



Plastics for Green Transitions

Virtual Training Workshop Report

IBC Training Programme on Green Transitions

Webinar #4: Plastics for Green Transitions, 10 November 2022 (12-2pm CET)

The United Nations Issue-based Coalition (IBC) on Environment and Climate Change for Europe and Central Asia

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Introduction to the Training Program and Webinar

A virtual training webinar for UN Resident Coordinator Offices and Country Teams on the topic of Plastics for Green Transitions was convened on 10 November 2022 by the United Nations Issue-based Coalition (IBC) on Environment and Climate Change for Europe and Central Asia.

Training objective for the Plastics webinar: The objective of this webinar is for participants to gain an understanding of the policy context and approaches to addressing plastic pollution and the role the UNCTs can play on the ground to help countries. The discussions address how plastics affect the environment, causing pollution to both terrestrial and marine ecosystems and impacting human health, and how the shift to a circular economy can create positive results in terms of both reducing waste and creating green jobs.

Background on Green Transitions: The green transition is key to safeguarding our planet's future allowing us to turn the fossil-fuel dependent economy to a green economy, in a new sustainable paradigm that drives sustainable development and peace. It is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda and directly contributes to the achievement of most of the SDG targets. The Ukraine crisis has seriously affected the Europe and Central Asia region including an exacerbating energy crisis, increased pollutants, biodiversity loss and climate change. During this time, it is important to support member states of the region to turn environmental and climate challenges into opportunities and to make the Green Transition just and inclusive for all. The success of this transition depends on strong regional coordination, involving local authorities, state-owned enterprises, the private sector, civil society, research and education institutions, youth, the financial sector, and the development community.

Training Context: In response to the request by Resident Coordinators, UN Country Teams and the Development Coordination Office, the Issue Based Coalition on Environment and Climate Change for Europe and Central Asia (IBC) offers the Green Transition Training Programme dedicated to RCOs and UN Country Teams in Europe and Central Asia. The Green Transition Training Programme further builds countries' capacities to design strategies and action plans for green transition. The content is based on the expertise and resources among the IBC members. The work is led by UNDP, UNECE, UNEP and UNESCO and facilitated by IISD, with contributions from the other IBC organizations and external experts.

The IBC Green Transitions Training Programme offers five webinars led by different agencies depending on capacity from September to November, with most having both a thematic and a sub-regional focus. The main themes, identified through various consultations with the RCOs and UNCTs, are: (1) Sustainable Finance; (2) Energy; (3) Circular Economy (4) Plastics; and (5) Enabling policies and strategic frameworks for Green Transition at the country level.



Webinar Opening, Expert Presentations and Discussion

IBC representative, Matthew Billot (Regional Advisor, Environment Division, UNEP) opened the webinar and highlighted the importance of UNCT members sharing experiences and learning from each other, and reminding participants that a guidance document would be produced on the topic of this webinar.

Expert Presentations

Two experts from UNEP provided presentations on plastics pollution, regulatory frameworks, circular economy and the role of the UN:

<p><u>Presentation – Part 1:</u> Plastic pollution - a key environmental challenge - and the global regulatory framework and the role of the UN on the ground</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Brenda Koekkoek, UNEP</i> 	<p><u>Presentation – Part 2:</u> Plastics and the circular economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Llorenc Mila Canals, UNEP</i>
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A summary of the expert presentations is provided under separate cover in the form of an IBC Guidance Note on Plastics for Green Transitions. Guidance notes are posted to the IBC website approximately two weeks after the respective training webinar at:

<https://uneuropecentralasia.org/en/ibc-environmental-coalition>

Question & Answer Session

Question 1. by Anastasia Saglam IOM, Turkey:

What about the wide usage of synthetics like polyester in the textile sector?

Answer from UNEP expert Llorenc Mila Canals:

- Textiles is one of the biggest sectors using plastics. Approximately 60% of the textiles are synthetic. Synthetic textiles are essentially plastics - and polyester is one of the biggest types.
- The textile sector is a big part of the consumption of plastics and is sometimes presented as “*well, we put a lot of recycled plastics in textiles*” - which is true - it's happening. This is also the case with polyester - i.e., PET bottles can be recycled into fibers that are used in polyester, and then you can say, “*I have a recycled fleece*”.
- However, the drinks & beverages sector generates huge consumption and waste of plastic. Recycling these plastic into textiles is not solving the bigger problem - the drinks & beverages sector should not be using single-use plastic products in the first place. Drink bottles can be plastic,



glass or metal - they should be reusable and stay in the economy, so we massively decrease this influx of fossil fuels that go into the plastics economy.

To support this response, co-facilitator Darren Swanson highlighted a slide which Mr. Mila Canals had presented on plastic pollution sources and pathways (see below).

