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EU4Environment
Green Economy in Eastern Partner Countries

EU4Environment completes the training of professionals on resource efficiency in Azerbaijan

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For over 30 years, UNIDO has been advancing the application of the [Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production \(RECP\) methodology](#) in industries across the globe. Now, within the EU-funded programme, EU4Environment, the methodology reached Azerbaijan and other EU Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries, where both the manufacturing enterprises and professionals have been brought together to learn and implement the potential benefits of RECP in a practical and tangible way.

In a nutshell, RECP helps industries increase efficiency and reduce risks to humans and the environment by offering a continuous application of preventive environmental strategies to processes, products and services. In Azerbaijan, UNIDO works to build the capacity of over 35 Azerbaijani Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to use RECP and innovative approaches in their production process. The selected SMEs are then assisted in revising their business models, while local experts are trained on the RECP methodology. At the end of the training period, the RECP experts conduct assessments at the selected demonstration companies and recommend an action plan based on the RECP methodology to help the enterprises increase productivity, product quality, and competitiveness.

12 December 2022 marked the last stage of the learning curve for the RECP experts in the country. The five-hour event was packed with individual presentations, discussions, and feedback on the strategies needed to communicate, present, and critically examine the outcomes of the RECP assessments in order to facilitate the actions taken by each company's management.

This was an important step in polishing the RECP assessments and recommendations which will guide the demonstration enterprises into applying the identified RECP measures. The training session was also the final part of the overall RECP learning process in Azerbaijan. Here, 15 trainees shared their experiences and exchanged views on the RECP in-plant assessment reports, gathering final guidance and feedback from both the technical team, as well as UNIDO:

In this final training session, the participants are transitioning from trainees to resource efficiency experts, and we see this as an opportunity to discuss findings, challenges, and proposals for the RECP assessments. Under EU4Environment, UNIDO is promoting Circular Economy and New Growth Opportunities, part of which RECP is a cornerstone activity. This is because RECP helps demonstrate sustainability options for enterprises to save resources and become more environmentally friendly. These efforts are also supported

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in the [National Development Priorities of Azerbaijan](#). It is thus important to understand the journey and experiences of the group and develop recommendations for those who will follow its path in introducing RECP in the country, said Ms Tatiana Chernyavskaya, EU4Environment Project Manager, UNIDO.

The training of RECP experts in Azerbaijan kicked off in December 2021 and was followed by training sessions throughout 2022. Hitherto, at least 2-3 company visits were performed by each group of trainees during nine in-plant assessments which led to the identification of around 30 RECP measures. Most of the measures were in the field of energy consumption, raw materials and waste, followed by fuel conversion, and water management and consumption. The external trainees mainly consisted of engineers and technical specialists, researchers, and economists. In total, six teams of trainees were established to assess the demonstration enterprises. The SMEs ranged in size, production sector, and geographical location. The work method was also quite diverse, consisting of presentations and case studies, individual consultations, company visits (to gain practical experience, collect data and raise awareness), studying the handouts and filling-in the templates, conducting exercises and homework assignments.

Background

The “European Union for Environment” (EU4Environment – Green Economy) Action helps the Eastern Partnership countries 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.

It is funded by the European Union and implemented by five Partner organizations - OECD, UNECE, UNEP, UNIDO, and the World Bank – over the 2019-2024 period, with a budget of EUR 20 million. For more information about the Action, please visit: www.eu4environment.org. For more information about RECP in Azerbaijan, please visit: <https://recp.aceconsultants.az/en>.

Contact

Ms. Tatiana Chernyavskaya
EU4Environment Project Manager
Department of Technical Cooperation and Sustainable Industrial Development
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
Email: T.CHERNYAVSKAYA@unido.org

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