHTS AND REFLECTIONS

Webinar 1: Sustainable Procurement as a Catalyst for Innovation and Market Transformation

This webinar revealed that green public procurement (GPP) can sustainably facilitate future innovation and market transformation through an accelerated demand of green products and services. GPP clearly gears industries towards a more sustainable production and cascades down to an entire supply chain. For GPP to drive market transformation, GPP is to be implemented in alignment with policies and instruments such as climate policy, incentive scheme for green and low-carbon production. A roadmap is crucial for this process to be sustainable, potentially with differentiated pathways for different sectors and groups. It provides a structured plan, aligns stakeholders, sets clear milestones, and ensures consistent progress toward sustainable market transformation by guiding policy implementation and monitoring.

KEY INSIGHTS

- GPP should not be a stand-alone policy but rather be mainstreamed together with the other relevant national and international policies, plans, and initiatives, i.e., climate change, circular economy, sustainable development. GPP will therefore be used by many line-ministries and across industrial sectors.
- The national roadmap and commitment on GHG reduction, as well as a sector-specific GHG reduction target can elevate GPP implementation in the country as it paves ways to reach the target by purchasing low carbon products and services.
- GPP can cause a market transformation by scaling up demand for green products and services. A clear market signal from the government would induce an innovation related to raw materials, processes, and products that have less environmental impacts, i.e., low carbon emission, high recycle contents, high energy efficiency.
- The examples from Australia and Thailand showed that GPP can be focused on some products and services categories. In Australia, the government chooses 4 categories namely construction services for building and transport infrastructure, ICT goods, furniture, and textiles, which show high environmental impact and procurement spending per year. In Thailand, there is the GPP products and services platform prepared in local language, where procurers can use as a database to search for green products and services where GPP requirements are met. There are 7 categories available for government procurement, which are computers and printing, office supplies, papers, vehicles, electrical appliances and lightings, construction materials for buildings, and others.
- In Australia, the government particularly shows a strong intention towards sustainable buildings that use environmentally and climate friendly construction processes, materials, and design. Therefore, a low carbon concrete containing slag, fly ash and other industrial wastes has been developed, representing an actual case of how GPP drives innovation and market transformation. Apart from that, other policies help promote sustainable buildings, i.e., circularity in construction contributing to zero waste from the construction site.
- Tender evaluation in Singapore accounts sustainable criteria for 5%. It is a clear message from the government on a country's greenplan, in which all government procurement must incorporate environmental sustainability consideration by 2028.
- Although SMEs have limited readiness to participate in GPP, a good example from Australia GPP framework shows that there is a certain procurement percentage allocated to support local entrepreneurs. In Malaysia, the government incentivizes SMEs to further improve their production facilities using green technologies and practices, especially through the MyHijau platform. The SMEs in Malaysia can claim

tax deductions for investment in approved green technology projects from the Green Investment Tax Allowance (GITA) and Green Income Tax Exemption (GITE) programs.

- In the Netherlands, a discount system in GPP allows the government agencies to procure lower environmental impact products and services with higher prices. This will encourage the producers and contractors to explore for greener products and services and invest in greener technology.
- Regarding GPP data, the transparent, accurate, harmonized data and reporting systems at sub-national and national levels are required for tracking ongoing actions and overall progress towards the target set.

Speaker Highlights

Webinar 2: Enhancing Circularity in Procurement of Infrastructure Projects

This webinar revealed that the circular economy is a global trend shaping towards a sustainable tomorrow by shifting from conventional linear (take-make-use-lose) to circular economy (regenerate biological materials and restore technical materials). The sustainable procurement by the government for large-scale and complex infrastructure projects can immensely promote impactful climate resilience and circularity by extending the useful life of infrastructure, maximizing the reusability of elements and recyclability of materials, while minimizing the total amount of materials used and environmental impacts, including carbon emission from the materials. The progressive trend of circularity is moving from the centralized circularity, where circularity is implemented individually by organization, towards the distributive circularity with more open source, open data, network based with distributive R&D for common knowledge of circularity in society.

