Central American Dialogue on Circular Economy

Circularity of resources and solid waste management to accelerate Sustainable Development Goals

23-25 July 2024 - Holiday Inn, San Salvador, El Salvador

Concept Note

Humanity currently generates approximately 2.24 billion tons of municipal solid waste (MSW) per year and waste generation rates could increase by more than 73% by the end of 2050.[1] However, waste volumes continue to increase across the globe amid rapid urbanization and production and consumption trends centered on a "take, make and dispose" model. With six years left to achieve the 2030 Agenda, the circularity of solid waste, which is itself a resource, can ensure progress towards sustainable development while achieving innovation and economic opportunities.

A key challenge in waste mismanagement is open dumping and burning of waste, often linked to informal and unregulated activities. Only 55% of MSW generated [2]generated is managed in controlled facilities worldwide and developing countries discard approximately 90% of waste in large, unregulated dumpsters or landfills that can burn openly, affect air quality and also leach into waterways. [3]Informality in the waste sector increases the vulnerability of workers and their communities. It is estimated that more than 400,000 people in developing countries die each year from diseases resulting from poorly managed waste systems requiring multilevel governance and multilateral action to address this challenge.

Driving a circular economy around key resources presents co-benefits and synergies to accelerate progress on all key social, economic and environmental SDGs and targets. Effective and integrated waste management contributes to all 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).[4] Therefore, this dialogue will focus on key SDG indicators, specifically, 11.6.1, 12.3.1, 12.4.1, 12.4.2 and 12.5.1, with the objective of accelerating national-local progress in Central America on data generation and evidence-based public policies for a circular economy.

The transition to circularity in the economies of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC region) can effectively contribute to sustainable development, but requires transformational changes in production and consumption systems with the adoption of mechanisms to achieve this transition. To this end, it is essential to overcome various factors that act as barriers to the advancement of the circular economy, such as the construction of roadmaps, the lack of metrics, the absence of instruments

[1] International Day of Zero Waste | United Nations

[2]According to the UN Statistics Division on SDG 12.5, Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) includes waste from households, commerce and trade, small businesses, office buildings and institutions.
It also includes bulky waste and selected municipal service waste if managed as waste. More information on MSW is defined in the SDG indicator methodology for 11.6.1.

[3] Ferronato N, Torretta V. Waste mismanagement in developing countries: a review of global problems. Int J Environ Res Public Health. Mar 24, 2019;16(6):1060. doi : 10.3390/ijerph16061060. PMID: 30909625; PMCID: PMC6466021 and https://www.borgenmagazine.com/waste-management-in-developing-countries/.

[4] United Nations Environment Programme (2019). Small island developing states waste management outlook. Nairobi. https://www.unep.org/ietc/node/44

and regulatory issues, building governance and collaboration among actors. Therefore, in addition to the harmonization of concepts, it is increasingly important to identify gaps and opportunities and design policies to lead society towards an increasingly circular future.

In key ECLAC documents[5] , the circular economy is defined as a model of productive transformation that applies a new logic of production and consumption through the optimization and permanence of the use and value of resources in the economy, based on technological innovation and the development of new technologies. business models. In this logic, the circular economy would be a system where materials do not become waste and nature is regenerated. Materials are kept in circulation through processes that start from the eco-design of products, and where priority is given to maintenance, repair, reuse, remanufacturing, recycling and composting, promoting a decoupling between the consumption of natural resources and economic activity. Eliminating waste and pollution, circulating products and materials and regenerating nature are the three principles of the circular economy adopted worldwide.

As a resource-rich region with a diverse configuration, LAC plays a key role in the global extraction and use of materials. The region provides more than 11% of the world's raw materials by weight, despite representing 8.3% of the world's population. It is largely self-sufficient in raw materials and comprises many countries with a moderate material footprint. However, material recirculation and thus secondary material consumption is minimal, less than 1%[1] . The LAC economy is largely linear, with differences between countries and sectors. The challenge now is to promote the incorporation of circular practices in priority sectors by transforming them into national strategies and public policies consistent with a transition to circularity.

