



Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries

The government of the Republic of Korea clearly understands the necessity to combat marine litter and microplastics, and has launched pan-government efforts to implement detailed action plans. In particular, we are making bold strives to promote policies aiming to significantly reduce marine plastic litter in accordance with SDG 14.

To reduce marine plastic litter by more than half by 2030, the Korean government declared 2019 as the first year of bringing marine plastic litter down to zero. Adding to this proclamation, a comprehensive pan-government marine plastic reduction plan was developed and new laws regulating marine litter were enacted to build a stronger foundation for waste management. Furthermore, marine plastic litter collection activities were enhanced, with significantly more government budget amounts allocated to maintaining fishing gear and buoys, which are the primary causes of marine plastic litter.

In addition to these efforts to help solve issues regarding international marine plastic litter, during last year's APEC meeting the Korean government tabled the APEC Roadmap on Marine Debris with Chile, the chair of last year's APEC meeting. We are also planning an ODA project to construct clean-up vessels for Southeast Asian countries. With UNEP, Korea will also jointly host the Seventh International Marine Debris Conference, the largest international event on marine debris, in Busan in 2022.

The problem of marine plastic litter is not the issue of a single country. Since marine plastic litter travels long distances riding ocean currents and mutually impacts multiple nations, international cooperation is crucial in solving this problem.

I hope that the Fourth Meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics(AHEG-4) will provide opportunities to share and discuss existing and potential response options, resulting in meaningful reports to be submitted to the UNEA5.