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EU4Environment supports the institutionalization of Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production) in Azerbaijan with a dedicated seminar on RECP

26.09.2023 Baku, Azerbaijan

On Tuesday, 26 September, under the EU-funded EU4Environment programme, UNIDO organized a seminar on institutionalizing the Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production (RECP) methodology for manufacturing enterprises and experts in Azerbaijan. The in-person event took place in Baku and gathered representatives from the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, the Small and Medium Business Development Agency (SMBDA), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Non-Governmental Organizations, associations for the development of industry, academia, and experts. Specifically, the event aimed to explore the potential support of SMBDA and other organizations in the country to ensure the institutionalization and supply of RECP services for SMEs in the upcoming future. This initiative also corresponds to the "Socio-economic development strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2022 - 2026" approved by the presidential decree dated July 22, 2022, to support the expansion and promotion of educational opportunities for SMEs.

*In the "Azerbaijan 2030: National Priorities for Socio-Economic Development" agenda, we have Sustainable growing competitive economy; A dynamic, inclusive and socially just society; A place of competitive human capital and modern innovation; A great return to the liberated territories; A country of clean environment and "green growth" where, out of the five priorities set for the next decade, three are directly related to RECP. Our country supports projects and initiatives related to the transition to a circular economy, the application of clean technologies, the promotion of the use of clean energy sources, recycling and cleaning up polluted areas, said **Mr. Umud Aghazadeh**, Deputy Head of Department of Cooperation with International Organizations, Ministry of Economy.*

As Earth's natural resources are finite, once their flow through the economy reaches its limit, the only way to maintain economic growth is to ensure resource efficiency, that is: to find means to generate greater returns from the same amount of resources. Hence, RECP is not only essential for economic growth, but it is also an important enabler for industries to increase their competitiveness, create jobs, and stimulate innovation while investing in recycling and resource recovery.

Azerbaijan's policies are based on innovative management principles, and this trend is the basis of sustainable transition. In this regard, sustainable water management becomes one of the most important factors for building an inclusive society and achieving sustainable management. The main goal of Azerbaijan's water policy is to provide the population and all sectors of the economy with water in the required quantity and quality according to international standards, and, at the same time, to achieve a good ecological situation, environmental protection, efficient use of water resources and global water

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cooperation, said **Mr. Rafiq Verdiyev**, Deputy Head of Department of Ecological Policy, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources.

In Azerbaijan, the implementation of the RECP activities was launched in May 2021, when UNIDO contracted a National Implementing Partner comprised of a consortium of companies led by ACE Consultants. Since then, both achievements and challenges have been reported in the efforts to support the creation of circular value chains through RECP and industrial waste mapping. Thus, the seminar served as a platform to discuss continuous support in promoting UNIDO's approach to reduce the environmental impact of industry through measures that improve both economic and environmental aspects in enterprises. This includes the introduction of the RECP methodology, the efficient use of resources and water based on the needs of enterprises, the application of energy efficiency and energy audits in production processes, safe management of chemicals, and waste reduction.

Such efforts also contribute to the implementation of the framework established by the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the "Effective Use of Energy Resources and Energy Efficiency", where conducting a mandatory energy audit, promoting measures on the efficient use of energy resources and energy efficiency, evaluating the efficiency potential, and applying energy management system trainings are listed among the key recommendations.

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. For more details, please visit: www.eu4environment.org

For more information about RECP in Azerbaijan, please visit: www.recp.aceconsultants.az

Contact

Ms. Tatiana Chernyavskaya
EU4Environment Project Manager
Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency Unit
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
Email: t.chernyavskaya@unido.org

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