The Central American Integration System (SICA) is made up of the countries of Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and the Dominican Republic. SICA's main objective is the integration of the region and one of the integrating issues is the environment. The secretariat in charge of the environmental agenda within the system is the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD), which through its Regional Environmental Framework strategies (2021-2025), contains proposals for solid waste management and circular economy for the region. CCAD has promoted regional agreements to strengthen the countries' capacities for solid waste management, compliance with the treaties on hazardous waste under the Basel Convention and electronic waste (WEEE), and, more recently, to develop a regional approach to solid waste management and the circular economy. [6]and, more recently, to develop a common approach to plastic waste management.[7]

However, challenges persist from national to local implementation of these strategies, as well as data gaps related to monitoring and measuring progress on waste and circularity. Data and knowledge gaps are key barriers to effectively implementing targeted policy actions for greater resource circularity.

A recent UN report shows that SDG 1, which includes most of the indicators on solid waste, has the largest gap in data availability. Similarly, SDG

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[5] ECLAC (2023). *Opportunities for investment and collaboration between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union* . Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/48984-oportunidades-la-inversion-la-colaboracion-america-latina- caribe-la-union#:~:text=In%20this%20document%2C%20la%20Comisi%C3%B3n%20Econ%C3%B3mica%20para%20Am%C3%A9rica,oportunidades%20y%20propone%20agendas%20de%20trabajo%20y%20pol%C3%ADticas.
ECLAC (2022). *Towards the transformation of the development model in Latin America and the Caribbean: Production, inclusion and sustainability* (Synthesis LC/SES.39/4). Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

[6] Basel Support of the Regional Convention Center with the OAS (OAS) 2012 onwards

[7] https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/137306.html

12.5, measured from data on national recycling rates and tons of recycled material, has accumulated limited data for most countries globally. These data are essential to compare progress globally and to measure the shift towards a circular economy.[8] Every two years countries have the opportunity to report solid waste data, with national responses to the Questionnaire on Environmental Statistics (QES).[9] to the United Nations Questionnaire on Environmental Statistics.[10]

Creating evidence-based policies requires support for data generation and the implementation of local-level strategies towards a circular economy. In this context, the United Nations Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD), which serves as the policy support arm of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), aims to develop a policy support system that can address data gaps, technology needs and capacity gaps to achieve resource circularity in solid waste management. This work builds on UN DESA's commitment to zero waste through the International Partnership for Scaling Up Local Authority Waste Management Services (IPLA) from 2011 to 2015. In light of the UN General Assembly resolution *A/RES/77/161 adopted in 2022* on zero waste, UNOSD proposes a Community of Practice for the formulation of zero waste policies in the run-up to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a special focus on Central America through this first dialogue to be held on July 23-25 in San Salvador, El Salvador.[11]

To address the triple planetary crisis through waste-free societies, UN DESA, through UNOSD, aims to develop a concerted system of policy support through partnerships, results-oriented and consultative strategies for regional, national and local action, in partnership with ECLAC. ECLAC is also part of the Circular Economy Coalition of Latin America and the Caribbean, formed in 2021 to provide a regional platform to enhance inter-ministerial, multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder cooperation, increase knowledge and understanding of the circular economy and provide capacity building and technical assistance for the development of public policies on circular economy and sustainable consumption and production.[12]

With the support of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea, this first regional policy dialogue will contribute to design better research and policy support to strengthen circular approaches and waste-free societies in participating countries through a multi-year policy support process. This first meeting serves as a consultation platform to tailor future research and policy support according to current needs, challenges and accelerated solutions that can measurably improve solid waste management and resource circularity at national and local levels.

Objectives

This policy dialogue will focus on:

(1) Generate evidence and data on current needs, challenges and barriers to promote resource circularity and a circular economy in solid waste management in Central America;

[8]Retrieved from: Special edition of the SDG Progress Report (May 2023).

[9] United Nations Statistics Division, Country files of the UNSD/UNEP Environmental Statistics Data Collection https://unstats.un.org/unsd/envstats/country_files

[10] United Nations Statistics Division, UNSD/UNEP Questionnaire on Environmental Statistics https://unstats.un.org/unsd/envstats/questionnaire

[11]A/RES/77/161 Promoting zero waste initiatives to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N22/756/33/PDF/N2275633.pdf ?Open Element

[12] https://www.circularity-gap.world/lac

(2) Examine policy support tools, proven solutions and methods to drive circular approaches and close data and information gaps on waste management and facilitate evidence-based policy formulation in the solid waste sector such as plastics and more;
(3) Share and discuss opinions, comments, suggestions and recommendations on the design and operation of circular waste management systems from the national to the local level;
coherent and impact-oriented policy support;
(5) Identify and involve new actors to promote the circular economy and responsible solid waste management in Central America.

