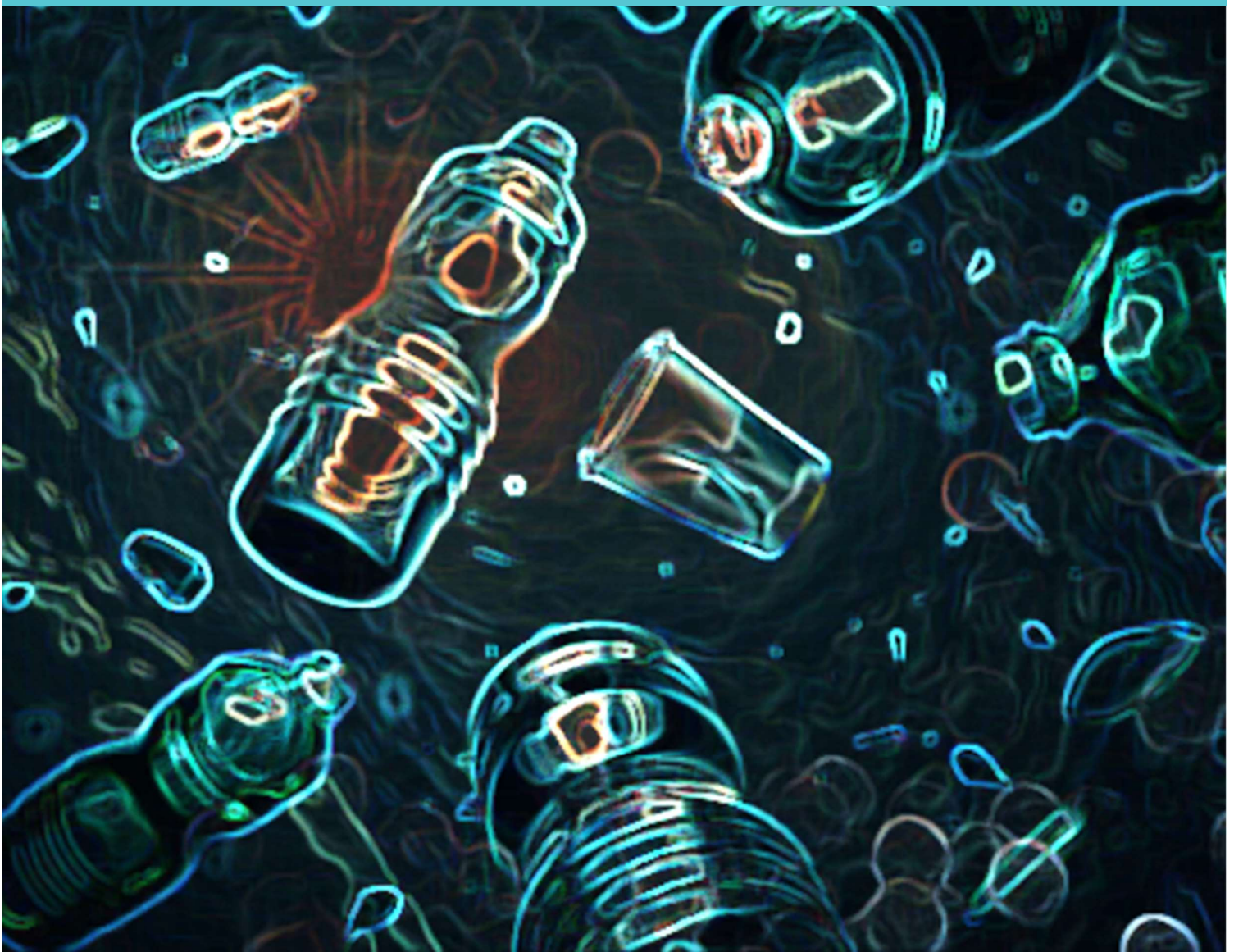




SEA
circular
solving plastic pollution at source

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

SEA circular Project



SEA circular Project – Annual Report 2021

Project duration:	August 2018 – December 2022 (Including inception phase)
Reporting period:	January – December 2021
Date:	08 April 2022

The SEA circular project - "Reducing marine litter by addressing the management of the plastic value chain in South-East Asia" – aims to reduce marine plastic litter by ensuring that less plastic is entering general solid waste streams where the coverage and effectiveness of the management systems is weak. This initiative is taken by the UN Environment Programme and the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) to inspire market-based solutions and encourage enabling policies to prevent marine plastic pollution as well as raise awareness among the consumers and the private sectors to end plastic pollution in South-East Asia. The project is funded by the Government of Sweden.

