

EU4Environment fosters the promotion of Industrial Waste Mapping activities in the Rustavi and Zestaponi municipalities of Georgia

June the 3rd 2021 marked the kick off stakeholders meeting on industrial waste mapping (IWM) under the framework of the "Circular Economy and New Growth Opportunities" Component of the EU- funded "EU4Environment" Action.

The Energy Efficiency Centre Georgia (EECG) is the National Implementing Partner of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in executing this component. As a means of introducing circular economy (CE) principles, the project aims to assess waste sources from industrial activities and identify recycling options (from source to waste) where CE models can be introduced as "waste maps" tools on a pilot basis.

The component of the Action is implemented by the experts from REC Caucasus and the Swedish company SWECO. The event, which took part virtually, gathered 25 relevant stakeholders from key ministries, enterprises, municipalities, UNIDO, National Implementing Partner-EEC Georgia, experts from SWECO, and REC Caucasus.



Key remarks from the event's participants:

George Abulashvili, Project National Coordinator, introduced the meeting participants and the components of the Project, in particular: RECP Networking and Institutionalization, RECP Clubs & Industry Demonstrations, Circular Economy & Waste Management, RECP Awareness, Knowledge Management and Capacity Building. He then spoke about the progress made in carrying out the scheduled activities in Georgia.

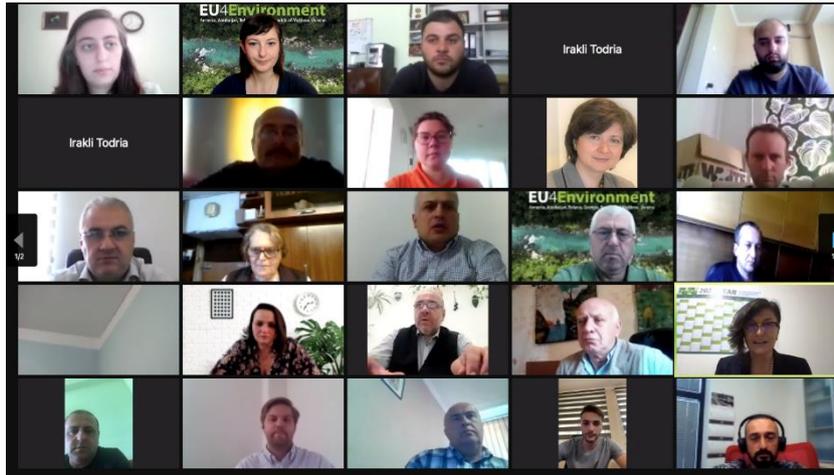
Ms. Sophiko Akhobadze, REC Caucasus Director, familiarized the participants with the component of the project - Circular Economy and New Growth Opportunities. She then proceeded towards waste management and other

related activities which have already been implemented in Georgia (including the mini study on the identification of experts and practices on applying CE). She mentioned the identification of 3-4 regions to draft regional industrial waste management plans, and, based on pre-determined selection criteria, two regions were selected to conduct waste mapping exercises. The key criteria for the final selection of Zestaphoni and Rustavi municipalities for the pilot project were: information on the main types of waste within the municipality (including hazardous waste), and the available industrial waste and capacities to recycle or combust waste.

Mr. David Advadze, Deputy Head of Sustainable Development Department at the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, in his welcoming remarks, pointed out that the circular economy models are very important for the economic development of the country, being beneficial for businesses by providing them with opportunities to increase their income, and, at the same time, having minimal adverse impact on the environment.

Ms. Angela Bularga, Programme Manager, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), at the European Commission, welcomed all the participants and mentioned that the date of the meeting coincided with the EU green week dedicated to zero pollution, which is one of the main goals of the European Green Deal (the new growth strategy of the EU). Ms. Bularga explained that the European Green Deal ensures that the EU policy follows the principle of sustainability of which all the public as well as private investments must follow. Circular economy, including waste management, are thus part of the European Green Deal. Ms. Bularga underlined that, in general, within the Eastern Partnership, the EU aims to achieve tangible results or collective strength, wealth, and health by working together on protecting the environment and supporting industries in their green transition. This especially concerns the SMEs that are receiving substantial support from the EU in boosting their economic or environmental resilience.

