

UNEP Global Dialogue: Circular Economy Model of Waste Management

Date: Monday 17th - Tuesday 18th February, 2025

(Youth Day: Wednesday 19th February, 2025)

Venue: UNEP-IETC Office in Osaka, Japan (In-person Dialogue with online connection)

Opening session

Context

The meeting will commence with a formal opening ceremony, featuring welcome remarks from UNEP, representatives from the Government of Japan, the Osaka City Government, and key partners such as GEC and IGES-CCET. The opening session will introduce the key theme of the meeting: circular economy model for waste management.

Agenda

Monday 17th February (8:45-9:30)

8:45-9:30	<p>Opening Remark</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Takehiro Nakamura, Head, IETC UNEP <p>Welcome Remark</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Hisashi Horii, Director General, Environment Bureau, Osaka City Government)• Government of Japan
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Session 1 - Waste Management as a component of closed-loop systems

Context

This session will explore how cities, nations, and regions can adopt strategies to close the material cycle through recycling and better waste management, as a contributor to circular economy. Discussions will address topics such as lifecycle approach, circularity, waste valorisation, waste minimization, recycling innovations, and economic benefits of circularity. Case studies from various countries will highlight successful strategies for transforming waste into valuable resources, reducing environmental impacts and promoting sustainable development.

The target audience are policymakers, practitioners, experts and stakeholders from waste arena, including civil society and informal and underrepresented groups.

Objectives

1. Learn how waste management sector can benefit from circular approaches.
2. Understand the implications of lifecycle approach for the waste management.
3. Identify entry points for collaboration between downstream and upstream sectors.

Agenda

Monday 17th February (9:30-12:30)

9:30-9:45	<p>Special remarks: Brazil's efforts to become a world champion of circular economy and proper waste management</p> <p>Lucas Ramalho Maciel, Director of New Economies in Brazil's Ministry of Development, Industry, Trade & Services</p>
9:45-10:15	<p>Keynote speech: Integrating circularity into waste management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is recycling alone insufficient to tackle waste management challenges? • How does thermodynamics influence material quality and waste valorization? • What are the energy and climate implications of waste management and recycling (LCA approach)? • How can producers and waste operators collaborate to advance a circular economy? <p>20 min: Joe Papineschi, Chairperson, Eunomia Research & Consulting 10 min: Q&A</p>
10:15-10:30	Coffee break

10:30-10:55	<p>Presentation 1: Lessons from the new plastics economy global commitment</p> <p>Showcase of Global Commitment, which unites over 1,000 businesses, governments and other organisations in a voluntary coalition for a circular economy for plastics, with a collective commitment of more than USD 10 billion to ensure plastics never become waste or pollution. The group represents 20% of all plastic packaging businesses globally, and over 1 billion people from 55 government signatories. In its initial five years (2018-2023), the group achieved a stabilisation in its virgin plastics use, compared to a 11% increase of global plastic packaging market; and increased the production of recycled plastics by 90%, compared to 25% for the market as a whole.</p> <p>15 min: Ellen Macarthur Foundation representant 10 min: Q&A</p>
10:55-11:20	<p>Presentation 2: Recent developments in the packaging industry toward circularity and better waste management</p> <p>This session explores circular innovations in packaging, highlighting successful business cases, challenges with non-scalable solutions, and lessons learned. It will discuss how the packaging industry and the waste sector can collaborate for better waste management, as well as industry perspectives on interventions against plastic pollution for meaningful engagement and results.</p> <p>Key Discussion Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current recycling, composting, and reuse infrastructure in the U.S. • Trends in sustainable packaging: alternative materials, reusable designs, and consumer engagement • Innovative technologies: AI, advanced labeling, and waste management breakthroughs • Scalable, economically viable recycling case studies <p>15 min: Cory Connors, Director of Sustainable Packaging, Orora Group 10 min: Q&A</p>
11:20-11:45	<p>Presentation 3: ASEAN's roadmap to circular economy: strategies, achievements and future directions</p> <p>15 min: Latifahaida Abdul Latif, Assistant Director of the Analysis and Monitoring on Finance & Socio-Economic Division, ASEAN Secretariat 10 min: Q&A</p>
11:45-12:30	<p>Panel & open discussion: Upstream and downstream cooperation for waste management</p> <p>Key Discussion Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating resource valorization into the waste management sector • Designing effective policies and market mechanisms to engage both citizens and companies • Success stories of cooperation between upstream and downstream sectors in circular systems • Making "design for recycling" a practical and widespread reality

