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EUROPEAN UNION



PRESS RELEASE

Tapping into the upcycling trend: a new platform launched by the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, EU and UNDP to mark World Environment Day 2020 in Azerbaijan

Baku, 5 June 2020 – A new platform has been launched to encourage more people in Azerbaijan to ‘upcycle’ products they would normally throw away. Users of the platform – called Ozun Yarat, meaning ‘do-it-yourself’, or DIY – can find and share creative ideas for repurposing and reusing items. The best three ideas will be eligible for prizes worth 3,000, 2,000 and 1,000 AZN.

The platform is launched as part of the #EUforClimate regional initiative, funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) which aims to help accelerate climate action in all six countries of the Eastern Partnership region.

‘Ozun Yarat’, developed and funded by UNDP and the EU in partnership with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, is designed to help spread the popularity of DIY as an effective way of reducing waste and other damaging environmental impacts of our ‘throw-away’ consumerist culture.

Upcycling is increasingly popular throughout the world and the Ozun Yarat platform is set to boost this trend in Azerbaijan, inspiring a flood of innovative solutions for making the best use of old products and household waste.

The platform is being launched under the slogan 'Change Begins at Home!', sending out the message that every one of us can contribute to a more sustainable economy by changing our habits of consumption. For those new to upcycling, the platform and its users will share tips and techniques for repurposing everyday objects and creatively transforming waste materials into new products.

The release of the platform has been timed to coincide with this year's World Environment Day on the 5th of June and will be accompanied by a campaign to raise awareness of the importance of investing in efforts to protect the environment at all levels of society, from individuals to industries and governments.

This campaign, like the new platform itself, ties in with the global theme of World Environment Day 2020 – #ForNature – and the aim of shifting to a more 'circular' economy that protects the environment and maintains biodiversity.

"Azerbaijan has made remarkable achievements in recent years to protect its environment. We need the support of all citizens to continue building a sustainable legacy for future generations. We believe that by working together – the Government, the international community and all citizens we can contribute to further improving the environment in Azerbaijan and better adapt the country to the inevitability that climate change brings", said Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources Mukhtar Babayev.

"This initiative is in line with EU's Green Deal and new Circular Economy Action Plan. They both aim to modernise and transform our economies and to protecting the environment. We have an ambition to lead in changing our lives, our behaviour for more sustainable production and preservation of our planet. We want to do that working together with our partners.", said EU Ambassador to Azerbaijan Kestutis Jankauskas.

Raising awareness of the need to preserve biodiversity is especially crucial in the context of climate change. A million species of plants and animals are already at risk of extinction, posing a threat to food security and reducing our quality of life.

“At a time when countries are planning how to build back better and greener in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is more vital than ever to ensure that the need to protect the environment lies at the heart of all decision-making – including personal decisions about energy use, transport and consumption. Only by changing our behaviour – and our consumption habits above all – can we hope to reverse biodiversity loss and ultimately increase our resilience to climate change”, said UNDP Resident Representative, Alessandro Fracassetti.

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