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### **Introduction**

The role of '*Special Officer*' is a new role introduced to the national council of the *United Nations Association of New Zealand* (UNA NZ) from the year of 2020. The overall objective of the role is to promote the concepts of the United Nations, its strategies and initiatives in the area of sustainable consumption and production, sustainable industrialization and innovation and inclusive sustainable economic growth with priority accorded the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 8,9 and 12 in the 2030 agenda, and extend support to wherever it is needed in order to achieve the targets mentioned under these sustainable development goals.

The working groups in different specialised UN agencies are working on advocating and educating governments, businesses and communities on achieving the targets mentioned in the SDGs 8, 9 and 12 at various scales. Some of the key UN councils and special agencies that are involved in work towards these goals include the *agencies of Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the UNs, the United Nations Framework for Climate Change Commission (UNFCCC), the Economic Social Commission for Asia Pacific (ESCAP), the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP).*

### **United Nations - Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth and Sustainable Consumption and Production**

Sustainable consumption and production and sustainable economic growth are all about doing more and better in efficient ways with less, decoupling of economic growth from environmental degradation, increasing resource efficiency and promoting sustainable production and lifestyles.

Special agencies of United Nations pursue various work programmes, commitments and knowledge dissemination programmes in close cooperation with governments, intergovernmental organisations, community sector organisations, academics and businesses in order to cater for needs as they arise. For instance, very prominent are:

- *The 10 Year Framework for programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production.* (United Nations 10YFP, 2020).
- *The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change/Long-term Low Emissions Development Strategy* (UN Climate Change, 2020).
- *Sustainable Consumption and Production Policies of UNEP* (UN Environment Programme, 2020).

- Green Growth platform of UNEP (UN Environment Programme, (2020).

Apart from that these United Nations special agencies introduce a number of strategic approaches and organise various capacity development and knowledge dissemination to support governments and businesses to develop roadmaps to implement suitable policy instruments and programmes for successful transition towards zero-waste and a low-carbon green economy. Those programmes are subjected to continuous monitoring of progress and reviewing accordingly.

SDGs 8, 9 and 12 have very strong interconnection with every other SDG. Working towards achieving those SDGs assists in contributing to most of the requirements of the other SDGs.

### **New Zealand, transitioning towards low-carbon inclusive Green Economy and the Contribution from the Special Officer, Sustainable Economy and Innovations, UNA NZ**

New Zealand as a country is doing a significant work towards achieving the objectives in the 2030 agenda and achieving SDGs collaboratively with regard to all the aspects in the economy. However, it is still clear that there is a long way to go and every day the circumstances are getting more complex, requiring novel approaches, strategies, frameworks and action.

In light of the transition to a sustainable economy, industries and researchers are demanding systems and infrastructure development that will support them in contributing to the transition. Good example for this is, at the recently finished Sustainable Packaging and Material Forum (11<sup>th</sup> March 2020, Ellerslie International Conference Centre, Auckland) leading packaging and food businesses in the country, pointed out that they need more knowledge and government participation so as to provide suitable systems and infrastructure to refresh their roadmaps to organise, and implement productive sustainability.

The two main objectives of UNA NZ are promoting and supporting the aims and objectives of the UN and promoting the understanding, education and the engagement of the UN. As discussed above, special agencies of the United Nations provide comprehensive approaches and knowledge platforms to support the mechanism of transitioning to an inclusive and sustainable economic growth, foster sustainable industrialisation and innovations and assure sustainable consumption and production. Therefore, as Special Officer for suitable economy and innovations, it is my intention to develop an awareness of the knowledge, approaches, mechanisms, concepts and strategies that the United Nations introduces to the world in different capacity development platforms for New Zealand.

My experience working at the UNIDO sub-unit for the *Resource Efficient, Cleaner and sustainable Industrial Development Programme* (a global project of this division among nearly 50 countries in the world. I was attached to the project in Sri Lanka) has helped me to understand the scope of what New Zealand needs in respect of its economic direction and industrial environment.

I have already planned a series of discussion forums for this year through the UNA NZ Wellington branch to educate the New Zealand public and private sectors on some of the UN approaches that will support the provision of knowledge for integrated planning and policy design. I am hoping to connect UN experts in this subject area with New Zealand and already Rene Van Berkel, UNIDO representative to the Asia Region and former Chief of RECP for Sustainable Industrial Development Programme, and Edward Clarence Smith, the former Director-UNIDO Asia region and Head of RECP Programme and have indicated me their desire to share their experience with New Zealand. I am planning a video discussion forum with both soon connecting interested in the public, private and civil community organisations in New Zealand.

The discussion forum on “*Linear to Circular- New Zealand’s Challenges and Opportunities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*” which I organised last year was well received by nearly thirty participants from the public and private sectors and provided me encouragement to move forward. Also, my speech on “*Extended Producer Responsibility Schemes- Overseas Experience and what New Zealand can Learn*” at the above mentioned conference in Auckland provided me with a strong platform to discuss decision making tools and approaches in the process of transitioning to a ‘green economy’. I am looking forward many more external opportunities to further this discussion, representing the UNA NZ.

It is certain that UNA NZ can contribute a lot to New Zealand by way of activities, initiatives, policy reforms towards in the process of transitioning to a green economy, working collaboratively with the government, businesses and other community sector organisations.

I am trying to connect with the relevant government institutes, business sector organisations and NGOs with future programmes promoting UNA NZ and its objectives. These programmes mostly will present as discussion forums, panel discussions and contributing to national consultations.

Also, I will try to be a part of the Asia Pacific and international knowledge sharing and capacity building hubs in the scope of the position giving value to the UNA NZ.

## Works Cited

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