KEY INSIGHTS

- The Chinese central government and relevant ministries such as the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Housing and Urban Rural Development, and Ministry of Industry, work collaboratively to strengthen the sustainable public procurement (SPP). A policy instrument aimed at lowering carbon emission and environmental impacts, and enabling the local governments to take actions on the ground to promote the SPP in their public projects, including infrastructures, i.e., local schools, public hospitals. A massive drive on recycled steel consumption has caused a remarkable decrease in carbon emission and energy consumption from steel manufacturing. A shrink in cement consumption is another key element causing a substantial reduction in the carbon emission from infrastructure projects. The implementation of SPP is a key driver fostering low-carbon technologies and innovations in the country. The private sector has been motivated to invest more in research and development.
- Mongolia is committed to advancing sustainable public procurement, ensuring that government spending supports environmental protection, social equity, and economic efficiency. In 2022, the SPP action plan has been developed and the SPP actions are implemented step by step. Other initiatives supporting the SPP and circular economy have been carried out in parallel, such as capacity building programmes, integration of sustainability criteria into the procurement laws, improvement of transparency in procurement, and public engagement. The key barriers inhibiting a successful integration of circularity into procurement practices are lack of political will, insufficient budgets, and resistance to change from private sector actors. Resilience, commitment to core values, and hard work have been the keys in overcoming challenges and driving these initiatives forward.
- Most infrastructure projects financed by EIB in South Asia are climate-related such as mobility systems in cities such as MRT, and renewable energy projects, such as solar and hydropower projects, where the sustainability and environmental criteria are strongly taken into consideration in the procurement process. EIB develops relevant policies, guide, best practices, tools, capacity building and technical assistance programmes to support the circular procurement of projects including infrastructure outside the European Union.
- Some challenges found in South Asia are firstly the complexity of life cycle consideration of the whole projects that require new measurement tools to tackle. Secondly the concepts of SPP and circularity have not been integrated into the procurement regulations of many partner countries, which need a substantive legal amendment. Thirdly, there is the limited capacity of bidders to understand this new approach and its requirements in procurement, and lastly, the product standards are not clearly defined, causing limited availability of products in the markets.
- Experiences from pilot GPP initiative in Malaysia (so called Government Green Procurement or GGP) show that integrating circularity into sustainable public procurement for infrastructure works requires a clear national policy. It will inevitably foster a strong value chain among construction stakeholders, including project owners, designers, contractors, and suppliers. The strong collaboration among governmental agencies is one of the key success factors enhancing the circularity and SPP in Malaysia. For instance, the Ministry of Finance provides clear GGP instructions for national implementation and the Ministry of Works, which regulates infrastructure projects, ensures that the circularity and green construction concepts are integrated into the procurement system.
- From the perspective of the private sector, Holcim Philippines accelerates decarbonization and circularity of operations by diverting residue waste from landfills and used as alternative fuels and raw materials in the co-processing process in cement production. By working closely with many local municipalities, the company can greatly reduce the amount of virgin natural resources consumed. A transparent report on circularity and sustainability is another key focus, where the company emphasizes on monitoring, auditing, reporting, and verification of sustainability indicators to ensure that circularity and sustainability genuinely emerge.

- Driving a transition of buildings towards low carbon is one of ASEAN's agendas, where procurement and energy efficiency can play significant roles. Through SPP, high energy efficiency appliances can be chosen for installation and usage in large public buildings, especially intensive energy consumption appliances, such as air conditioning. This regional initiative for strengthening energy efficiency efforts in residential sector is led by ASEAN Center for Energy (ACE). Apart from energy saving, the other impactful advantages are coherently achieved, in terms of carbon emission reduction, lowered operation cost, and longer product lifespan. Currently, the governments of many ASEAN Member States have already integrated the energy efficiency criterion into their GPP policies to support the decision-making process for procurement.

Speaker Highlights

Webinar 3: Leveraging Green Public Procurement for Net Zero Transition

This webinar revealed the undeniable potential of Green Public Procurement (GPP) as a powerful tool for climate mitigation. Governments annually spend 13–14% of their GDP on procurement, making this a critical leverage point. The procurement strategy must be shifted from a lowest-price approach to a lowest total cost over the lifecycle, while taking into consideration the embedded carbon within products. This strategic change transforms GPP into a robust mechanism for minimizing climate impact across the public sector supply chain. Achieving this requires a concerted effort emphasizing collaboration, focused capacity building, the leveraging of transparent and standardized accounting tools.