Facilitator: Felipe Dall Panellists: Joe Papineschi, Ellen MacArthur Foundation Representative, Cory Connors, Chris Bradley
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Session 2 - Informal sector integration and gender mainstreaming in the waste sector as part of the circular economy transition

Context

As the global community accelerates its shift towards more sustainable and inclusive practices, integrating the informal sector and addressing gender dynamics in waste management have emerged as critical components of a successful circular economy systems. Informal waste workers, particularly women, play a pivotal role in waste management, particularly source segregation, recycling and resource recovery, contributing significantly to waste reduction and environmental sustainability. Despite their contributions, they often face social exclusion, economic marginalization, inadequate recognition and systemic challenges such as lack of access to social protection, formal employment, and safe working conditions. This technical session will explore the critical intersections of informal sector integration and gender mainstreaming in waste sector. It will examine the influence of gender roles and dynamics on waste management practices. Drawing on comprehensive gender analysis and case studies, the session will highlight best practices, innovative approaches, and policy interventions for creating more inclusive waste management systems.

Objectives

1. Examine the roles, challenges and contributions of informal waste sector workers, including women, in the circular economy.
2. Highlight the importance of gender mainstreaming in waste management systems to promote inclusive and sustainable practices.
3. Showcase best practices for integrating the informal waste sector into circular economy transitions, emphasizing social equity and gender responsiveness.
4. Discuss strategies and practical action for fostering partnerships between government, NGOs, and the informal sector to enhance resource recovery and sustainability.

Agenda

Monday 17th February (14:00 - 17:00)

14:00-14:05	<p>Session introduction Premakumara Jagath Dickella Gamaralalage, IGES</p>
14:05-14:15	<p>Setting the scene: Gender and waste management Junko Fujioka, UNEP-IETC</p>
14:15-14:25	<p>Presentation 1: Integrating social equity and gender mainstreaming into circular waste management: global lessons from the informal sector Ms. Poorniima Chikarmane (Online participation)</p>
14:25-14:35	<p>Presentation 2: Empowering communities through waste banks: women's leadership in establishing local circular systems transforming household waste into economic opportunities Dr. Auwilla Putri, Section Head of Environmental Monitoring Program, Environmental Management Agency of Padang City, Indonesia</p>
14:35-14:45	<p>Presentation 3: Youth leading the way: meaningful engagement in gender-responsive and inclusive circular economy models Ms. Janna Radi (Translational health researcher/ CYMG, Chemicals, Waste and Pollution)</p>
14:45-15:25	<p>Discussions – Part 1: Gender mainstreaming and youth engagement in the circular economy model Key Discussion Points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Role of Gender Equality in Circular Economy Models: How can gender equality contribute to the success of waste management initiatives? Discuss the different roles women and men play in waste management and recycling sectors and how inclusive policies can improve outcomes. 2. Youth as Catalysts for Circular Economy: How can youth-driven innovations and initiatives accelerate the transition to circular waste management? Explore examples where young people have led or innovated in waste reduction, recycling, or upcycling. 3. Challenges and Opportunities for Women and Youth in Waste Management: What are the unique challenges women and youth face in waste management roles (including at household, community and the formal/informal waste management functions, and policy preparation), and how can these be addressed? 4. Empowering Youth and Women through Education and Awareness: How can targeted education and awareness campaigns increase youth and women's participation in circular economy practices? Consider the types of training or support needed for sustainable engagement. 5. Intersection of Gender, Youth, and Policy in Circular Economy: What policies or practices could be developed to ensure gender and youth considerations are embedded in national and local circular economy strategies?
15:25-15:45	Coffee break