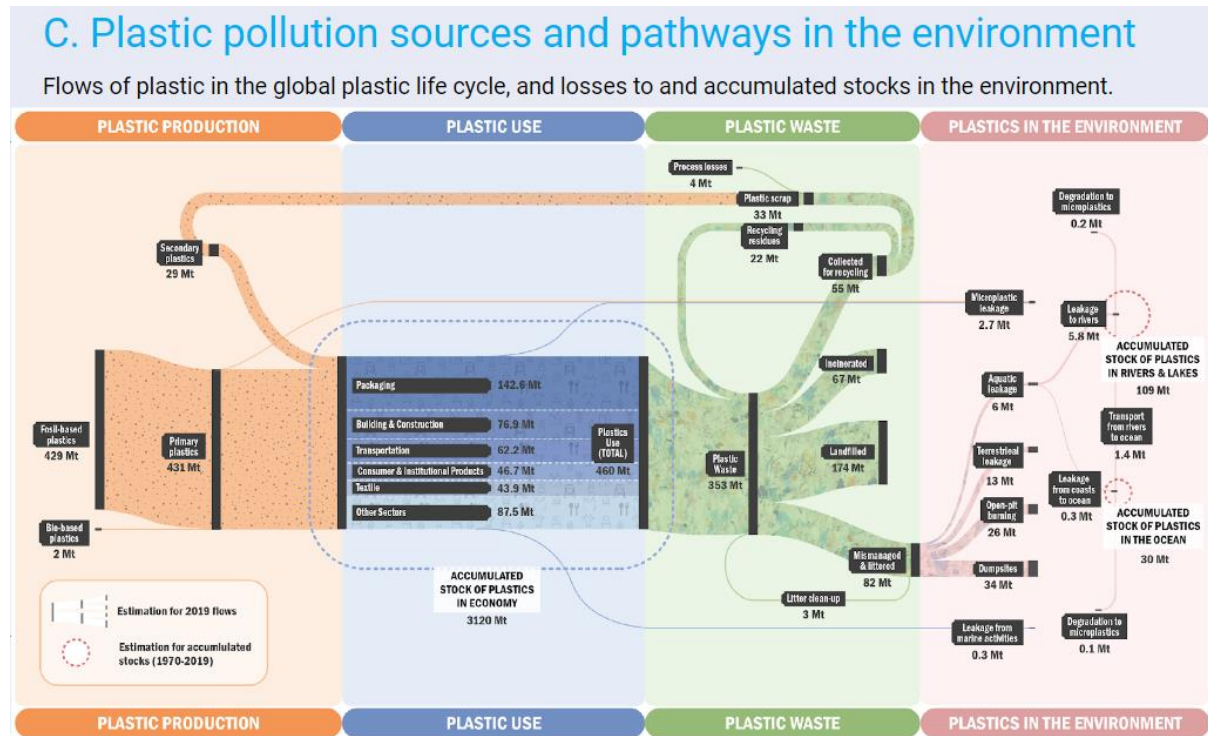


Image source: UNEP

Question 2 - by Vladan Šćekić (Environment Improvement Centre, Serbia):

Bioplastic can be one of the sustainable solutions. Will the Plastics Treaty go towards supporting the scientific teams working on this type of plastic?

Answer from UNEP expert Brenda Koekoek:

We can't predict what Member State negotiators will decide in the process. But the UNEA resolution specifies several key aspects linked to science:

- Provide scientific and socioeconomic assessments related to plastic pollution (para 3i);
- Consider the best available science, traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems (para 4d);
- Consider the possibility of a mechanism to provide policy related scientific and socioeconomic information (para 4f).



Question 3 by Darren Swanson:

What role can national action plans play in the whole process of addressing plastics in the circular economy - how can we build on processes that are already in place?

Answer from Brenda Koekkoek:

- This is a key question - how are countries going to implement a future agreement and what will the approach be? The resolution makes reference to national action plans as a possibility in the provisions for the future instruments. This indicates the direction of the approach.
- We've seen lots of different approaches to action plans over the years – E.g., Minamata action plans for mercury: countries have to specify whether a problem exists with artisanal small scale gold mining in their country, and if so, it must be acknowledged, and they must develop a national action plan specifically linked to that. Other approaches include a universal requirement for such plans.
- There is a lot to learn from other areas, and linked areas. Thus, work at the national level is quite important - to understand from people's experiences with national action plans what are the most effective approaches. We should expect to see national action plans in this process to some degree. The level of which they will be responsible for national level implementation is still to be determined.

Question 4 - by Darren Swanson to Lloreç Mila Canals:

Could you elaborate on the 'action side' of the packaging sector - are there connections with existing processes that can help pull the lever for change in plastics packaging?

