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Circular Economy in practice: stakeholders gather in Azerbaijan to validate the Industrial Waste Mapping Report for Absheron-Khizi and Baku Economic Regions

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With the support of UNIDO and the European Union, the Economic Regions of Absheron-Khizi and Baku are on track to become more resource efficient thanks to a robust pilot exercise focusing on Industrial Waste Mapping (IWM).

On Thursday, 6 October 2022, stakeholders representing the Absheron-Khizi and Baku Economic Regions, members from the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan, the Delegation of the European Union in Azerbaijan, UNIDO, and ACE Group Consultants, as well as professionals and international experts interested in and working on the topic of industrial waste gathered in an online setting to discuss the preliminary findings of IWM pilot in the two regions and advance the validation of the IWM Report as a stepping stone towards Circular Economy.

Structured around three major topics (presenting the main principles and benefits of Circular Economy to key stakeholders; discussing the results from the industrial waste mapping exercise, and identifying benefits and opportunities to apply Circular Economy principles for the industrial enterprises from the Absheron-Khizi and Baku Economic Regions), the event enjoyed contributions from both the industry sector and the government side. These later fed into the consultations to validate the IWM report, propose practical recommendations to implement it, as well as extend the recommendations to other regions and in other Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries.

“The efficient management of waste is one of the top priorities of the development platform in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2022-2026. The reduction of usable waste from 25% to 15% and increase of recyclable waste to 20% by 2026 have both been defined as key targets” said **Mr. Mehman Nabiye**v, Head of Management of waste Division of Department of Ecological Policy, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources.

Waste management is comprised of the activities and actions required to manage waste from its generation to its final disposal. This includes the collection, transportation, treatment and disposal of waste, together with the monitoring and regulation of the waste management process and waste-related laws, technologies, and economic mechanisms. An efficient waste management

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system creates an increased business value. This contributes to the sustainability of industrial sectors and the promotion of economic opportunities.

In Azerbaijan, the implementation of the IWM and Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production (RECP) activities was launched in May 2021, when UNIDO contracted a National Implementing Partner comprised of a consortium of companies. Since then, both achievements and challenges have been reported in the effort to support the creation of industrial waste maps. The overall objective of waste mapping is to identify, assess, and map waste types from industrial enterprises in order to develop options for improving resource efficiency and the circularity of materials and by-products for the economy.

“For UNIDO, Circular Economy is a cross-cutting issue which allows businesses to be more productive. Here, industrial waste mapping can act as an important tool to help municipalities and governments see how they can support enterprises in becoming the new circularity leaders of tomorrow by applying the practices and principles of Circular Economy in their core business” said **Ms. Tatiana Chernyavskaya**, EU4Environment Project Manager, Circular Economy and Environmental Protection Division, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

The IWM methodology developed by UNIDO delimits the IWM study to specific geographical regions, focusing on industries and on identifying waste types that have a high circularity potential. This approach contributes to defining the scope of the IWM pilot and developing concrete recommendations based on the analysis of solid waste management and the role of the industries in the selected regions.

Background

The “European Union for Environment” (EU4Environment) programme aims to help the EU’s Eastern Partnership countries to preserve their natural capital and increase people's environmental well-being by supporting environment-related action, demonstrating and unlocking opportunities for greener growth, and setting mechanisms to better manage environmental risks and impacts. The Action’s implementation period is 2019-2024.

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