



Concept Note: Zero Waste Week in Afghanistan (19–26 April)

1. Introduction

Zero Waste Week in Afghanistan is a capacity-building and awareness initiative jointly organized by the **Environmental Protection Trainings and Development Organization (EPTDO)** and the **tUrn Climate Action Project**, led by faculty volunteers based at **Santa Clara University, California, USA**. This event will be the **14th week** in which EPTDO and tUrn are organizing every April and October. Like previous years, the week is designed to strengthen knowledge, motivate action, and connect Afghan communities with global expertise through **panel discussions and structured learning sessions**.

Every year, **EPTDO and tUrn** conduct **tUrn Weeks in both Afghanistan and the USA**, along with **online sessions** and **panel discussions** that specifically focus on Afghanistan—its environmental conditions, climate crisis, waste challenges, and the practical pathways to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change. These repeated efforts aim to create sustained impact, not only short-term awareness.

EPTDO is also a **core partner of the Zero Waste Foundation** based in **Turkey**, and this year the **2nd Zero Waste International Forum** will take place in **Istanbul in June**. In alignment with this broader global momentum, **COP31** will also focus on key environmental themes strongly related to waste reduction, circular economy approaches, and pollution prevention. Therefore, **Zero Waste Week in Afghanistan will serve as an Afghan-centered platform** that reflects both local needs and international policy direction, while preparing participants and recommendations for global engagement.

2. Purpose of the Week

Afghanistan is highly affected by waste and its cascading impacts on public health and the environment. Waste contributes to:

- **Water contamination:** Afghanistan is severely affected by water contamination, impacting drinking water, irrigation, and daily household needs. As a result, **agriculture is also negatively affected**.
- **Soil degradation:** Afghanistan faces reduced land productivity and ecosystem damage due to soil degradation, including loss of soil quality and harmful environmental impacts.
- **Increased disease and health risks:** Communities face higher health risks from plastic pollution in streets and other public areas—particularly where **waste collection and safe**

disposal systems are limited or inconsistent. This can contribute to environmental and public health problems.

This Zero Waste Week is dedicated to building awareness and developing practical capacity around waste prevention, waste sorting, responsible disposal, and community participation. The week seeks to empower participants—youth, students, volunteers, speakers, and municipal partners—with knowledge and tools that can be used immediately in their communities.

The week will also culminate in a structured set of **key findings and recommendations**, translated into a **letter to the Zero Waste Forum**, requesting attention and resources to address priority challenges identified during the event. At the end a **Media conference will be conducted** to share the result and key findings in this platform.

3. Core Theme

“Waste Prevention and Community Action for Healthier Water, Safer Soil, and Cleaner Cities.”

4. Dates and Overall Structure

Zero Waste Week in Afghanistan: 19–26 April The program combines:

- **In-person events** for community engagement and institutional dialogue
 - **Online sessions** to broaden participation and include national/international speakers
 - **Capacity-building sessions** focused on youth training and solutions
 - **Municipal meetings** to discuss realistic challenges and pathways forward
 - **Final community reporting** to share results and communicate recommendations to decision-makers and global partners.
 - **Media conference** to share the key findings and solutions through media.
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5. Daily Activities and Sessions (19–26 April)

19 April – Zero Waste Panel Discussions (National & International Speakers). This is a major panel discussion organized jointly by EPTDO and tUrn project. The session is featuring **national and international speakers** to strengthen and integrate national international perspectives and cross-learnings.

- Speakers will share insights on:
 - Waste problems and root causes in Afghanistan

- Impacts on water and soil
 - Practical and scalable solutions
 - Behavioral change and community roles in waste reduction
 - **The session scheduled on:** Thursday, April 23, 2026 from 8:45 PM - 9:45 PM AFG Time.
 - Link to register: <https://scu.zoom.us/meeting/register/6HgYZ31bSLSI5WrJoH-Ekg#/registration>
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20 April – Introductory Session – in person (EPTDO and its EVN network volunteers)

- Opening and orientation for Zero Waste Week participants
 - **EPTDO staff and selected volunteers from the EVN** will lead the introductory session
 - Key objectives, expected outcomes, and session flow will be presented
 - Participants will be introduced to the week’s theme: waste reduction, water protection, soil restoration support, and health risk prevention
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21 April – Youth Engagement & Training (Online Session for 100+ Youth)

- An online session designed to engage **100+ youth (male and female)**
 - Focus: training participants on **Zero Waste concepts and waste challenges in Afghanistan**, including:
 - How waste becomes a health and environmental crisis
 - Waste prevention principles and responsible disposal
 - Community-based actions youth can lead in their neighborhoods and schools
 - Participants will leave with practical guidance for waste awareness and action planning
 - The session scheduled on: 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM.
 - Link to register:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe7mYrdhwUJeUgf6zPOwmJuHo3TButwFAQy6pFrO_ioPvdW2A/viewform?usp=preview
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22 April – Technical Presentations on Solutions (Online & In-Person for 100+ Youth)

- Technical presentations and learning sessions on **solutions**, using both:
 - **Online** delivery to reach broader participants
 - **In-person** engagement for hands-on discussion and interaction
- Target audience: **100+ young men and women**
- Proposed focus areas:
 - Waste sorting and collection approaches
 - Community participation models

- Low-cost and feasible interventions for cities and schools
 - Implementation pathways linking communities to municipal systems
 - The session scheduled on: 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM.
 - Link to register:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe7mYrdhwUJeUgf6zPOwmJuHo3TButwFAQy6pFrO_ioPvdW2A/viewform?usp=preview
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23 April – Coordination Meetings (NEPA and Kabul Municipality)

- A meeting with **NEPA and Kabul Municipalities** to discuss waste-related challenges in Afghanistan
 - The session will focus on:
 - Current waste collection and disposal difficulties
 - Gaps affecting water contamination and soil degradation
 - Coordination needs between municipalities, communities, and youth-led initiatives
 - Participants will document priority challenges and realistic solutions for future action
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26 April – Community Event, Results Sharing & Letter Submission – Media conference

- Final **in-person event** with **local communities and relevant authorities**.
 - Key activities:
 1. Sharing the week’s **key findings** and outcome highlights
 2. Announcing preliminary results and participant learning achievements
 3. Presenting a **letter to the Zero Waste International Forum** (Istanbul, June)
 - The letter will include:
 - Major challenges identified during the week
 - Proposed solutions and community-based recommendations
 - A clear request for **resources and support** to advance Zero Waste priorities
 - This final stage will connect local Afghan voices to international action and upcoming global forums.
 - Media conference will be conducted to share these issues.
 - The session scheduled on: 9:00 AM – 01:00 PM following by lunch.
 - Link to register:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe7mYrdhwUJeUgf6zPOwmJuHo3TButwFAQy6pFrO_ioPvdW2A/viewform?usp=preview
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6. Expected Outcomes

By the end of 26 April, the week will produce measurable outputs such as:

- Increased awareness and understanding of Zero Waste principles among youth and volunteers
- Enhanced capacity of participants to identify waste-related risks affecting water, soil, and health
- Documented insights from panel discussions and technical sessions
- Consolidated recommendations created through municipal dialogue
- A formal **letter to the Zero Waste Forum** containing challenges, solutions, and resource requests
- Strengthened partnership between **EPTDO, tUrn Climate Action Project**, youth groups, and municipal stakeholders.

QR to scan and register