Answer by Lloreç Mila Canals:

- Brands in the packaging industry are in a very interesting position. They are the main culprits of plastic pollution. Yet - they are not 'married' to plastic - they're not interested in the type of packaging. They've been using plastic because it's been super cheap and very versatile, etc. At the same time, the brands putting plastic pollution in the environment are now also among those wanting to move faster into solving this problem - mainly because their name is in the pollution. So this is '*branded litter*'.
- An initiative to highlight is the [New Plastic Economy Global Commitment](#), led by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation in collaboration with UNEP – in which companies responsible for approximately 20% of the globally produced plastic packaging have committed to actions to achieve specific targets by 2025. The 2022 report shows that after some initial positive trends, it is evident that many of the targets won't be achieved (now only three years to 2025). So, we're putting additional pressure on these companies.
- Lesson learned - there are good examples, but there also are limitations to voluntary approaches. The companies are saying, "*we want to do more, but unless there is legislation and governments are pushing the other 80% of plastic producers, there's not much that we can do on our own*".



Plenary Panel: Solutions & Experience Sharing on Plastics

The second hour of the training webinar featured five panellists: two presenting perspectives from countries in the Europe and Central Asia region, one from the Asia-Pacific region and one presenting from an international perspective. The panel session was moderated by Livia Bizikova (IISD).

Panellists included:

- **Menal Mungan Arda, UNDP, Türkiye:** Legal/Policy framework of Waste Management in Turkey
- **Kamala Ernest, UNEP-ROAP:** Experiences Working with UNCTs and informing CCAs in Asia-Pacific
- **Vladan Scekic, Centre for Environmental Improvement, Serbia:** Plastics and the Waste Management System in Serbia
- **Yasuhiko Kamakura, ILO:** Decent Work and Plastics Circularity

Summary of Challenges, Barriers, Good Practices, and Lessons Learned

Organization	UNDP Türkiye	UNEP-ROAP	Centre for Environmental Improvement, Serbia	ILO
Topic:	Legal/Policy framework of Waste Management in Turkey	Experiences working with UNCTs and informing CCAs in Asia-Pacific	Plastics and the waste management system in Serbia	Decent work and plastics circularity
Challenges:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Need to more fully align with EU acquis ● Need to fill gaps in legislation – E.g., SUP not yet legislated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SEA is a marine litter hotspot – there is a plastic crisis in the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Need to more fully align with EU acquis ● Need to fill gaps in legislation – E.g., SUP not yet legislated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Environmental challenges of plastic waste and inequality in ‘World of Work’ in the plastics recycling sector.
Barriers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No emphasis or separate treatment of plastic waste in waste legislation ● Marine litter- not properly dealt with in legislation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plastic pollution is not a dedicated area or a target that is explicitly mentioned in the UNSDCF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reliable data on estimates of plastic package waste recycling not available. ● Inadequate infrastructure for plastic waste and for waste collection in general. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inhumane situation in the informal waste and plastic recycling sector - ‘Decent Work Deficit’ - workers are vulnerable populations (e.g. poor, rural, minorities, single parents, refugees), with no access to



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of capacity at all levels in government 	social security schemes.
Good practices:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on the legal framework is an area where policy support can be revisited after gap analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incentivize behavioral change to encourage recycling, sorting and waste segregation at source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plastic pollution reduction approach combining social research, stakeholder consultations with plastic producers, advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green jobs accelerator ILO Guidelines for a Just Transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all
Lessons learned:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing implementation is not as easy as strengthening the legal framework. For this, awareness, habitual changes, sector assessments and enabling change is needed. Supporting implementation may come as a package of opportunities and problems at the same time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNCT's role to push the agenda on plastic pollution is dependent on who is in the group and the collaborators who can work together to push the common agenda Follow-up actions with government and other stakeholders can catalyze further results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High public awareness already exists on the problem with plastics. Implementation of legislation, and adoption of new legal approaches should be stronger so that everyone will have to follow. Plastic producers not paying environmental taxes results in budget losses for the country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A holistic approach would have a larger impact on green job creation: by developing a solution throughout the supply chain of plastics we could create a huge impact on the ground. implementation of 'Just Transition' requires a systemic approach through social dialogue involving government, employers' and workers' organizations.

Details on Each Topic

Legal/Policy Framework of Waste Management in Türkiye

Meral Mungan Arda, Chemicals and Waste Projects Coordinator, UNDP Türkiye Country Office

Ms. Mungan Arda's presentation focused on the legal/policy frameworks in Türkiye relevant to plastics waste management – from international to national:

The national legal framework in Türkiye relevant to plastics waste management:

- Environmental Law (1983-R.G.18132): Polluter Pays; Reuse, Recycle and Recovery.