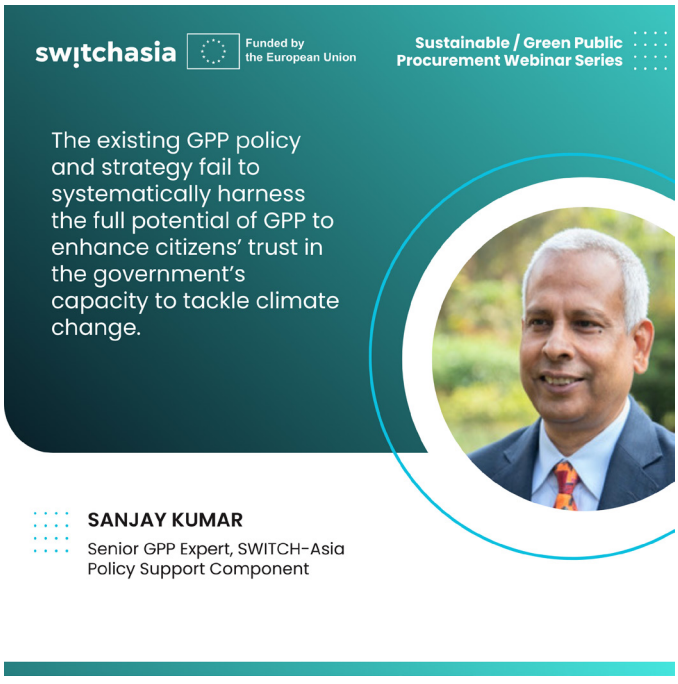
KEY INSIGHTS

- It is crucial for the government to move beyond merely incorporating green procurement criteria into its tendering process and to actively establish mandatory requirements for its implementation.
- In many developing nations, including those in Central Asia, the political will to adopt sustainable practices is present, yet the necessary practical enablers are absent. The main obstacles are a lack of established regulations for recycling and secondary material use, limited local production and certification of green or secondary construction materials, and insufficient technical expertise among public authorities to integrate green criteria into proper tenders. To overcome these barriers, governments should implement pilot projects to aggregate green demand, establish certification systems specifically for secondary construction materials, create incentive schemes, and develop capacity building programs for procurement officers.
- The effective implementation of GPP at the local municipalities is hindered by several significant challenges. Overly stringent green criteria can inadvertently restrict market participation by limiting a number of compliant suppliers, which highlights the necessity of conducting a preliminary market study or consultation with suppliers to accurately assess current supply capabilities. Moreover, the establishment of a clear and long-term procurement plan by the governing authority serves as a critical mechanism to incentivize manufacturers to proactively prepare green supplies.
- For Thailand, to accelerate the Thailand 2050 Net Zero Cement & Concrete Roadmap, a significant push for adoption of low-carbon materials is essential. A core strategy involves promoting hydraulic cement as a replacement for high-carbon ordinary Portland cement. The role of GPP is crucial here, as

it can generate strong market demand by setting clear performance-based concrete criteria, focusing on durability, mechanical properties, and carbon footprint. Collective actions from all key stakeholders could stimulate approximately 80-90% of the material conversion rate towards low-carbon cement.

- The Low Carbon Ratings (LCR), launched by the Global Cement and Concrete Association (GCCA), is a transparent and harmonized rating system that ranks cement and concrete products based on their carbon footprints. It serves as a crucial tool for sustainable procurement by enabling governments, developers, and consumers to clearly identify and prioritize lower-carbon materials, thereby driving demand and accelerating the industry's progress toward decarbonization by complementing the data provided in third-party verified Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs).
- Another item to thoroughly unlock the GPP is the Product Carbon Footprints (PCFs) to provide carbon transparency for accounted emissions from entire value chains. The Partnership for Carbon Transparency (PACT), a leading initiative hosted by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), aims to standardize the calculation and exchange of Product Carbon Footprint data across global value chains. This specific data can accurately track carbon reductions from products and be more accurate than using the global emission factors.
- Effective GPP needs the power of the "3Ps" (Public, Private, and People) to work. The government's demand for green products mandates supplier decarbonization. Financial institutions can then leverage this momentum to finance and scale greener products, delivering benefits to the community.
- Success story: the South Korea mandatory GPP system has proven highly successful, driving a five-fold increase in carbon reduction to 655,000 tonnes and the procurement of 2.7 billion USD in green products.

Speaker Highlights



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Sustainable / Green Public Procurement Webinar Series

The Thai cement industry has several levers to contribute to the net-zero transition, including eco-design as well as the application and development of new technologies. GPP creates demand for ambitious low-carbon solutions by focusing on the lifecycle of products and infrastructure.