Ms. Irma Gurguliani, Deputy Head of Waste and Chemicals Management Department at the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia spoke about the significance of the EU4 Environment Action's work on waste management issues. She gave a quick overview of the country's progress and policy development. Ms. Gurguliani stated that mapping industrial waste in the Rustavi and Zestaponi municipalities, as well as developing waste mapping methods, will be extremely beneficial to identify the needs of the companies present in the regions.



Ms. Tatiana Chernyavskaya, EU4Environment International Project Coordinator at UNIDO, stated that the Organization views circular economy as a way to produce value, and ultimately, success by considering product longevity, waste relocation, resource loops, and connecting the end of the supply chain to the beginning. She noted that UNIDO is encouraging not only the waste-related component, but also the development of value through resource usage throughout the value chain and during the manufacturing process. She emphasized that the industrial waste mapping exercise has been a very interesting experience for UNIDO, as they are attempting to establish a methodology in accordance with the country's existing legislation in order to better understand how it may be applied in Georgia's various regions. She emphasized the importance of local governments and businesses in participating in this process.



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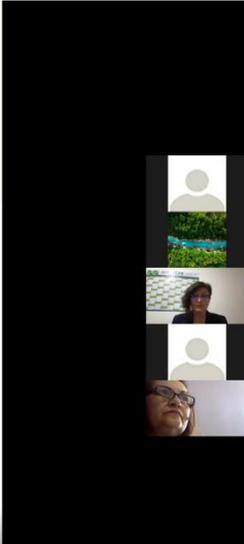
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Further Steps

Activity 3.4 - Waste maps for two identified regions and clarification and consultation with municipal administrations

Activity 3.4.1 – Development of waste maps for two identified regions and action plans on their promotion and application

Activity 3.4.2 - Conduct consultation meeting with in-line ministries representatives of local authorities of the selected municipalities, in-line ministries and private sector for validation of the waste maps and action plans



Action implemented by:

Mr. Alastair Carruth, SWECO specialist in circular economy and waste mapping, discussed the next steps in advancing waste mapping for the two selected municipalities: the collection of data from the enterprises to determine

the type of waste and its quantity, storage and transportation, treatment and disposal of industrial waste (which will be followed by the organization of the gathered data and their analysis). He also shared his knowledge on comparable projects in other countries (Finland, Great Britain, the Netherlands).



The image shows a presentation slide with the following content:

- To pilot a replicable waste mapping method
- Focus on a selection of unutilised materials
 - Waste, by-products, residues
 - Symbioses within and between industries
 - Think circular economy
- Describe and quantify waste systems, identify improvements
- Contribute to action plans

Logos at the top left include the European Union flag and the text "ევროკავშირი საქართველოსთვის The European Union for Georgia". The logo at the top right is "EU4Environment" with the text "Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine" below it. On the right side, there is a vertical strip showing a video call interface with several participants' faces.

During the discussion, Mr. Besik Togonidze , the Deputy Mayor of the Rustavi Municipality, expressed his gratitude for including the Municipality in the waste mapping exercise, and indicated his willingness to provide the required information for the successful implementation of the exercise.

Mr. Givi Kalandadze, the Environmental Manager at "Rustavi Steel" LLC spoke on the importance of the six EPR Technical Regulations, four of which have already been adopted by the Government of Georgia (with the adoption of remaining two on end-of-life-vehicles and packaging materials still being delayed).

The representatives of "HeidelbergCement Georgia" LLC and "Mshenebeli 2004" LLC expressed their readiness to cooperate and provide the experts with all the necessary information to elaborate waste maps. Industrial waste mapping will help improve the waste management process in both municipalities, aid in the expansion of economic possibilities, and lower the negative environmental impact in the regions.