- Law on Establishment of Environmental Agency (2020-R.G.31350) - Deposits for beverage boxes, glasses and packaging materials is expected in 2023 (despite the deposit system and recycling targets, the reuse of recycled PET in food packaging is prohibited by the Turkish food codex regulation does not allow recycled plastic to be used for any kind of food product - even though the Minister of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change allows it. Recycled plastic can only be legally used more simply - E.g., for garbage bags).
- Zero Waste Regulation (2019-R.G.30829)- Two separate categories for waste, measures for biodegradable waste reaching landfills, time limits for institutions for separate collection system
- Packaging Waste Control Regulation (2021-R.G. 31523) -Methods for recycle and recovery and decrease as per years in the amount of packaging waste that will reach landfills. Latest revision has been made for biodegradable packaging waste definition.
- Regulation on Recovery Contribution Share (2019-R.G.30995)
- Civic Amenity Centres Communiqué (2014-R.G. 29222) - For municipalities to install mobile or permanent amenity centres to bring in and collect waste.
- Communiqué on Import Control of Wastes under Control for Environmental Protection (2020-R.G.31351)
- Regulation on Receiving Waste from Ships and Control of Waste (2004-R.G.25682) and (2017-R.G.30213) - Regulates waste generated within marine environments and defines how this waste will be disposed of. **Gap in Türkiye's legal framework** – *this regulation currently only deals with waste generated in the marine environment - not waste generated on land that reaches marine environments.*
- Regulation on Landfilling of Wastes (2010-R.G.27533) - aims to reduce mixed waste to be accepted in the landfills. The target is 5% lower than the EU's target (Türkiye's target is 60% reduction by 2035).
- The National Waste Management and Action Plan (2016-2023) aims to recover 35% waste generated and dispose of 65% by landfill management.

Good practices for plastic waste management policies in Türkiye

- The UNDP country office has been working with the Turkish government to reduce the continuous land-generated sources of plastic waste and to improve waste management practices. E.g., the *11 Zero-waste Guidelines* - detailed guidelines accredited by the ministry for establishing a basic level zero-waste management system.
- The Legal framework in Türkiye is quite strong and is mostly in alignment with EU acquis
- Zero-waste campaigning was initiated in 2017 (targeting 400 000 buildings) to reduce the sources of plastic waste that are not properly managed and handled.



Challenges/Gaps

- Plastic Waste Management is not emphasized in Türkiye's overall legal framework – waste management is addressed broadly - not specifically to plastics. Thus, a target of both the ministry and UNDP Türkiye is to promote a clearer emphasis on plastic waste management within the legal framework.
- The EU single-use plastics (SUP) directive has not yet been adapted, and the Turkish legal framework currently does not cover SUP at all.
- In the case of marine litter, the legal framework does not regulate waste originated on land. This is an issue because the majority of the marine litter is generated on land – it does not originate from marine areas.
- No regulations for plastic nets used in fishing, and none for agricultural plastics either.
- Waste acceptance from ships is not yet fully aligned to the relevant directive of the EU.

Summary – UNDP's support to the Turkish government with regards to Plastics Waste Management:

- Development of baseline reports to help the government prepare for the UNEA 5.2 negotiations
- Community-based recycling project to identify the factors that keep people from segregating waste and promoting better habits, and to install waste traps for rivers.
- Climate action project to create an action plan for plastics waste management, carry out zero-waste management training for primary school teachers, village leaders and fishing families, and provide equipment support to help municipalities improve waste management.
- COVID – 19 Resilience and Recovery Project: to provide support and equipment for healthcare waste segregation.
- Industrial Symbiosis Project to decrease the amount of industrial waste going into landfills.
- Upcoming: Marine Litter Management and Local Zero Waste Management projects.

Experiences Working with UNCTs and Informing Common Country Analyses in Asia-Pacific

Kamala Ernest of UNEP-ROAP, is the coordinator of UNEP's South East Asia (SEA) circular project in six countries, and is also the UNEP UNCT member for Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei.

Ms. Ernest presented the UNCTs' experiences, and how UNEP's work is informing the common country analysis (CCA) in the Asia Pacific region.

The context of plastic pollution in Asia: A plastic crisis in the region: Asia is a hot spot for plastic pollution marine litter. It contributes to: 49% of the global total of plastics; 38% of the consumption of plastic; 81% of all plastic waste originating from rivers in the South Asia region; 75% of material



value of recycled plastic (equivalent to USD 6 billion dollars) is lost in first use cycle in three countries in South East Asia.

The SEA circular project supports countries by inspiring them with market-based solutions, as well as strengthening science and data for informed decision making.

Ms. Ernest's role is the coordinator of the SEA circular project, as well as a member of the UNCT. This helps her to advance the work of UNEP in the area of marine litter plastic pollution and also helps steer countries towards a better involvement in this global agreement.