Organizers
The policy dialogue is jointly organized by the United Nations Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD) of the Sustainable Development Goals Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office in El Salvador and the Central American Integration System Central American Commission for Environment and Development (CCAD), with the support of the Korean Environmental Corporation (K-eco) of the Ministry of Environment.

Participants
The policy dialogue includes government representatives and invited experts from the United Nations, international organizations and civil society representatives and others focused on resource circularity, circular economy, data management, and material flow management, as well as national to local MSW policies and practices.

Contact
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Location
San Salvador, El Salvador

Supported by

Central American Dialogue on Circular Economy

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Agenda

Day 1 Tuesday, 23 July 2024	
Time	Session
8:30 - 9:00	Participant Registration
9:00 - 9:30	**Welcome** Mr. Jair Urriola, Secretary, Executive Secretary. Central American Commission for Environment and Development, SICA. Mr. Chun Kyoo Park, Head, Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD), Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) Mr. Luiz Krieger Merico, Chief, Sustainable Development Policy Unit, ECLAC
9:30-9:45	**Introductory Session: The Sustainable Development Goals and Solid Waste Management - Achieving a Waste Free Society and Economy** Sara Castro de Hallgren, Sustainable Development Officer, UNOSD, UN DESA
9:45 - 10:00	Pause - group photo
10:00 - 11:00	**Session I: Circular Economy in Latin America and the Caribbean: main advances and challenges** Mr. Luiz Krieger Merico, Chief, Sustainable Development Policy Unit, ECLAC
11:00-12:00	**Session II: The life cycle for transitioning solid waste to resources in value chains** Introductory lesson on the life cycle of solid resources Mr. Chun Kyoo Park, Chief, United Nations Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD), UN DESA
12:00-13:30	Lunch
13:30-15:45	**Session III: Regional context on circular economy and zero-waste: governance and policy structures for solid waste management** Moderator: Karina Martínez, ECLAC

	Roadmap and regional process in harmonization of legislation in SICA countries Adriana Alvarado GIZ/ CCAD SICA and Carlos Gonzáles CCAD SICA Presentations by member states and their representatives Olga Segura Cárdenas, Coordinator, Integrated Waste Management and Circular Economy Planning, Environmental Health Unit, Ministry of Health, Costa Rica. Petrona Gago, Technician in Integrated Waste and Hazardous Waste Management. Ministry of Environment of Nicaragua MARENA. Mellany Díaz, Technical Advisor in Waste Management and Circular Economy. Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala. Mildred Márquez, Director of Environmental Management. Secretariat of Environment of Honduras Guiding questions: • What key governance and policy structures are focused on the management of waste from the national to the local level? • What is the role of national and local governance in achieving the waste zero in the context of the country? • What are the gaps and challenges between planning and policies for achieve zero waste and more circular and integrated solid waste management? • What progress or national plans are in place to remedy these challenges and gaps, if any?
15:45 - 16:00	Pause
16:00 - 17:00	**Session IV: Measuring what we waste - progress and gaps in solid waste management data** Moderator: Ms. Sara Castro de Hallgren, UNOSD, DESA Mr. Marcus Newbury, Statistics Division, UN DESA - Questionnaire and Data Gaps Ms. Magda Correal, Senior Specialist, Water and Sanitation Division, IDB Mr. Rafael Valladares, Waste Flow Diagram-GIZ in Central America Guiding questions: • What are the data gaps on solid waste management in the context of the SDGs and to move towards zero waste at the regional level? • How does the UN DESA Statistics Division collect and support countries in collecting data on waste management? • What is the Waste Flow methodology and how does it support the generation of plastics data for the improvement of plastics waste management? • Are there any data gaps on socioeconomic factors or demographics that influence waste generation patterns?

