

Policy dialogue on sustainable lifestyles in Asia

Background Information:

SWITCH-Asia is the programme funded by the **European Union (EU)** to promote sustainable consumption and production (SCP) across the Asian Region. The SWITCH-Asia Regional Policy Advocacy Component (RPAC), implemented by United Nations Environment Programme, is designed to strengthen the dialogue at regional, sub-regional and national policies on Sustainable Consumption and Production and thereby contributing to green growth and reduction of poverty in Asian countries

Under the SWITCH Asia II, output A 2 – **Dialogue on Sustainable Lifestyles for Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)**, the SWITCH-Asia RPAC, funded by EU and implemented by UNEP Asia Pacific Regional office successfully organized two dialogues in 2018 and 2019 respectively to strengthen the awareness raising, policies, and business models for SWITCH-Asia countries. This results in strong perception and deeper understandings of key messages that Sustainable Lifestyles is now at the heart of Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) to accelerate achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including Climate Action, Marine Litter, Air Pollution, Food Loss and Food Waste, Resource Efficiency, and so on. Based on the RPAC's technical guidance and policy advocacy, the dialogues in 2018 and 2019 were developed as part of regional and sub-regional policy dialogues and training. The main contents of the dialogue were integrated and presented during the regional and sub-regional events with analysis of case studies and application of different sectors. The academies and private sector also enhanced knowledge and experience sharing and networks of young professionals and startups in the region.

In close collaboration with global partners, UNEP has been promoting principles of sustainable consumption and production and resource efficiency, and their roles in accelerating and scaling up this action for global impact a transformative change including through Sustainable Lifestyles. With the extensive work, Resource Efficiency and SCP is extensively promoted through advocacy, science-policy interface, convening, and multi-stakeholder stakeholder engagement. UNEP has also been actively supporting green economy and circular economy to create virtuous cycle around sustainable consumption and consumption based on life cycle approach. Sustainable lifestyles is one of the key element for promoting circular economy as it influences whole value chain across the lifecycle including eco-design, responsible sourcing of primary materials, environmentally sound and socially responsible production and after sales services including right to repair, and take back for proper recycling and recovery.

The SWITCH-Asia Regional Policy Advocacy Component (RPAC) is funded European Union (EU), implemented by UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, based in Bangkok. The SWITCH-Asia RPAC promotes the uptake of sustainable consumption and production practices in Asia as well as the transition to a more circular economy as a road to transformation to an economic system that uses natural resources in the most efficient way, preserves the value of materials and products by using them circularly, and reduces the negative impact of economic activities on the environment and health. The EU sees the circular economy as an opportunity for resource-poor countries to secure access to vital resources, maintain global competitiveness and ensure a high quality of the global environment. Applying circular economy approaches can cut industrial emissions, reduce the production of and exposure to hazardous substances and contribute to climate change mitigation. (2019, European Commission). Sustainable lifestyles is one of the key elements for circular economy that influences every stage in the value chain based on life cycle perspective.

The EU has been supporting sustainable lifestyles through various mechanisms including through awareness raising and advocacy, green public procurement, sustainable financing, policies and regulatory frameworks, and business models including extended lifespan through right to repair, shared economy for optimal use, product as service to control the life cycle of the products and so on. This dialogue is being organized during the difficult times due to COVID-19 and many countries are putting in place economic, social and environmental recovery. Therefore, this is very timely effort to integrate that thinking in sustainable lifestyles.

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