How the UNCTs are set up in Malaysia and Thailand:

- **Malaysia:** Its UNSDCF is categorized into four different areas. people, planet, prosperity and peace.
 - The focus of the planet group is 'Environment, Climate Change, and Resilience'. For this, it has its set of indicators. However, plastic pollution is not a dedicated area or a target that is explicitly mentioned in the results framework, so advancing the agenda on addressing plastic pollution requires a lot of coordination, collaboration, information sharing, and continuous awareness raising while participating in the monthly UNCT meetings and supporting the resident coordinators.
- **Thailand:** Its UNSDCF is set up quite differently from that of Malaysia. It focuses on three different 'Outcomes'.
 - Outcome 1 looks at 'Inclusive, green, resilient, low carbon & sustainable economy'. UNEP is the co-convenor with UNIDO to achieve the targets and objectives of this outcome.
 - This framework is very much in line with Thailand's National Action Plan.
- The UNCT's role to push the agenda on plastic pollution is very much dependent on who is in the group and the collaborators who can work together to push the common agenda. Some examples of collaboration include:
 - **Thailand: SEA circular project:** In 2021, a city-wide waste assessment was piloted in six cities in the province of Chonburi, involving hotspot modeling and the assessment of cities' waste and planning actions to help the cities and municipalities to develop an integrated waste management system addressing plastics pollution.
 - Data was collected to understand the flow of waste at the city level and to determine the plastic footprint of the population in that province.
 - Inputs were provided to the cities to help them come up with better integrated risk management plan through stakeholder consultations and engagements.
 - Follow-up actions were carried out six months after the project ended: The UN resident coordinator for Thailand, together with UNEP and partner UN habitat, carried out a site visit to the landfill where the waste assessment was being carried out and held meetings with the governors of the province to further engage and inspire them



to implement the recommended measures. Those actions generated media engagement, increased the project's visibility, and resulted in additional project activities and funding to the province.

- The U.N resident coordinator is a very dynamic person – active, engaging, and very interested in mobilizing change. She inspired a lot of UNEP's and other UN agencies' work with the national government in Thailand.
- **A pilot carried out in three countries on “inspiring national level engagement between the UN RCs and the government by raising national level awareness on championing the urgency to beat plastic pollution, and also to support national actions:**
 - Funded by the government of Norway, three videos and country briefs were produced (for Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam).

Plastics and the Waste Management System in Serbia

Vladan Scekcic, Program director of the Environment Improvement Center - and NGO based in Belgrade, Serbia.

- **Serbian citizens feel that Serbia's waste management system doesn't work as it should.**

Overview of Serbia's legislation framework for plastic waste management

- The policy/legislation situation in Serbia is similar to Turkey
- Serbia has laws, plans, strategies, programs, etc. - more or less in line with the European legislation
- Serbia is a candidate country. The EU Acquis needs to be transposed into Serbia's legislation. However, it's outdated. E.g., it does not include the EU directive on SUPs.

National Goals on Plastics

- The goals are not ambitious enough.
- According to the Serbian Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Report 2020, 33.8% of plastics packaging is waste collected. This is likely an overestimation because it is difficult to obtain reliable data.
- Law on Packaging and Waste - two ways for companies to deal with waste: self-management (with license), or delegate the plastic waste collection to one of 7 operator companies.
- Plastic waste comprises approximately 12% of the communal waste in Serbia. The amount of waste generated per capita each day is currently approximately 1.2 kilograms – projected to grow to 1.4kg per capita by 2030. With 7 million people living in Serbia – it's a big problem. And these numbers only reflect the waste from citizens - not industry.

Challenges/Gaps

- The main constraint is the lack of correct data on waste generation.



- No progress has yet been made towards introducing a Deposit Refund Scheme in Serbia
- Plastic bags containing Oxo additives are still being used (Oxo additives were banned in the EU on July 3, 2021).
- Inadequate infrastructure for plastic waste and for waste collection in general.
- Lack of capacity at all levels of government.

Proposed solutions ('call-to-action'): Initiative for plastic pollution reduction:

- **Social research** carried out on knowledge, habits, and attitudes of citizens. 1014 people responded to an internet survey focused on SUPs. Findings: high levels of awareness on the problem of SUPs. Most people also know that the plastic bags that are being sold in Serbia are not biodegradable. What citizens want:
 - The introduction of the deposit refund scheme (DRS)
 - More disposal units (bins) for plastics
 - Ban on SUPs in general and plastic bags
 - Stricter penalties and taxes on producing and putting plastic on market
 - More trust in the waste management system (Multiple respondents indicated that the plastics they separate are put into the same truck with other waste going to the landfill. They don't believe that these materials are being recycled).
- **Consultative meetings with plastic producers** in Serbia - Multi-stakeholder meetings (with 25 participants) including:
 - Companies (plastic producers, beverage producers, retail chains, recyclers and waste operators)
 - Professional associations (Serbian business chamber, plastic producers)
 - Academia, NGOs and activists.
 - Conclusions:
 - Transposition and application of EU SUP Directive
 - Introduction of DRS (run by companies) – *this needs to be ASAP, because implementing the laws and bylaws requires three to four years – i.e., year 2032.*
 - Ban on oxo additives and plastic bags (15-50 microns) *working towards alignment with the EU SUP directive. The companies producing plastic bags in Serbia with oxo degradable additives are not paying the required environmental taxes, resulting in approximately USD 2 million in budget losses for Serbia.*
 - Taxed funds to be reinvested in plastic waste – *importance of the awareness that the taxes are being gathered for addressing environmental issues. There will be*