	• Are there specific types of waste that are currently not accurately measured and accounted for? • What data gaps exist particularly in the informal waste sector and what proxy indicators can be used to estimate the role of the informal sector?
17:00 - 17:30	**Report to the plenary on the first day** Moderators: UNOSD and ECLAC Guiding questions: • What patterns can be observed in the country presentations in the previous sessions on the relationship between national and local governance, policies and data for solid waste management? • How can national governments ensure that waste data collected in different locations are standardized and comparable? • What other policy support tools could strengthen the data and local governments to achieve zero waste and the key targets of the SDGs?
17:30 - 19:00	**Welcome reception**
Day 2 Wednesday - July 24	
Time	Session
8:50-9:00	Day 1 compilation and introduction to day 2
9:00 - 10:00	**Session V: Transition to a circular economy for plastics** Moderator: Carlos Gonzalez, SICA - Global Plastic Treaty Pedro Sao Simao, Coordinator, Working Group on Plastics, World Economic Forum (virtual) Questions and Answers
10:00 - 11:00	**Session VI: Success stories in Central America on policies and practices for a waste-free society: value chains and the role of the private sector and PPPs** Moderator: Silvia Vides, Partnerships and Funding Officer, Office of the Resident Coordinator in El Salvador Rodrigo Samayoa, Director of Corporate Affairs and Sustainability, TERNOVA/Business Coalition Regional Center for the Promotion of MSMEs - CENPROMYPE Questions and Answers Plenary discussion on lessons learned Guiding questions: • What success factors determine zero waste in practice? • What is the role of policy in ensuring better partnerships? public-private partnerships for resource circularity? • What is the role of MSMEs and informal sector enterprises in the zero waste matter?
11:00-11:15	Pause
11:00-12:00	**Session VII: Extended Producer Responsibility and the formulation of evidence-based policies**

	Moderators: UNDESA/UNOSD y SICA y ECLAC • Liliana Davila Stern, Central America Representative, GGGI • Efficient management of solid and electronic waste through extended producer responsibility: Case of EPR in South Korea: Je Dong-Sik, K-ECO Questions and Answers Conclusions for capacity building Guiding questions: • What barriers can be observed in the design and implementation of a effective solid waste management? • What are some examples of how these barriers can be overcome in the practice? • What are the success stories in infrastructure projects for the management of waste in the region?
12:00 - 13:00	Lunch
13:00-14:30	**Session VIII: Designing policies for resource circularity at the national level** Moderator: Luiz Fernando Krieger, ECLAC Division into Groups Group exercise: governance and instruments for circularity policies Group presentations
14:30 - 15:00	**Pause**
15:00-17:00	**Session IX: Generating data and evidence from the local to the national level** Moderator: Sara Castro Hallgren, UNOSD Marcus Newbury, Statistics Division, UN DESA - Questionnaire and data gaps Chaela Shin, Solid Waste Expert, United Nations Office for Sustainable Development - digital transformation and the generation of solid waste data from local to national level - case study South Korea Data Collection for Solid Waste Management: Country Data Collection Exercise and Discussion • Group division for the review of a questionnaire for the generation of data • Review of the questionnaire in groups • Plenary discussion and group presentations Guiding questions: • Does the questionnaire cover all data gaps and key areas for policy design at national and local levels? • What are other methods for capturing data gaps for the policies on ISWM?

	• Do you foresee any specific challenges in providing the information requested in the questionnaire?
Day 3 Thursday, 25 July 2024	
9:00-10:00	**Session X: Developing a Roadmap-Dialogue and brainstorming in plenary session** Moderators: UNDESA/UNOSD - SICA/CCAD - ECLAC Action plans-development of short-, medium- and long-term action plans Open discussion and feedback on the design and operation of circular waste management systems from the national to the local level. Roadmap on capability gaps and follow-up Country representatives' dialogue
10:00-10:15	**Pause**
10:15-11:00	**Session XI: Action plans and next steps** • Presentation of action plans • Next Steps and Roadmap
11:00-11:30	**Closing** SICA CCAD CEPAL UNOSD/DESA
12:00 - 13:00	Lunch
	Field Visit - Ternova Recycling Plant (Plan de la Laguna) The Ternova Group's Thermoshrink Recycling Plant is an example of excellence in circular economy, as it converts plastic waste into raw material and has a regional scope. Transfer time: 5 minutes Duration of the visit: 1 hour. Logistics: guided tour of the recycling plant, in 3 groups of 8/9 people (27 people) The groups start their tour with a 10-minute lag.