National High Level Policy Dialogue on Sustainable Consumption for Policy Makers and Stakeholders held in Beijing, China
The National High Level Policy Dialogue on Sustainable Consumption for Policy Makers and Stakeholders was co-organized by SWITCH-Asia II Regional Policy Advocacy Component (RPAC) funded by the European Union and China Environmental United Certification Center (CEC) in Beijing, on 25 April 2019, with the support of Delegation of the European Union to China, Environmental Development Center of Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China.

With aims to strengthen national SCP policies and capacity focusing on sustainable consumption in China, this national policy dialogue aims to provide a platform among different policy makers to share information on sustainable consumption, and contribute to building bridges between policy makers and stakeholders so as to encourage collective efforts and mainstreaming sustainable consumption. More than 60 people from governmental departments of China, research institutions, civil society, UN agencies, international organizations and private sectors participated.

The Project Manager of SWITCH-Asia II RPAC, Dr. Mushtaq Memon chaired the meeting. He highlighted the key role of China towards global transition of sustainable consumption and production, and briefed the audience that one regional academy and one sub-regional workshop is being planned to be held in China by RPAC in the coming months with focuses on resource efficiency, circular economy and plastics.

Mr. Ren Yong, Director General of Environmental Development Center, Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China, stated in his opening remarks that establishing the policy system leading to the transition to green production, consumption and life style is an important task for ecological civilization in China, and the current stage is the key period for developing China's sustainable consumption model. He fully acknowledged the importance of this dialogue for China's sustainable consumption policy research and recommendations to the Government.

“Encouraging sustainable consumption means changing a complex ecosystem which is engrained in
our economic fabric. We need more collective efforts and coordination among Ministries.” said Ms. Dechen Tsering, Director of Asia Pacific Regional Office, United Nations Environment Programme at the opening of the conference. She stressed the current approach to “grow now, and clean up later” has reached its limit, and called for joint efforts to have a sustainable way of live, consume and produce, which would have a fundamental impact to tackle climate change. She appreciated that Ecological Civilization philosophy and related policies and practices calling for low-carbon ways of production and life.

Ms. Zhang Xiaodan, Chief Advisor, Environmental Development Center of MEE presented the sustainable consumption policy status and trends, and proposed four policy recommendations including "attaching great importance to and firmly grasping the historical opportunity period on transition to green consumption in China".

Through the panel discussions on policy outlook, experts’ insight and local experience sharing, this policy dialogue shared the sustainable consumption, green production and "zero waste" pilot city program and related policies and local practices, discussed how to improve the national systematic strategy based on information sharing on China’s sustainable structure features and energy use status in the building sector, explored what is the suitable sustainable consumption model based on indicators of SDG12 and what should be the priority areas and sectors towards transition of sustainable consumption nowadays in China. With a case study on single-use plastic reduction and packaging waste recycling in logistics and food delivery sectors, the representatives from the competent department, associations and private sectors shared practices and innovations, discussed the challenges and proposed related solutions.

Ms. Feng Mei, the program officer from Delegation of the European Union to China, appreciated the productive information sharing and panel discussions, and said that SWITCH-Asia II program will continue to support the sustainable consumption and production transformation through its three components: Sustainable Consumption and Production Facility, Regional Policy Advocacy and Grants, in China and other eligible countries in Asia.

The SWITCH-Asia Programme - Promoting Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) was launched in 2007 with funding from the European Union to promote inclusive sustainable growth, contribute to the economic prosperity and poverty reduction in the region and to support the development of a green economy and the transition towards a low-carbon, resource-efficient and circular economy. The second phase of SWITCH-Asia was launched in 2018 covering 19 Asian developing countries and five Central Asian countries. The Regional Policy Advocacy Component (RPAC) funded by the European Union is implemented by United Nations Environment Programme.

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