reinvestment back to the sector to reduce impacts and help producers to use more sustainable materials.

- More ambitious targets for collection and recycling.
- **Position paper** - Based on the outcomes of the social research and consultative meetings. Contains nine intervention points (so far it has obtained 33 supporters):
 - i) Formation of a working group in a permanent session at the Government level with participation of relevant stakeholders
 - ii) Prohibit the use of oxo additives
 - iii) Prescribe a ban on the placing on the market of plastic bags with a thickness between 15 and 50 microns
 - iv) Prescribe a deadline for the introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme
 - v) Adopt the Waste Prevention Program
 - vi) Prescribe national goals for the collection and recycling of PET bottles and a mandatory percentage of recycled content in new bottles
 - vii) Prescribe a fee for plastic and other packaging disposed of in landfills
 - viii) Funds collected on the basis of the environmental protection fee for plastic bags to be invested in the development of infrastructure for the collection and reuse of waste plastic bags
 - ix) Improve professional capacities at all levels of government, including inspection
- **Social media campaign** - Fifteen posts on plastic, plastic waste and related issues. Two videos on plastic alternatives in Serbia.

Summary: there are a number of things that have to be improved so that Serbia can have a more controlled, efficient and effective plastics waste management system.

Decent Work and Plastics Circularity

Yasuhiko Kamakura, Chemicals Industries Senior Specialist, Sectoral Policies Department (SECTOR), Governance, Rights and Dialogue Cluster (GRD) – ILO

Mr. Kamakura's presentation focused on social and labour issues in the plastic recycling sector, the potential for a decent job creation in the sector, and the ILO's policy framework and tools to address the social and labour issues in the sector.

- The ILO promotes social justice in the workplace and provides several instruments. For textile industries, there is the [Code of practice on safety and health in textiles, clothing, leather and footwear](#), addressing how to promote circularity and environmental protection.

Social and labour issues in the plastic recycling sector:

- Why does plastic circularity matter? Environmental challenges: An ILO study showed that only 10 percent of plastic waste is recycled. Another study showed that 22 million tonnes of plastics are



leaked into the environment every year. This is accompanied by 'World of Work' challenges: ILO is concerned about inequality.

- In many countries the municipalities are responsible for waste management and plastic recycling, however, not all plastics can be recycled. Leftover plastics are collected by informal waste and recycling workers. Their role is significant around the world. In some communities these workers provide the only form of municipal waste collection.
- The informal recycling workers are a vulnerable population: they are often found in low-income countries, they are often rural workers - people living in poverty, migrants, refugees, single parents, people with a disability and other disadvantaged groups. They suffer from poor working conditions and lack access to the public social security schemes such as healthcare, unemployment insurance, pension plans, etc. We call this inhumane situation in the informal waste and plastic recycling sector the '**Decent Work Deficit**'.
- ILO's response can be summed up as '**Just transition**'. This means:
 - Greening the economy in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities, and leaving no one behind.
 - Maximizing social and economic opportunities of climate action, while minimizing and managing any challenges, including through social dialogue among all impacted groups.
 - Respecting the ILO International Labour Standards.

Potential for a decent job creation in the sector:

- In September 2021, the UN Secretary General launched the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions with the ambition to bring together member states and stakeholders to help countries create 400 million decent jobs.
- The ILO 2018 Report "Greening with jobs" has estimated that 8 million new jobs could be created by 2030 in a circular economy model.
- The ILO conducted **national green job assessments**. Although the ILO assessments do not focus solely on plastic recycling, they showed that a large number of green jobs could be created in the waste management sector. E.g., Bangladesh's assessment showed that over 200 000 jobs could be created in the sector; Malaysia's showed that nearly 16,000 green jobs could be created in the sector.
- A key message of these assessments is that a holistic approach would have a larger job creation impact. Solutions developed throughout the supply chain of plastics could create a huge impact on the ground.