15:45-15:55	<p>Presentation 4: Policy frameworks for integrating the informal sector in circular economy: enhancing sustainability and social inclusion in Cambodia</p> <p>Mr. Sam Phalla, Director, COMPOSTED, Cambodia</p>
15:55-16:05	<p>Presentation 5: Innovative approaches to informal sector and gender integration in waste management in Africa</p> <p>Mr John Chweya, Chairman, Kenya National Waste Pickers Association</p>
16:05 -16:45	<p>Discussions – Part 2: Informal sector integration into the circular economy model</p> <p>Key Discussion Points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contributions of the Informal Sector to Resource Recovery and Recycling: Examine the vital role informal workers play in collecting, sorting, and recycling materials, which supports resource efficiency and waste reduction in the circular economy. 2. Challenges Faced by the Informal Sector in Waste Management: Discuss common obstacles such as lack of recognition, access to resources, fair wages, and safety measures, which hinder informal workers' contributions well-being, and integration into formal systems. 3. Successful Approaches to Integrating the Informal Sector: Highlight examples and case studies where informal waste workers have been integrated into formal waste management systems, improving both their livelihoods and waste management outcomes. 4. Policies and Programs that Support Integration: Identify the types of policies, partnerships, and programs that create pathways for informal sector workers to be recognized, trained, and supported in the circular economy. 5. Strengthening Collaboration between Formal and Informal Sectors: Explore strategies for fostering partnerships between formal waste management entities and informal sector workers to create a collaborative, inclusive circular economy system.
16:45-17:00	<p>Summary: Identifying a few key takeaways from the session</p> <p>All participants</p>

Session 3 - Public-private partnerships and EPR schemes as catalysts for better waste management

Context

This session will focus on how waste sector can be a contributor to the circular economy through the adoption of PPPs and EPR schemes. Discussions will revolve around collaborative initiatives involving private and public sector that can serve both parties' interests while contributing to reducing waste generation, enhancing recycling and supporting the transition to a circular economy. EPR schemes may be one of the best tools for this purpose, not only as a waste management instrument, but also as a lever to promote resource efficiency in closed-loop systems, through the establishment of PPPs and business-oriented mechanisms with societal environmental goals.

The target audience for this session includes policymakers, private sector representatives and financial institutions dealing with waste management through public-private collaboration.

Objectives

1. Learn best strategies to leverage PPP in the waste sector.
2. Identify best opportunities/entry points for the establishment of sound PPPs or EPR schemes in waste sector.
3. Discuss the best models for EPR implementation.
4. Better understand the role of blended financing and how to leverage investments in waste sector.

Agenda

Tuesday 18th February (9:00-12:00)

9:00-9:25	<p>Keynote speech 1: Public-private partnerships in support of EPR schemes.</p> <p>Showcase of Uruguayan experience with EPR schemes, involving private sector and national and subnational governments, where strategic partnerships provide financial and operational support for waste management operation in cities, including costs with personnel, facilities and activities.</p> <p>Key Discussion Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the EPR schemes were designed? • Were adaptation measures required?
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the role of national and subnational governments? • What works better: centralised or local-level coordination? • What social and gender aspects are taken into consideration? <p>15 min: Virginia Chiesa, Environmental Policy expert, Ministry of Environment of Uruguay 10 min: Q&A</p>
9:25-9:50	<p>Keynote speech 2: Understanding PROs role and opportunities for PPPs in EPR schemes</p> <p>Key Discussion Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to design an effective, transparent and agreeable PRO entity? • Which model is better (public/private/PPP; centralised/decentralised; profit/not-for-profit)? • What's the role of governments once PROs are established? • How can EPR be effectively implemented as part of PPPs to drive circularity in waste management? • How to expand EPR schemes into up- and mid-stream stages? <p>15 min: Deawon Sung, Resource Circulation Centre, Ministry of Environment of Korea 10 min: Q&A</p>
9:50-10:15	<p>Keynote speech 3: Cameroon case</p> <p>15 min: Guy Roland Olinga Ngonu, Head of Studies and Perspective Unit, Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development of Cameroon - National Waste Exchange 10 min: Q&A</p>
10:15-10:35	Coffee break
10:35 - 11:00	<p>Keynote speech 4: Kazakhstan's experience with PPP.</p> <p>Key Discussion Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the process of Kazakhstan in designing its PPP schemes, and what would you do differently? • How convergence was achieved between different stakeholders? • What are the main challenges and envisaged objectives for the PPP implementation in Kazakhstan? <p>15 min: Vera Mustafina, CSD Kazakhstan representant 10 min: Q&A</p>
11:00-12:00	<p>Panel and open discussion: Leveraging PPPs and private investments to promote circularity in waste management sector</p> <p>Key Discussion Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main challenges and opportunities in evolving traditional PPP and EPR frameworks towards circular economy models? • What are the best cases, and ideal policy strategies and timeline for design and implementation? • How to leverage investments in waste sector, and how to balance companies' interests with environmental and societal goals?