DR. WONCHALERM CHALODHORN
Chair of Working Group TCMA on Sustainability

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Sustainable / Green Public Procurement Webinar Series

We need to support the professionalization of public procurers, who deserve greater recognition. Life-cycle costing should be made easier and mandatory to ensure the full benefits of GPP. In Europe, GPP does not lead to higher costs in practice. These barriers can be overcome with sufficient political will.

HELENA O'ROURKE POTOCKI
Procurement Expert at ICLEI Europe

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Sustainable / Green Public Procurement Webinar Series

Low-carbon procurement is one of the priorities in the net-zero plan for the cement and concrete industry. Governments can lead by example and stimulate innovation through GPP. Environmental Product Declarations are a cornerstone of GPP implementation in the cement and concrete sector.

JANA PSARSKA
Head of Policy, Global Cement and Concrete Association (GCCA)

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Sustainable / Green Public Procurement Webinar Series

It's important that governments not only include criteria for green procurement in their bids but also establish mandates for it. Green procurement enables businesses to test products and build markets. Simple tools such as Product Carbon Footprints can unlock transparency in procurement decisions.

JOE PHELAN
Executive Director, Asia Pacific World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

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Sustainable / Green Public Procurement Webinar Series

According to World Bank statistics, government procurement represents about 12% of GDP. This makes it a powerful lever for decarbonisation, with the potential to reshape markets, drive emission reductions, and spur sustainable growth.

ISABELLA LOH
Chairman, Singapore Environment Council

Webinar 4: From Capacity Building to Professionalization: Strengthening the GPP workforce for effective policy implementation

This webinar revealed that Green Public Procurement (GPP) is increasingly recognized as a powerful strategic lever for advancing sustainability, circularity, and achieving broader policy objectives, particularly in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). It highlights a clear shift from conventional procurement approaches focused on compliance and cost-efficiency toward more strategic, value-driven practices that integrate environmental and social impact into consideration. While governments are actively promoting GPP through extensive guidelines and capacity-building programs, a key challenge lies in translating these into effective implementation on the ground. The professionalization of procurement officials plays a critical role in addressing this gap. The role of international organizations such as the OECD, the International Training Centre of the ILO, and the Sustainable Procurement Pledge, as well as national bodies such as the Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority and the Thailand Professional Qualification Institute, was highlighted in supporting procurement professionalization and strengthening GPP implementation. Overall, the webinar emphasized that advancing GPP requires a systemic and collaborative approach, combining policy direction, professional capacity, and innovation across public and private sectors.

KEY INSIGHTS

- Public procurement is linked to over 80% of the SDG indicators. As such, GPP serves as a strategic policy tool for advancing sustainability, shifting public procurement from a conventional approach based on compliance and cost-efficiency toward innovation, environmental value, and long-term impact.
- Enabling effective Strategic Public Procurement requires a comprehensive set of supporting components, including a skilled workforce.
- Training, while necessary, is not sufficient to achieve professionalization. It represents only one element of a broader systemic approach. Professionalization requires the formal recognition of the profession and structured career pathways (through a competency model and certification framework), incentive mechanisms, and collaboration with knowledge institutions. Further guidance on these elements is set out in the OECD's publications (2023 and 2025) on professionalizing the public procurement function.
- GPP professionalization is illustrated through two country case studies: France and Hungary. France set an ambitious target for 100% of public procurement procedures by 2026. However, as these targets were not met, the government recognized that limited capacity within the procurement workforce was a key barrier to effective GPP implementation. In response, the OECD supported France by assessing competency gaps and developing practical solutions, including a hands-on training program and supporting tools such as lifecycle costing, guidance materials, and e-learning modules.
- Hungary adopted its Green Public Procurement Strategy in 2022 with a target of 30% GPP by 2027 and recognized capacity-building for contracting authorities as a key enabler. To support this, the OECD helps develop Life Cycle Costing (LCC) tools for 3 selected procurement categories (water and sewage pumps, medical equipment, and public lighting) and user guidelines.
- There is a common misconception that GPP is expensive than conventional approaches. In practice, experience from several countries shows that greener options may involve higher initial upfront costs; applying LCC often shows that they are more cost-effective over time.
- The International Training Center of the ILO (ITCILO) provides a collection of training programs in the area of green/sustainable public procurement, such as regular course, master course, and diploma, to suit the needs of the trainees. Each program has specific features; for example, the diploma course is designed as a practical program to strengthen capacity in managing procurement functions, with participants required to complete a capstone project demonstrating the knowledge, competencies, and skills acquired.