ILO policy frameworks that can assist the implementation of Just Transition at the country level:

- The **Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP)** is the main vehicle for ILO support to countries:



- Tripartism and social dialogues are central to the planning and implementation of coherent and integrated ILO programme of assistance to the country (DWCPs) providing the country with knowledge, instruments, advocacy, and cooperation.
- There are 8 DWCPs in the Eastern Central Asian region (Armenia, North Macedonia, Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan).
- **International labour standards** have grown into a comprehensive system of instruments on work and social policy backed by a supervisor system designed to address issues at the national level. They are a minimal standard in the world of work. Particularly important is the **Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Right at Work**, which sets out the five basic human rights:
 - Freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining
 - The elimination of all forms of forced labour
 - The effective abolition of child labour
 - The elimination of any discrimination in respect of employment occupation
 - A safe and healthy working environment
- **ILO Guidelines for a Just Transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all** - offers a comprehensive set of policy briefs - including policy briefs on macroeconomic and growth, the labor market, industry and sectors, social protection and occupational safety and health, among others. It underlines the importance of policy coherence and the effective social dialogue and tripartism.
 - To facilitate, ILO provides technical advisory services to member states, and the Green Job Assessment
 - ILO's training arm offers green job training courses (the ITC-ILO).

Summary: 'Just Transition' can create decent work in the plastic recycling sector. Its implementation requires a systemic approach through social dialogue involving government, employers' and workers' organizations at all levels. ILO urges all organizations in the UN system to strengthen collaboration on sharing knowledge, experience, and good practice on a full recycling of plastics to enable the achievement of SDG 8 and SDG 13.



Closing Remarks

Co-facilitator Darren Swanson highlighted the links posted by participants on the webinar's virtual sharing board, including:

Case examples of plastics:

- [SEA Circular – Best Practices](#)
- [SEA of Solutions](#)
- [The New Plastic Economy Global Commitment](#)

Challenges and lessons learned in addressing plastics:

- Not using plastic bottles for workshops and meetings. Sorting and sending for recycling.
- During the COVID-19 it was problematic to live plastic free.
- The sectoral footprint of plastic use is not known. Surveys conducted show that the tourism sector has an immense impact on plastic pollution despite hotels' mitigation efforts. Wrong collection and lack of separation is a serious issue for hotels and cruises.
 - [Addressing plastic pollution in tourism through sustainable procurement](#)
 - [Tools and Resources for Implementing the Global Tourism Plastics Initiative](#)

Other resources:

- [Visual Feature | Beat Plastic Pollution](#) (by UNEP)
- [SEA circular - Solving Plastic Pollution At Source](#)
- [Regional Dialogue on Perceptions on plastic waste: A dialogue on the findings of a regional study and the role of businesses in accelerating circularity](#)

IBC representative **Francesca Bampa (UNESCO)** highlighted that it is necessary to address not only how plastic affects the environment - causing pollution to terrestrial and marine ecosystems and how it impacts human health, but also to reflect on the shift required to move to a circular economy and how can this create positive results in terms of both reducing waste and also creating new green jobs.

She reminded participants that plastic waste is an increasingly big environmental challenge for the countries in the region and for the world in general - and there is a complex life cycle and complex waste management system behind the massive amount of plastic we generate every day.

Ms. Bampa ended the session by reminding participants of the UN's responsibility to assist countries in shifting gears towards more circular and sustainable policies, and that UN Country Teams are uniquely placed to support such transitions. She encouraged participants to use the guidance materials and the information from today's discussion and circulate it further among colleagues. The IBC team is also available to support and provide further information as needed.



Annex 1: Participant List

NO	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	ORGANIZATION	ROLE in the ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY office
1	Aizhan	Karabayeva	FAO	Project Manager	Kazakhstan
2	Akemi	Lamarche-Vadel	UNESCO Regional Bureau	Intern	Italy
3	Aleksandra	Siljic Tomic	UNEP	Project Coordination Specialist	Serbia
4	Anastasia	Saglam	IOM	UNDFCF, MPTF	Turkey
5	Assel	Nurbekova	UNDP		
6	Brenda	Koekkoek	UNEP		
7	Darren	Swanson	IISD	Senior Associate	Canada
8	Fiona	McCunty			
9	Francesca	Bampa	UNESCO Regional Bureau	Project officer	Italy
10	Francesco	Vettore	UNESCO Regional Bureau	intern Science Unit	Italy
11	Garik	Khachikyan	UNDP		Armenia
12	Gayane	Gharagebakyan	UNDP	National Team Leader	Armenia
13	Gökçe	Yörükoğlu	IOM	Project Development and Reporting Officer	Turkey
14	Hovhannes	Ghazaryan	UNDP	CER Portfolio Lead	Armenia
15	Inga	Podoroghin	UNDP	Programme Specialist	Moldova
16	Jing	Fang	UNESCO		
17	Kamala	Ernest	UNEP	Coordinator of SEA circular project	Thailand
18	Klem	Ryan	UNDCO		
19	Kumar	Kylychev	UNDP	Head of Energy and Environment Unit	Kazakhstan
20	Leslie	Paas	IISD	Associate	Canada
21	Livia	Bizikova	IISD	Lead, Monitoring and Governance, Tracking Progress	Canada
22	Llorenç	Milà i Canals	UNEP		France