	Facilitator: Aseel Abotalib (CYMG) Panellists: the four previous speakers
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Session 4 - Waste management policies and circular economy

Context

The global shift towards circular economy models is becoming essential to address escalating waste management challenges. Traditional linear approaches are insufficient to handle the growing waste crisis, necessitating interventions beyond just waste sector management. Upstream and midstream solutions, such as reducing harmful materials and promoting reuse and recycling, are critical to building resource-efficient systems. To achieve this, robust policies and regulatory frameworks that incentivize circular practices throughout the product lifecycle are necessary.

This session provides a platform for discussions on developing effective policy frameworks that support circular economy practices. It will explore innovative financing mechanisms, including blended finance and public-private partnerships, to strengthen these frameworks. Participants, including policymakers, industry leaders, and financial institutions, will collaborate to identify challenges, opportunities, and strategies for advancing circular waste management at local, national, and regional levels. The session aims to foster a collaborative dialogue to promote sustainable and inclusive waste management solutions.

Objectives

1. Policy Development: Create effective circular waste management policies.
2. Identify Gaps: Spot policy weaknesses and innovate solutions.
3. Collaboration: Unite stakeholders for inclusive policies.
4. Financing: Highlight funding models for circular systems.
5. Recommendations: Share successes and draft solutions.

Agenda

Tuesday 18th February (13:30-16:30)

13:30-14:30	<p>Keynote Speech 1: Is the world advancing towards a “Circular Economy Model of Waste Management”?</p> <p>Mr Carlos Silva Filho, Former president of the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) and member of the UN Secretary-General’s Advisory Board on Zero Waste will provide an overview of waste management issues across the world, and how circularity-</p>
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	<p>based waste management policies can contribute to broader national development policies. The suggested questions for the speaker to consider include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the linkages between circular economy and waste management? • What are some examples of effective circular economy policies that have successfully advanced waste reduction and waste reuse and recycling? • How can regulatory frameworks incentivise circular practices among businesses, communities, and consumers. How do these policies engage those stakeholder groups? <p>Circular economy policy frameworks and zero waste policies Professor Li Jinhui, Executive Director, Basel Convention Regional Centre, Tsinghua University, China and Dr. Atiq Zaman Associate Professor, Curtin University Sustainability Policy (CUSP) Institute, Curtin University, Australia will provide overviews of successful zero waste policy frameworks that may be taken up in the developing countries. These zero waste policies support resource recovery, recycling, and waste minimisation. The suggested questions for the speaker to consider include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key elements of an effective zero waste policy framework? • How can national and city governments incentivise zero waste initiatives, and what are the barriers to implementation?
14:30-15:00	<p>The implementation of EPR schemes under different national contexts Pascal Leroy, Director WEEE Forum</p>
15:00-16:00	<p>Structured discussion Key Discussion Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the practical steps required for public and private sectors to collaboratively to set up waste focused circular economy data systems? • In developing the circular waste policies, what are the roles of stakeholders? Are stakeholders different from the traditional waste management stakeholders? • In the circular economy waste management, how is the private sector economy involved? <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zoë Lenkiewitz on the policy recommendation from Global Waste Management Outlook 2024 - Heinz Schandl, International Resource Panel on policy recommendations from the Global Resource Outlook 2024 recommendations
16:00-16:15	Coffee break

Concluding session

Tuesday 18th February (16:15-17:30)

16:15 - 17:15	<p>Conclusion and recommendations</p> <p>The conclusion and recommendations from the four technical sessions, where UNEP-IETC and key partners will present the key outcomes and recommendations from the technical sessions. A summary of action points and way forward will be discussed and agreed upon</p> <p>10min presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session 1 (Felipe Dall) • Session 2 (Junko Fujioka) • Session 3 (Akiko Doi) • Session 4 (Takehiro Nakamura) <p>Discussion</p> <p>Overall conclusions by Premakumara Jagath Dickella Gamaralalage, IGES</p>
17:15 - 17:30	<p>Closing remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEC (Shinji Shimojo, President, GEC) • IGES (Premakumara Jagath Dickella Gamaralalage, IGES) • UNEP (Takehiro Nakamura, UNEP)

Contact

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