

Batumi Initiative on Green Economy (BIG-E) Actions by the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC)

**Country:** Tajikistan and Uzbekistan

**Implementer:** The Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC)

**Title:** Promote sustainable consumption and production (SCP) through implementation of the European Union REAP (Resource Efficiency in Agri-food Production and Processing) project in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (2020-2024)

**Focus area 1, 2, 4, 9:** 1: Improve the measurement and valuation of natural capital; 2: Promote the internalization of negative externalities and the sustainable use of natural capital; 4: Shift consumer behaviors towards sustainable consumption patterns; and 9: Promote public participation and education for sustainable development

**Description of the action:** Promote SCP practices in the agri-food production and processing industries along the entire supply chain, while creating an enabling environment through clusters and by building on current national development strategies, integrating SCP incentives. The SCP practices will focus on resource-efficiency in agri-food production and processing and apply approaches for dealing with resource shortfalls. This will cover increasing the efficiency of water usage, reduction of food-losses and decreasing other energy and resource inefficiency. The process of clusterization will seek to enhance the competitiveness of local businesses.

The European Union REAP project, in partnership with the National Association of Small and Medium Businesses of Tajikistan, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Uzbekistan, Adelphi Research gGmbH (Germany), Austria Recycling (Austria), STENUM Asia (India), Teri Institute of Energy and Resources (India) is piloting practical implementation of sustainable consumption and production measures in small and medium-sized businesses in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

REAP is a 4-year project (2020-2024) supported by the European Union under the SWITCH Asia Programme. This programme emphasizes sustainable consumption and production in MSMEs. REAP is targeted specifically at the agri-food production and processing sector in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. It aims to introduce resource efficiency practices and technologies that lead to improved environmental quality and combat pollution. The REAP project promotes Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) practices in the agri-food production and processing industries in Central Asia along the entire supply chain in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. It covers Dushanbe and Gorno-Badakhshan, Khatlon, Sughd regions of Tajikistan and Tashkent and Bukhara, Ferghana regions of Uzbekistan.

The four-year project started in March 2020 and just as the project activities, including training of local teams on SCP and visiting MSMEs to provide SCP consulting services were about to be rolled out, COVID-19 related restrictions came into force. The project team utilized the time to prepare management structures, internal coordination meetings and other such activities that did not require travel and physical meetings.

REAP Project comprises 400 small and medium businesses in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan where SCP are implemented and a local pool of trained SCP consultants is created. The SCP practices cover increasing the efficiency of water usage, reduction of food-losses and decreasing other energy and resource inefficiency.

With some easing of travel within countries, the REAP project team has come up with a unique approach that combines on-site consulting by local teams and on-line support by the international experts to start to introduce the REAP project to MSMEs and to initiate actions on the ground. This approach requires well-aligned actions between team members despite the physical distance separating the team.

Therefore, a detailed Orientation Training has been developed and delivered online on 2 and 5 November 2020 by international experts for specially selected local teams' members from

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Uzbekistan and National Association of Small and Medium Business of the Republic of Tajikistan, as well as some nominated participants from CAREC. It was facilitated by SCP experienced trainers from Austria Recycling, The Energy and Resources Institute and STENUM Asia. Also, a series of National Consultation Meetings with project partners of REAP have been organized in 2021-2022.

REAP Project hold an event “Implementation of Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) measures in MSMEs of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan” in online and offline mode at Central Asia Pavilion “5 countries – 1 region – 1 voice”.

The participants got information about activities of REAP Project implemented by the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia in partnership with the *National Association of Small and Medium Business* of the Republic of *Tajikistan*, Uzbekistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Adelphi Research gGmbH (Germany), Austria Recycling (Austria), STENUM Asia (India), The Energy and Research Institute (India).

At REAP Project presentation event, the participants shared their experience and discussed challenges and opportunities for MSMEs in SCP in implementation of measures. The SCP practices implements “green” economic and financial instruments, green entrepreneurship and new green business models, regulatory mechanisms promoting the market for sustainable products and services.

**Action’s timeframe/milestones, as appropriate:** 2020-2024 years

**Type of action:** (a) legal, regulatory and policy instruments and (c) information, education-based, capacity building and voluntary instruments.

**Economic sectors:** The action is covering the sectors: agriculture, energy, water, forestry, fishing, mining, manufacturing, transport, waste, tourism and housing.

**Reference instruments and sources, as appropriate:** Project budgets of the “REAP” project implemented in cooperation and with support of CA governments, international, national and regional partners

**Expected co-benefits and impact of the outcome:** Tajikistan and Uzbekistan will design, apply and disseminate the integrated approaches, instruments and tools helpful to the process of support of the agri-food production and processing sector in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, introducing resource efficiency practices and technologies that lead to improved environmental quality and combat pollution in the Central Asian region, monitoring and reporting on achieved results.

**SDGs target(s) that the action may contribute to implement:** SDG 7 - Affordable and clean energy, SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth, SDG 9 - Industry, innovation & infrastructure, SDG 12 - Responsible consumption and production, SDG 13 - Climate action, SDG 17 - Partnerships for the goals

**Implementation of Environmental Performance Review (EPR) Recommendations, as appropriate:** N/A

**Objectively verifiable indicators, as appropriate:** Agenda, LoP, and outcomes of the REAP project’s events/trainings/workshops/conferences.

**Partners:**

EU under the SWITCH Asia Programme, Adelphi Research GmbH (Germany), Austria Recycling (Austria), STENUM Asia (India), Teri Institute of Energy and Resources (India).

National partners: National Association of Small and Medium Businesses of Tajikistan, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Uzbekistan

Regional partners: IFAS, ICWC, ICSD, CAREC.

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Additional information on the Nicosia focus of the action:

- **Is the action related to the Nicosia environmental theme I: “Greening the economy in the pan-European region: working towards sustainable infrastructure”?** (YES / NO)
  - *If yes, please indicate below to which “International Good Practice Principles for Sustainable Infrastructure<sup>i</sup>” does the action contribute:*
    3. Comprehensive lifecycle assessment of sustainability;
    4. Avoiding environmental impacts and investing in nature;
    5. Resource efficiency and circularity;
    6. Equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment;
    7. Enhancing economic benefits;
    9. Transparent, inclusive, and participatory decision-making;
    10. Evidence-based decision-making.
  
- **Is the action related to the Nicosia environmental theme II: “Applying principles of circular economy to sustainable tourism”?** (YES / **NO**)

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<sup>i</sup> The “International Good Practice Principles for Sustainable Infrastructure” (as reflected in a subsequent UNEA Resolution UNEP/EA.5/Res.9) set out **ten guiding principles that policymakers can follow to help integrate sustainability into infrastructure planning and delivery:**

1. Strategic planning;
2. Responsive, resilient, and flexible service provision;
3. Comprehensive lifecycle assessment of sustainability;
4. Avoiding environmental impacts and investing in nature;
5. Resource efficiency and circularity;
6. Equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment;
7. Enhancing economic benefits;
8. Fiscal sustainability and innovative financing;
9. Transparent, inclusive, and participatory decision-making;
10. Evidence-based decision-making.

Web link: <https://www.unep.org/resources/publication/international-good-practice-principles-sustainable-infrastructure>