

## NEWS RELEASE

### **EU SWITCH-Asia SCP Facility Side Session at the 8th OECD Forum on Due Diligence in the Garment and Footwear Sector: “Europe and Asia partnerships to support and link Governments and SMEs to adopt sustainable textile consumption and production”**

21 February 2022 (16:00 – 17:15 GMT+7)

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The EU SWITCH-Asia SCP Facility together with key partners organised the [Virtual Side Session](#) at the [8<sup>th</sup> OECD Forum](#) on Due Diligence in the Garment and Footwear Sector on 21 February 2022 (16:00 GMT+7) to discuss “Europe and Asia partnerships to support and link Governments and SMEs to adopt sustainable textile consumption and production.”

The side session presented on how sustainable consumption and production (SCP) policies and practices could minimise economic, environmental, and social risks, while ensuring producers’ profitability, an integral part of due diligence processes. Information was shared on partnerships and collaborations created in between Europe and Asia for the implementation of policy options and SCP practices by supporting SMEs to transition towards a low-carbon, resource-efficient and a more circular economy.

**Ms. Alessandra Lepore, International Cooperation Officer on Green Economy and Sustainable Consumption and Production at the European Commission Directorate-General for International Partnerships** highlighted, “The Garment sector is a driving force for economic development and job creation around the world, but the sector is far from being sustainable. Sustainability of the sector can’t be addressed in silos. A common and joint response is needed to achieve a full transition. SWITCH-Asia will remain as one of the EU instruments to tackle environmental concerns in global value chains, supporting the integration of more sustainable practices in the textile sector.”

**Ms. Maria Rincon Lievana, Policy Officer and Team Leader on Circular Economy, Sustainable Products, Production and Consumption at the European Commission Directorate-General for Environment** presented the importance of textile to the EU, as it is the fourth highest pressure category for use of resources and water and fifth highest contributor of GHG emissions. She mentioned that the EU Circular Economy Action Plan offers an opportunity for incentivizing business models to move towards textile sustainability, resource efficiency and waste management.

**Dr. Cristina Martinez, Senior Specialist and Environment and Decent Work/Asia Pacific Coordinator on Green Jobs & Just Transition, International Labour**

**Organisation** presented on how the International Labour Organisation (ILO) is supporting effective social dialogue in the textile sector involving government, workers, and employers coming together and finding solutions. She stated, “Environmental sustainability can be enhanced by strengthening policy and regulatory guidance, as well as with tools and knowledge to support eco-innovation and the just transition.”

In the panel discussion, lessons learned and experiences from projects supported by the EU strengthen partnerships in Asia to reinforce governance and implementation of policies and to shift towards stakeholders’ responsible decisions, including in business-to-business relations, and actions towards textile sustainability.

**Mr. Dwayne Appleby, Programme Manager on Sustainable Consumption and Production from Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)** stated, “To implement a robust system for monitoring and enforcement in Asian Countries like Cambodia, it is important to strengthen policy and provide regulatory guidance, ensuring access to reliable data, capacity, technology, and knowledge towards circular economy and resource efficiency in the textile and garment sector.” The SWITCH-Asia Programme has provided support to the country to develop a SCP Roadmap and a policy analysis focusing on reducing waste in the garment sector.

**Mr. Bradley Abbott, Team Lead of the SWITCH-Garment Project in Cambodia led by the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) Cambodia** also shared how the project is providing support to the garment industry particularly the middle level factories, to invest on sustainability business models and practices. A multi-stakeholder approach is needed involving industry actors and the government, taking a lead role in collaboration amongst development partners.

Information about the STeP EcoLab, another SWITCH-Asia Project was also provided by **Mr. Guillaume Touati, Country Representative, Agronomes et Veterinaires Sans Frontieres, (AVSF) Mongolia**, with the project providing technical support and capacity building for uptake of green textile technologies, and supports platforms for collaboration of stakeholders, including SMEs, to implement sustainable textile and garment policy to practice in Mongolia. Mr. Touati highlighted, “It is important to develop a framework that looks at impacts based on practice through sectorial target indicators towards resource efficiency.”

**Mr. Marc Beckmann, Project Director of the FABRIC Asia Project led by GIZ**, highlighted on how Fabric Asia strengthens these partnerships by supporting platforms for shared experiences and knowledge about sustainable business practices in the sector across the region to improve environmental governance and to build competences in the textile and garment industry.

At the closing of the session, **Ms. Zinaida Fadeeva Team Leader of the SWITCH-Asia SCP Facility** concluded the discussion highlighting the importance of strengthening partnerships to support market access based on sustainable consumption and production and to better enforce policies through compliance, transparency, and accountability.

The EU SWITCH-Asia programme continues to support these partnerships towards good governance, sustainable business models, and eco-innovations on resource efficiency and circularity in the textile sector.