

Plenary

Circular Economy Transition Beyond 2030: From Policy Ambition to Inclusive Action in South Asia

In collaboration with IGES Centre Collaborating with UNEP on Environmental Technologies (CCET)

This plenary will examine how South Asia can translate circular economy ambitions into inclusive action, with Pakistan providing a national and subnational lens. It will bring together policy and implementation perspectives to consider how resource efficiency, waste prevention and recovery can support environmental sustainability, economic opportunity and equity. The discussion will connect priorities under Agenda 2030 with the institutions, partnerships and practical measures needed to sustain the transition beyond 2030.

A 'National Circular Economy Policy', proposed by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), will provide the starting point for discussing the relationship between national direction, provincial responsibilities and municipal implementation. The plenary will explore how policy can be translated into workable arrangements for local authorities, service providers, businesses and communities.

[SDPI's work in Sahiwal](#), including the Solid Waste Management Strategy for Sahiwal Division, and with [informal waste workers](#), will serve as a practical case for discussion. Participants will consider how provincial programmes such as [Suthra Punjab](#) and municipal service arrangements can support resource recovery while protecting livelihoods and enabling the participation of informal workers. Lessons from Sahiwal will inform a wider exchange on approaches that could be adapted elsewhere in Pakistan and South Asia, drawing on relevant experience from the Asia-Pacific region and developed countries. Specifically, the discussion will:

- Examine how circular economy priorities can advance Agenda 2030 and inform an inclusive development agenda for South Asia beyond 2030.
- Clarify the roles of federal, provincial and municipal institutions in translating Pakistan's circular economy policy ambitions into practical action.
- Draw lessons from Sahiwal on resource recovery, municipal waste services and the inclusion of informal waste workers in circular value chains.
- Identify opportunities for adapting local approaches, strengthening partnerships and exchanging relevant learning across South Asia, the wider Asia-Pacific region and developed countries.

Organisers:

Ms Zainab Naeem, Associate Research Fellow, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Pakistan
Email: zainabnaeem@sdpi.org

Ms Amna Urooj, Research Associate, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Pakistan
Email: amna_aroosj@sdpi.org