  Apart from that, ITCILO provides tailor-made capacity programs according to the training needs of clients such as government and financial institutions, as well as professional certification programs.

- Public procurement reform in Bangladesh has been underway since 1999, delivering tangible outcomes over time that support sustainable public procurement, including the enactment of the Public Procurement Act and the adoption of a Sustainable Public Procurement policy. Professionalization of procurement officials has been strengthened through GPP training initiatives implemented in collaboration with ITCILO.
- In Thailand, the climate change literacy framework developed by the Thailand Professional Qualification Institute is structured for four target groups. Interactive literacy (Group 2) is most relevant to the GPP workforce, emphasizing the application of sustainability knowledge in procurement decision-making processes, such as the use of environmental criteria and eco-label products. The other groups cover functional literacy (Group 1), which focuses on raising awareness; critical literacy (Group 3), which builds capacity to analyze technical data such as GHG emissions and carbon footprints; and transformational literacy (Group 4), which supports strategic and system change.
- The private sector plays a key role in promoting procurement professionalization by driving innovation, experimentation, and collaboration, often moving faster due to greater flexibility to experiment. Companies are piloting practices such as decarbonization, integrating carbon into commercial decisions, and redefining what value means in procurement. They also foster collaboration across companies and industries to co-develop practical approaches and share lessons learned. Through platforms like the Sustainable Procurement Pledge (SPP), knowledge exchange and capacity building across sectors are enabled, supporting broader system transformation.
- Integrating carbon pricing into procurement was identified as a shared business challenge. In response, over 235 industry leaders developed the Carbon Pricing for Procurement Initiative, aimed at accelerating supply chain decarbonization. Haleon (consumer health company) applied carbon pricing in tenders, driving supplier engagement while upskilling its procurement team and supporting suppliers, while Bayer (life science company) embedded it across multiple tenders, transforming both internal practices and supplier interactions.

Speaker Highlights

CROSS-CUTTING LESSONS LEARNED

Looking across the four webinars, several common lessons emerge despite the diversity of country contexts and sectoral focus.

1. **Policy frameworks:** GPP tends to be most effective when it is not treated as a stand-alone instrument, but embedded within broader policy frameworks. Linking procurement to national climate strategies, circular economy agendas, and sector-specific plans helps ensure that it contributes to wider policy objectives rather than operating in isolation.

2. **Market transition:** Governments play an important role in shaping markets through their purchasing power. Public procurement can create large-volume and predictable demand for sustainable products and services, encouraging suppliers to invest in green and circular innovations. At the same time, experience shows that criteria need to be carefully calibrated. If requirements are set too high without considering market readiness, they can unintentionally limit competition. Early engagement with suppliers in value chain, together with clear roadmaps and targets, can support a more balanced and realistic approach.

3 **Life cycle approach and value:** A shift can obviously be observed from lowest-price procurement toward approaches that consider environmental and social impact as well as life cycle cost. This allows public procurement decisions to better reflect long-term value, including circularity, durability, lifespan, carbon performance, and energy efficiency, although applying these approaches in practice still requires technical tools and robust competencies of GPP procurement officials.

4 **GPP data:** Reliable and comparable data remains a key enabler. Without transparent and harmonized systems, it is difficult to track progress or assess tangible impact. Tools such as product carbon footprints and standardized rating systems are increasingly being used to support more informed decision-making for procurement.

5 **Capacity:** Even where there is strong political commitment, implementation is often hindered by limited technical expertise and institutional capacity. This points to the need to move beyond ad hoc training toward a more structured approach to professionalizing the procurement function, including competency development and certification.

6 **Collaboration:** Progress in GPP rarely happens without the involvement of multiple stakeholders. It depends on the interaction of multiple actors, including public institutions, private sector, financial institutions, knowledge insitutions and others. Collaboration enables stakeholders to share knowledge, co-create practical solutions, support innovation, and scale these across sectors, counties, and regions.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAKEHOLDERS

The insights from the webinar series lead to a number of practical opportunities for different stakeholder groups to strengthen the GPP implementation.

