

Flash Report

A webinar to launch a series of policy dialogue on sustainable lifestyles in Asia and an offline course on Circular Economy



Date: September 2, 2020, 10.00 AM to 11.30 AM ICT

Venue: Live Broadcasting from United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC)

Disclaimer

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List of Acronyms:

AIT	Asian Institute of Technology
CE	Circular Economy
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
EU	The European Union
SCP	Sustainable Consumption and Production
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SWITCH-Asia RPAC	SWITCH-Asia Regional Policy Advocacy Component
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

Background:

SWITCH-Asia Regional Policy Advocacy Component (SWITCH-Asia RPAC) funded by The European Union, implemented by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), together with the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) are organizing a Dialogue on Sustainable Lifestyle for SCP (sustainable patterns of consumption and production) with an Additional Focus on Covid-19. This initiative aims to create an enabling environment (policies, financing, technologies, business models, and stakeholder engagement) to replicate and scale up good practices on sustainable lifestyles.

Under SWITCH-Asia RPAC, two leadership academies for Asia were organized in 2018 and 2019 respectively in different regions inviting participants from all over the Asia. To make these modules available for longer-term to support technical capacity building of youth including young policymakers and practitioners, these modules will be transformed into an off-line course on circular economy and made available through AIT platform with periodic support on feedback and Q&A.

Objectives of the event

1. To enhance understanding of sustainable lifestyle concept through discussion of good practices in Asia with relevant examples from European countries
2. To analyze/propose the enabling environment (policies, financing, business models, technologies and stakeholders' engagement) and promote knowledge transfer through networking

Logistical information about the event

The organization of the webinar was organized as the launch of a series of policy dialogue on sustainable lifestyles in Asia and an offline course on Circular Economy via live broadcasting from United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC).

Review on Participants:

More than 7,000 viewers joined the webinar which was accessible for public through Zoom and Live broadcast on the Facebook's Page of SWITCH-Asia, AIT and their networks.

Summary of Key Messages:

Introductory Remarks



Dr. Mushtaq Ahmed Memon

Regional Coordinator for Resource Efficiency
Project Manager for SWITCH-Asia RPAC
UNEP Asia Pacific Office

Dr. Memon delivered background introduction of today's launch of policy dialogue on sustainable lifestyles in Asia and an offline course on Circular Economy as a kick-off event for long-term capacity building of youth including young policymakers and practitioners and replicate and scale up good practices on policy support dialogue for sustainable lifestyles and knowledge management on circular economy.

Welcome Remarks



Dr. Eden Woon

President of Asian Institute of Technology

Dr. Woon gave the welcoming remarks by highlighting the appreciation to the European Union, SWITCH-Asia RPAC and UNEP for organizing the event with the topics that are very timely on Sustainable Lifestyle for Sustainable Patterns of Consumption and Production. Dr. Woon also emphasized that AIT is a forefront in the region to provide a hybrid mode of instruction to our students and take appropriate measures to ensure the safety of all faculties, students, and staff while continuing the mission to create Social Impact with innovation

Opening Remarks



Dr. Isabelle Louis

Deputy Regional Director, UNEP Asia Pacific Office

Dr. Louis delivered the opening remarks that the unprecedented challenges amid the COVID-19 pandemic has given all of us a renewed recognition of the interconnection between economies, society and the environment. To build back better, smarter use of natural resources is key. From the way we generate wealth, to the way we live, move, and eat, our jobs, we must shift to a new paradigm of resource use that is socially equitable, economically resilient, and environmentally healthy

Keynote Speech



H.E. Mr. Pirkka Tapiola

Ambassador of the
European Union to the Kingdom of Thailand

The event was honored by His Excellency in delivering the keynote speech with the highlights of the European Union (EU) that 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. His Excellency further explained that all these aspects are becoming even more important within the framework of the European Green Deal that Europe will not achieve transformative change by acting alone. The EU will continue to lead the way to a circular economy at the global level and use its resources, expertise and financial means to implement the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Closing Remarks



Ms. Tunnie Srisakulchairak

Programme Management Officer

SWITCH-Asia RPAC, UNEP Asia Pacific Office

In the closing, Ms. Tunnie highlighted that sustainable lifestyle is an individual choice and circular economy is an economy model to mitigate waste issue. She finally thanked all participants and requested them to pencil down dates for upcoming webinars which will be focusing on tourism, food and consumer packaging as well as the knowledge platform of an offline course on the circular economy.

Technical Session

Assoc. Prof. Vilas Nitivattananon

Associate Professor of Urban Environmental
Management Program, Development
Asian Institute of Technology

Assoc. Prof. Vilas presented that travel and tourism are among the most affected sectors with airplanes on the ground, hotels closed, and travel restrictions put in place in virtually all countries around the world. And, as the existing governance mechanisms for tourism are usually cross-cutting and involve different branches of government and planning methodologies are not rigid, the integration of SCP into tourism policies is feasible and should become a priority when revising policies.