NO	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	ORGANIZATION	ROLE in the ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY office
23	Madina	Nazarova	UNICEF	DRR and Emergency Preparedness Response Expert	Tajikistan
24	Marianna	Bolshakova	UNEP	Regional Coordinator, Environmental Law and Governance	Switzerland
25	Marika	Palosaari	UNEP	Programme Coordinator	
26	Matthew	Billot	UNEP	Senior Coordination Officer	Switzerland
27	Meral	Mungan Arda	UNDP	Chemicals and Waste Projects Coordinator	Turkey
28	Nadzeya	Lukina	UNICEF	Adolescent Development Officer	Belarus
29	Nicholas	Bonvoisin	UNECE	Chief, Operational Activities & Review Section, Environment Division	Switzerland
30	Nino	Antadze	UNDP	Team Leader, environment portfolio	Georgia
31	Oleg	Dzioubinski	UNECE	Regional Adviser on Energy	Switzerland
32	Olivera	Kostic	UNOPS	Project Manager	Serbia
33	Roberto	Martin Hurtado	Alboran Consulting Ltd	Director	.
34	Saltanat	Bayeshova	FAO	National Team Leader	Kazakhstan
35	Sarangoo	Radnaaragchaa	UNECE	Regional Adviser	Switzerland
36	Shukriana	Statovci			
37	Vladan	Šćekić	Environment Improvement Centre	Programme Director	Serbia
38	Yasuhiko	Kamakura	ILO	Chemicals Industries Senior Specialist	Switzerland
39	Yvonne	Rademacher	UNOPS	Project Manager	Serbia
40	Zeynep	Başoda	UNIDO	Team/Office Assistant	Turkey
41	Zhulieta	Harasani	ILO	National Coordinator	Albania



Annex 2: Webinar Agenda and Evaluation Results

Timing	Agenda Item
0-10 min	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Welcome and Introduction to Green Transitions</u>: IBC representative <i>Matthew Billot (UNEP)</i> • <u>Webinar Overview and Warm-up Polling</u>: <i>Livia Bizikova and Darren Swanson (IISD)</i>
10-60 min	<p>Presentation Session on Plastics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Presentation – Part 1</u>: Plastic pollution - a key environmental challenge - and the global regulatory framework and the role of the UN on the ground (<i>Brenda Koekkoek, UNEP</i>) • <u>Presentation – Part 2</u>: Plastics and the circular economy (<i>Llorenç Mila Canals, UNEP</i>) • Knowledge Poll • Q&A
60-110 min	<p>Plenary Panel: Experience Sharing on Addressing Plastics in the Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Panel Insights</u>: Moderated by <i>Livia Bizikova (IISD)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Panellist 1: Legal or policy frameworks (<i>Menal Mungan, UNDP, Türkiye, TBC</i>) ○ Panellist 2: Experiences working with UNCTs and informing CCAs in Asia-Pacific (<i>Kamala Ernest, UNEP-ROAP</i>) ○ Panellist 3: Plastics and the waste management system (<i>Vladan Scekcic, Centre for Environmental Improvement, Serbia</i>) ○ Panellist 4: Decent work and plastics circularity (<i>Yasuhiko Kamakura, ILO</i>) • <u>Plenary Q&A and Experience Sharing by Participants</u>: Facilitated by <i>Darren Swanson (IISD)</i>
110- 120 min	<p>Next Steps and Closing Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinar evaluation form (<i>Darren Swanson, IISD</i>) • Closing remarks and next steps: <i>IBC representative Francesca Bampa (UNESCO)</i>

Training evaluation results

In concluding the event, an evaluation form was circulated with a response rate of 12.5% (5 responses). All respondents reported they liked the format, duration, and interactive style of the training. 20% felt the training fully met their expectations, while the remaining 80% felt expectations were ‘partially met’. 80% also felt the content was a useful introduction to the tools and approaches for circular economy, while 20% felt it could be improved.



For the question “Did this webinar provide useful strategic and programmatic guidance on how to implement sustainable finance approaches and tools in your country?”, 60% agreed that it did, while 20% responded it did not, and the remaining 20% indicated it could be improved. 60% of the respondents indicated they would use the guidance in practice, while 40% thought they might use it.

In written feedback, a respondent commented, *“together with the legislation presented in the meeting, it would be helpful to cover in more detail the policy on the protection of jobs and the health of the workers, including migrant workers involved in plastic production”*.