

CONCEPT NOTE

Introductory Webinar on Circular Economy: Supporting Africa's Sustainable & Resilient Development"

July 13-14, 2021

1. Background:

A circular economy is commonly defined as an industrial approach that is restorative or regenerative by intention and design. It replaces the end-of-life concept with restoration, shifts towards the use of renewable energy, eliminates the use of toxic chemicals, which impair reuse and return to the biosphere, and aims for the elimination of waste through the superior design of materials, products, systems and business models.

In order to achieve the legitimate aspirations of African people as stipulated in Agenda 2063, it is important to strive to build a well-functioning African economy that generates well-being and prosperity for all its people through new forms of economic production and consumption which maintain and regenerate its environmental resources.

The significance of circular economy is increasing given the socio-economic havoc caused by the COVID-19, which necessitates a re-configuration of Africa's development narrative towards achieving Agenda 2063. Equally important, trading under the African Continental Free Trade Area, launched on the first of January 2021, will further galvanize the importance of mainstreaming the circular economy into Africa's development narrative for a resilient and equitable future.

The Global Consultations on Circular Economy, held by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), on 10-12 May, 2021, confirmed the keen interest of UNIDO Member States for just transitions to circular economy to address climate change, biodiversity loss, land degradation, and pollution and waste challenges, while at the same time creating decent jobs and markets for circular products, supporting green investments, and facilitating innovation, all with the ultimate objective of achieving the sustainable development goals.

The organisation of the webinar on Circular Economy, was identified as an important joint initiative by AUDA-NEPAD, as the Development Agency of the African Union, and UNIDO, as part of the suite of initiatives outlined in our partnership to foster opportunities for contributing to achieving Africa's development aspirations.

2. Target Audience:

The audience of the introductory webinar includes interested AUDA-NEPAD staff and stakeholders including:

- i. Policy makers and governmental officials;
- ii. Representatives of the multilateral sectors at all levels, continentally, regionally and nationally; including but not limited to RECs and AU;
- iii. Members of the private sector and civil society who would like to apply circular design principles to products or services;
- iv. Representatives of think tanks and research centers.

3. Date and time:

The webinar will be conducted over two 2.5hr sessions on July 13th and 14th, 2021, from 11:00-13:30 (CEST and SAST).

4. Format:

Virtual (Zoom platform): https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Zydb0IGuTS2tNQ75bik5sg

5. Language:

The webinar will be held in English (with simultaneous French interpretation)

6. Methodology and Content:

The webinar will include content on theoretical, practical and case study-based approaches to circular economy that will be used to illustrate and support the detailed objectives of the webinar. The seminar will be strongly application-based, with numerous real-life examples from around the world, and will include policy tools useful to advance Circular Economy practices on the continent.

7. Goal and Objectives:

The overall goal of this webinar is to provide an introduction to the concept of a circular economy approach and the tools and best practices around its application. The objective of the webinar is to capacitate participants to understand how the approach may be applied in their work programming so that participants will:

- i. Have a greater understanding of the evolution of the concept of Circular Economy, its principles, and the required effective circular transformations.
- ii. Explore the lessons learned and best practices to create more sustainable, equitable and prosperous societies across Africa through the application of circular economy approaches to development
- iii. Recognise the synergies between Circular Economy and implementation of Agenda 2063, the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and the AfCFTA.
- iv. Be able to identify potential strategies to mainstream Circular Economy into existing and new programmes at all levels; continentally, regionally, nationally and locally.
- v. Be able to identify some of the barriers and enablers to mainstreaming circular strategies.

8. Intended Outcome:

The webinar will serve as a platform to share information, lessons and best practices on the concept of Circular Economy. It will also explore ways by which respective multistakeholders can mainstream Circular Economy into various related programmes, for instance, those concerning green industrialization, trade, energy transitions, sustainable blue economy and more broadly, how it can support sustainable development to achieve the Africa we want as stipulated by Agenda 2063.

Draft Agenda

Introduction to the Circular Economy: Supporting Africa's Sustainable and Resilient Development 13-14 July 2021

DAY 1: Tuesday 13 th July 2021	
11.00-11.05	Introduction of Webinar Head Industrialisation – AUDA-NEPAD
11.05-11.20	Opening Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening Remarks AUC Opening Remarks by AUDA-NEPAD Opening Remarks by UNIDO
11.20-11.45	Introduction to the Circular Economy: Definition, Linkages to current global trends and options for different levels of uptake - UNIDO
11.45-12.00	Q&A Session Moderation: AUDA-NEPAD
12.00-12.05	Break
12.05-12.50	Circular Product Design, Manufacturing, and Distribution: examples of practices and policies - UNIDO
12.50-13.15	Q&A Session Moderation: AUDA-NEPAD
DAY 2 Wednesday 14 th July	
11.00-11.30	Presentation 3: Circular Product Use, sharing, and reuse: examples of practices and policies - UNIDO
11.30-11.40	Q&A Session Moderation: AUDA-NEPAD
11.40-11.45	Break
11.45-12.25	Presentation 4: Circular Product Repair, Remanufacturing, Recycling: Examples of practices and policies - UNIDO
12.25-12.40	Q&A Session Moderation: AUDA-NEPAD
12.40-13.20	Presentation 5: The Circular Bioeconomy: Examples of practices and policies - UNIDO
13.20-13.55	Q&A Session Moderation: AUDA-NEPAD
13.55-14.00	Closing remarks - NEPAD