Prof. Anil Kumar Anal

Department Head
Department of Food, Agriculture & Bio resources
Asian Institute of Technology

Prof. Anil gave an overview of the sustainable lifestyles on SCP with a focus on food systems in the context of COVID-19 that the current food systems is not fit for the future. The dynamics of food is going to change in next 25 years. Hence Sustainable approaches and innovations are necessary to withstand food demand. In addition, the context of COVID-19 in relations to the food system can be seen from the perspectives of consumption behavior and health of the consumers.

Assoc. Prof. Erik L.J. Bohez

Industrial System Engineering Program
School of Engineering and Technology
Asian Institute of Technology

Assoc. Prof. Bohez gave the presentation on the concept of dialogue on sustainable lifestyles focusing on consumer packaging with an additional focus on COVID-19. He further explained that packaging especially for food and breweries have become essential component of modern lifestyles. After COVID-19, one more packaging waste come to light package for the medical goods like masks, sanitizers and the challenges are huge since all the packing after post consumption becomes waste that need additional resources for processing. Hence, engaging industries in initiatives and researches to make packaging an addition to support sustainable lifestyles rather than creating an environmental problem, is important.

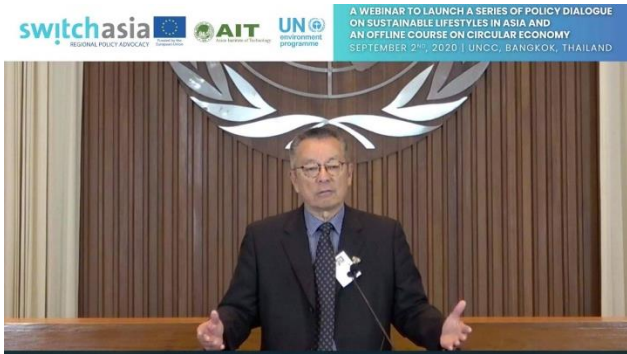
Prof. Chettiyappan Visvanathan

Professor of the Environmental Engineering
and Management Program, School of Environment
Resources and Development, Asian Institute of Technology

Prof. Visvanathan delivered a brief introduction on the pathways of AIT's contribution towards the development of circular economy course and how AIT is well-positioned to promote the cleaner production concept from previous to current projects and activities with various partners and stakeholders. He then elaborated activities on the circular economy's offline course which will be developed to facilitate the learning process as the knowledge management platform.

Snapshots of the Event





For more information

SWITCH-Asia event page:

URL: <https://www.switch-asia.eu/event/webinar-sustainable-lifestyles-in-asia/>

Contact SWITCH-Asia Regional Policy Advocacy Funded by European Union

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Annex:

Annex 1: The Final agenda



A webinar to launch a series of policy dialogue on sustainable lifestyles in Asia and an offline course on Circular Economy

September 2, 2020, 10.00 AM to 11.30 AM ICT
UNCC and Online via Zoom

Register here: <https://forms.gle/FjZSsRVVPhgiBJQ7>

Background Information:

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- 2.To analyze/propose the enabling environment (policies, financing, business models, technologies and stakeholders' engagement) and promote knowledge transfer through networking.

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Agenda

- 10.00** Introductory Remarks
Dr. Mushtaq Memon, Regional Coordinator
Resource Efficiency UNEP Asia Pacific Office
SWITCH-Asia RPAC Project Manager
- 10.05** Welcome Remarks
Dr. Eden Woon, AIT President
- 10.10** Opening Remarks
Dr. Isabelle Louis, Deputy Regional Director,
UNEP Asia Pacific Office
- 10.15** Keynote speaker on EU Green Deal
H.E. Mr Pirkka Tapiola, Ambassador of the
European Union to the Kingdom of Thailand
- 10.30** Concept of dialogue on sustainable lifestyles
focusing on Tourism, Food, Consumer Packaging
Announcement of the schedule (3 weeks)
Assoc. Prof. Vilas Nitivattananon,
Associate Professor of Urban Environmental
Management Program, Development, AIT
Prof. Anil Kumar Anal, Department Head,
Department of Food, Agriculture & Bio resources, AIT
Assoc. Prof. Erik L.J. Bohez, Associate Professor
of Industrial System Engineering Program,
School of Engineering and Technology, AIT
- 11.00** Concept of offline course on circular economy
Announcement of the schedule (3 weeks)
Prof. Chettiyappan Visvanathan,
Professor of the Environmental Engineering
and Management Program, School of Environment,
Resources and Development, AIT
- 11.20** Q & A
- 11.25** Closing
Tunnie Srisakulchairak, SWITCH-Asia RPAC

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