



NETWORKING EVENT

Transitioning to a Circular Economy (CE) for Plastics in the Asia Pacific

Enabling Frameworks, Digital Tools, and Frontier Technologies to address the Plastics Value Chain



DATE

Wednesday,
29th June 2022



TIME

12:30 - 14:00 hrs



VENUE

Multifunction Hall Room 7
International Congress Centre
(MCK), Plac Sławika i Antalla,
140-163, **Katowice, Poland**

BACKGROUND

The future sustainability of cities in Asia and the Pacific depends on the ability to innovate and integrate circular solutions for resource efficient and resilient socio-economic development. The region has witnessed a landmark shift, with more than half of its population now living in urban areas.

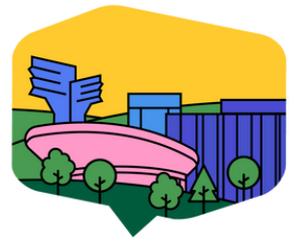
This has significant social, environmental, and economic implications - as the proportion of people living in towns and cities increases, the use and disposal of resources and their related impacts also increase. One of the most critical challenges is the management of plastic waste, where purposeful interventions have the potential to support transformational circular economies and build the foundation for more sustainable communities.

Plastic pollution is a significant issue in the Asia-Pacific region, with plastic waste contaminating land and water resources including rivers, streams, and oceans. It is estimated that of the 8.3 billion metric tonnes (Mt) of plastic produced globally over the past decades, only nine per cent has been recycled, while 79 per cent has accumulated in landfills or the natural environment and up to 13 million Mt enters the oceans annually. If unchecked, the world's oceans will contain nearly 250 million metric tonnes of plastic by 2025.

SESSION THEMES:

Circular Economy, Plastics, Frontier Technologies and Tools, Waste Management, Resource Efficiency, Environment, SDGs

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KATOWICE, POLAND | 26-30 JUNE 2022

Over 80 per cent of marine plastic waste comes from land-based sources, making plastic the most common type of marine litter. Countries with fast growing markets and underdeveloped waste management systems in Asia may be responsible for as much as 60% of global plastic waste leakage. Most of the waste produced in developing countries could be recovered to provide economic, social, and ecological value to societies. However, currently most of the plastic produced is lost to the economic supply chain, causing a serious threat to biodiversity, ecosystems, human health and wellbeing, and municipal budgets. With only 18 to 28% of recyclable plastic recovered and recycled in these countries, most plastic packaging waste is not only left to pollute the environment, littering beaches and roadsides, but its value to these economies is also lost. This needs to change. Transforming how we use and manage plastic is imperative and we must help countries shift to a circular economy (CE) that seeks to design products that create no waste or are reused and recycled. This transition can only happen by focusing on enabling frameworks that help to shift to circular solutions with a focus on innovative tool, frontier technologies and developing appropriate standards and policies that support this shift—from linear to circular.

The networking event planned as a panel discussion will focus on initiatives and actions to transition to a CE for plastics, digital tool and frontier technologies supporting circularity for plastics and best practice case-studies from Asia-Pacific. The event will have participation from representatives from the World Economic Forum, multilateral and bilateral agencies, national and local governments and private players will present insights and case studies on transitioning to a CE for plastics. The innovative tools, good practices and lessons learned from cities/ businesses/ pilots will be explored to promote inclusive, sustainable, and livable cities focusing on SDG11 and 12.

The key objective of the networking event is to bring together stakeholders working in the space of CE for plastics highlighting data driven digital tools, enabling frameworks, frontier technologies and policies. The session will explore formulating a roadmap to transition to CE for plastics. The discussant will share best practices in the Asia-Pacific Region with focus on innovation and digitization, standards, informal sector, and their role in CE transition and promoting an inclusive multi-stakeholder approach. Further, the discussants will exchange on how we can promote effective policies, partnerships and institutions that will allow cities in the Asia-Pacific Region to adopt wide CE interventions on the ground.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE

Plastic pollution is a significant issue in the Asia-Pacific region, with plastic waste contaminating land and water resources including rivers, streams, and oceans. It is estimated that of the 8.3 billion metric tonnes (Mt) of plastic produced globally over the past decades, only nine per cent has been recycled, while 79 per cent has accumulated in landfills or the natural environment and up to 13 million Mt enters the oceans annually. If unchecked, the world's oceans will contain nearly 250 million metric tonnes of plastic by 2025.

FORMAT OF DISCUSSION

The session will follow a moderated discussion format: the main group of 6–7 panelists will sit on the stage. After introductions by the moderator, each panelist presents first a 5-minute introduction to the main views or facts that they have on the theme. The panelist may use the guiding questions presented below to orient their opening comment. The opening remarks by the panelists will be followed by a moderated discussion between the panelist and then between the audience and the panel. Speakers are not required to prepare powerpoint presentations, formal speeches or statements. The objective is to foster an open debate and lively personal interaction.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What are the new and transformative approaches that can be taken to foster CE for plastics in the Asia-Pacific Region?
- Developing countries tend to see a rise in plastic consumption as their economies grow. What actions or standards should be taking place across emerging global markets to minimize plastics waste in the earlier stages of economic development? (Economic Development/Regional Differences)
- A circular economy can also help fight against climate change but begins at the point of conception of a product. Even before point-of-purchase, are there any parts of the circular economy where consumers might have more weight in influencing change? (Circular Economy)
- How can progressive social innovation programmes on circular economy be scaled-up (with focus on integration and inclusion of informal sector to reduce inequalities and promote equitable development)?
- What are some of the new emerging technologies/digital tools that are enabling transition to CE for plastics?
- What is the importance of circular financing in CE transition?
- What incentives can policymakers and establishments offer to increase CE transition for plastics, support infrastructure installation, and ensure a sufficient amount of material is processed to maintain profitability?
- Everyone is looking for the ultimate solution, but, the problem tends to be more localized. Is there a way to scale CE solutions across the Asia-Pacific region or is a bottom-up structure the best way forward?
- Can plastic waste management be one size fits all? How do we account for regional differences in how communities handle it to ensure closing the loop? Are there methods that are more effective than others or that are counterproductive? (Regional Differences)
- Plastics play a complex role in climate change. Many times, a plastic package has a lower environmental footprint than packaging made from glass, aluminum or fiber, but the continued growth of plastic waste is concerning. What circular solutions for end-of-life plastics have been the most significant in benefiting the larger fight against climate change?
- What tools or resources do youth and tomorrow's leaders need access to in order to be successful in taking actions that support circularity and toward a better future? How can we support? (Youth/Future Generations)

SPEAKERS/ PANELISTS

Title	First Name	Last Name	Official Title	Organisation	Country
Mr.	Sanjay	Kumar	Additional Secretary	Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India	India
Dr.	Graham	Alabaster	Chief	UN-Habitat Geneva Office	Switzerland
Dr.	Anjali	Acharya	Senior Environmental Specialist	World Bank	Singapore
Ms.	Kristin	Hughes	Director	Global Plastic Action Partnership (GPAP), World Economic Forum	Switzerland
Ms.	Taylor	Maddalene	Director, Circularity Assessment Protocol	University of Georgia	USA
Mr.	Martyn	Tickner	Chief Advisor Circular Solutions	Alliance to End Plastic Waste	Singapore

SESSION ORGANISERS



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Ms. Swati Singh Sambyal
UN-Habitat India Office
swati.singhsambyal@un.org
+91-9910496283

Mr. Abdellah Hmamouche
World Economic Forum
abdellah.hmamouche@weforum.org



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