

Resource Efficient Cleaner Production

Advancing resource-efficient production and circular economy in Armenia



Overview

For the past decade, Armenia has experienced significant economic growth rates (7.6 % in 2019). Nevertheless, the impacts from the global COVID-19 pandemic and with an expected drop in demand and prices for export commodities, will also negatively affect the economic situation for Armenia's industry. Assisting the private sector to utilize a more resource-efficient production and thereby producing cleaner and more cost-effective, would not only improve the environmental management and the urgent economic situation for SMEs in the country but also support a more resilient industry in Armenia.

The Government of Armenia places high importance on improving the environmental performance of its economy, which has been reflected in the National Development Strategy 2014-2025, and in the Second Phase of the Energy Efficiency Action Plan for Armenia 2017-2018. To realize such ambitions industrial development is required that can continue to improve productivity, job-creation and support economic growth opportunities for SMEs, while at the same time reduce resource consumption and the environmental performance of the production.

From 2013 - 2017, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) demonstrated, in the EU funded EaP GREEN Programme, the saving potential of a resource efficient and cleaner production methodology (RECP) by undertaking RECP assessments in 55 Armenian companies, identifying RECP measures that would allow them to reduce the consumption of resources, energy and water worth 1 million Euro per year. Apart from establishing a business case for RECP in Armenia, this project revealed the prospects of Circular Economy focused business models in the industry, showing that an investment in RECP is good for the businesses and the environment alike.

The EU4Environment RECP project in Armenia

Funded by the European Union, the new regional EU4Environment Programme (2019-2022) will follow up on the successful results achieved in the EaP GREEN Programme and continue supporting environment-related activities, demonstrating and unlocking opportunities for greener growth in Armenia. Together with the Government of Armenia, UNIDO has developed RECP project activities that support the uptake of circular economy for more resource efficient business solutions among SMEs. The project is also extending the number of industry demonstrations to display the business case for a resource efficient production in additional sectors and regions. To achieve this, UNIDO will cooperate with the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Economy and stakeholders from the Armenian industry.

The EU4Environment RECP project in Armenia will work to:

- Enlarging the number of business cases for RECP in Armenia by undertaking additional RECP assessments to support its uptake in sectors critical for the National Development Strategy;
- Delivering an "on the job" coaching programme for the 25 SMEs to foster continuous learning on RECP among industry professionals;
- Raising awareness on the Circular Economy and best practices from the RECP in Armenia to support the adoption of circular business models;
- Establishing a national professional network for RECP to promote knowledge sharing, exchange on technical expertise and foster dialogue among professionals and businesses on national and international levels.

Action implemented by:



Enlarging the number of business cases for RECP in Armenia

Taking advantage of the momentum that the RECP methodology in Armenia managed to gain, additional assessments in 15 new companies, as well as monitoring and support of improvements in 10 EaP GREEN, will be undertaken. The RECP assessments will be supported by audits, reports and assistance in accessing financing for prioritized resource-efficient measures.

This activity will assist the goal of scaling-up the adoption of resource-efficient and circular business models in Armenia. At the same time, the pool of best practices and demonstrated business cases for resource-efficient production will be enlarged, which will benefit knowledge and recognition of RECP amongst industry professionals.

Delivering an “on the job” coaching programme

An essential cornerstone for integrating and supporting the uptake of resource-efficient production principles into the strategic and daily decision-making processes of SMEs is the coaching of its staff. Under the lead of UNIDO, the design, structure and methodology of the coaching material have been prepared to coach staff members from the demonstration companies on RECP tools. Together with local experts, the RECP assessments will be undertaken with company staff to identify the best applicable resource-efficient measures and in finding innovative approaches for sector-specific production methods. This will help to foster continuous learning experience among the staff, within their own production environment, and create experience-based support for RECP among industry professionals in Armenia.

Raising awareness on best practises from the Circular Economy and the RECP projects in Armenia

Building support and awareness on the benefits of applying resource-efficient production principles amidst stakeholders from the industry will be pivotal to facilitate a change towards a Circular Economy in Armenia.

The RECP project in Armenia will undertake networking activities and organize an online sharing platform to create awareness on how RECP can contribute to environmental and economic savings for companies and the economy. Best practices and case studies from RECP demonstrations will be promoted through sector-specific information materials and events, to help stimulate the market demand for RECP services and to promote a more resource-efficient production as a viable and cost-effective investment opportunity for businesses in Armenia. Furthermore, national Circular Economy events will be organized to strengthen collaboration with national and international Circular Economy initiatives and share best practices on the latest innovations for a resource-efficient production.

Supporting a national professional network for RECP

Along with industry demonstrations, awareness-raising activities and the coaching programme for RECP, the establishment of a national professional network will be an essential tool in supporting the adoption of RECP in Armenia. Online platforms, events and collaboration with previously established RECP initiatives, will be advanced to increase knowledge sharing on RECP and to promote an exchange of technical expertise, and regular dialogue among professionals. This will help to strengthen the national capacities and collaboration on RECP as a stepping stone towards introducing Circular Economy in Armenia.

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