Policymakers: There is a prospect to further align procurement with broader policy priorities. This includes embedding GPP more firmly within legal and regulatory frameworks, as well as ensuring alignment with climate and circular economy strategies. Establishing clear standards and certification systems can also provide greater clarity for both procurers and suppliers. In addition, policy development would benefit from a more coordinated inter-ministerial approach. Co-creation across relevant ministries can help ensure that different dimensions are addressed in a complementary manner, for example, finance authorities can introduce measures to support SMEs and promote a more level playing field in public procurement, while industry-focused institutions can facilitate technological upgrading and incentivize production of eco-friendly or green products.

Procurement authorities and practitioners: There is an opportunity to make more systematic use of existing guidelines, best practices, and tools. This includes applying lifecycle costing (LCC), integrating environmental and carbon-related criteria into tendering processes, and engaging more actively with the market. Strengthening internal capacity and advancing professionalization through competency frameworks and certification are important elements in supporting these shifts.

Private sector: Growing demand from public procurement creates incentives to innovate and expand the supply of green products and services. Beyond this, companies have an important role in working more closely both within and across sectors to accelerate transformation, given their ability to respond more rapidly and adapt to emerging opportunities. This includes collaborating along value chains from material suppliers to contractors and service providers in order to co-create low-carbon and circular solutions. Partnerships across industries can also support shared innovation, particularly in areas such as alternative materials, energy efficiency, and waste reduction. In addition, companies can contribute by improving transparency, for example, through the disclosure of product-level environmental data such as carbon footprints and Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs), which support more informed procurement decisions.

Financial institutions: These actors can play a complementary role by supporting investments that respond to procurement-driven demand. By aligning financing with sustainability objectives, they can help scale up the deployment of green technologies and infrastructure. Beyond financing, financial institutions can also contribute by developing guidances and practical tools to support sustainable public procurement, particularly in infrastructure projects. In addition, they can support capacity building efforts and pilot initiatives, build technical knowledge, and strengthen GPP implementation on the ground.

International organizations and knowledge institutions: These stakeholders remain important partners in this process. Their role in providing technical assistance, developing tools and methodologies, and facilitating knowledge exchange is significant, especially in contexts where capacity is still evolving. In addition, they can help foster innovation by supporting pilot initiatives and test-bedding new approaches, allowing governments and practitioners to experiment, learn, and refine solutions before scaling them more broadly.

WAY FORWARD

Across the four webinars, there is a clear sense that the foundations for GPP are already in place in many countries. Policies have been introduced, targets are being set, and a range of tools is available. The more persistent challenge lies in implementation on how to translate these into consistent practices and tangible results.

A first priority is to strengthen how GPP is positioned within broader policy frameworks. In many cases, procurement is still treated as a separate initiative rather than as part of a wider policy landscape. Bringing it more firmly into climate and circular economy strategies, supported by clearer targets, defined responsibilities, and stronger coordination across ministries, can help close this gap. Closer alignment between finance, environment, and industry institutions will be particularly important, especially in contexts where market readiness and capacity of supply chain remain uneven.

At the same time, the role of the procurement workforce deserves greater attention. Experience from the webinars suggests that training, while useful, is not enough on its own. What is needed is a more structured approach to professionalization, including competency frameworks, certification systems, and clearer career pathways. Without this, it is difficult to expect consistent application of increasingly complex sustainability conditions and requirements.

Another area where further progress is needed is in the use of lifecycle approaches. While tools for lifecycle costing and carbon assessment are becoming more available, their application is still uneven. Expanding their use will require not only applicable tools, but also clearer guidance and stronger incentives. This goes hand in hand with improving data systems, so that procurement outcomes can be tracked more reliably and used to inform decision-making process.

The importance of engaging the market also comes through strongly. In practice, procurement cannot drive change unless suppliers in a whole value chain are able to respond. Early dialogue with the market, along with clearer and more predictable procurement signals, can help create the conditions for investment in greener and more sustainable solutions. At the same time, attention needs to be given to ensuring that small firms or SMEs are not left behind.

Finally, continued collaboration will be essential. Much of the progress described in the webinars has depended on partnerships among public institutions, private sector actors, financial institutions, and knowledge organizations. Strengthening platforms for ongoing exchange can help move beyond isolated initiatives toward more sustained learning and co-creation of solutions.

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