This Annual Report 2022 provides an overview of project implementation progress from 1 January until 31 December 2022. The report presents progress against the Project Workplan 2022, with a summary of delivery against the project results framework. The report also identifies impacts of and responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as changes made to project implementation and governance arrangements.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank	OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
AHEG	Ad Hoc Open-Ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics	ORA	Ocean Recovery Alliance
ARIEL	Asian Research Institute for Environmental Law	PCA	Project Cooperation Agreement
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	PCD	Pollution Control Department Thailand
AWGCME	ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment	PDP	Plastic Disclosure Project
BMU	German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety	PH	Philippines
COBSEA	Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia	PRO	Producer Responsibility Organization
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation	PSC	Project Steering Committee
CSO	Civil Society Organization	RAP MALI	COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippines	RC3S	Regional Capacity Center on Clean Seas
DMCR	Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Thailand	SEI	Stockholm Environment Institute
ECNU	East China National University	SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
EPR	Extended Producer Responsibility	Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
ERIA	Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia	SOS	SEA of Solutions
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	SSFA	Small-scale Funding Agreement
GEF	Global Environment Facility	SWAT	Solid Waste Management Association of Thailand Thailand
FIA	Food Industry Asia	TH	Thailand
FFI	Fauna & Flora International	UN	United Nations
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
GPML	Global Partnership on Marine Litter	UNEA	the United Nations Environment Assembly
HRBA	Human Rights-based Approach	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
ID	Indonesia	USEPA	the United States Environmental Protection Agency
IETC	UNEP International Environmental Technology Centre	UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
IGM	Intergovernmental Meeting	VASI	Vietnam Administration of Seas and Islands
ISWA	International Solid Waste Association	VN	Viet Nam
KASA	Ministry of Environment and Water	WWCT	Waste Wise Cities Tool
MGTC	Malaysia Green Technology and Climate Change Centre	WGML	COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter
MIMA	Maritime Institute of Malaysia	WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course		
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding		
MSWM	Municipal Solid Waste Management		
MY	Malaysia		
NAP	National Action Plan		
NGO	Non-governmental Organization		
NOWPAP	Northwest Pacific Action Plan		
NUS	National University of Singapore		
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development		

1. PROJECT SUMMARY

Project title	SEA circular (Reducing marine litter by addressing the management of the plastic value chain in South-East Asia)
Project duration	August 2018 – December 2022 (including inception phase)
Reporting period	1 January – 31 December 2021
Countries	Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam (target countries), Republic of China, Republic of Korea, Singapore (knowledge partners)
Executing agencies	United Nations Environment Programme Asia and the Pacific Regional Office and the Secretariat of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA)
Donor	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
Total grant	USD 6.3M (SEK 55M)
Project impact	Less plastic wasted, with reduced input to and impact on the marine environment as well as dependent people
Project outcomes	Reduction in plastic that are difficult to collect and recycle Increase in plastic reuse and recycle Increase in awareness about marine litter and plastic pollution, and public and consumer support for policies to fight it
Project outputs	Output 1: Market-based solutions towards 'less plastic wasted' Output 2: Strengthening the scientific basis for decision-making Output 3: Outreach Output 4: Regional networking
Synopsis	<p><i>SEA circular - solving plastic pollution at source</i></p> <p>SEA circular project aims to reduce adverse impact of land-based plastic leakage into the marine environment by ensuring that less plastic is wasted at source and management of the plastic value chain is improved in South-East Asia. Considering waste management systems in the region remain inadequate to process increasing amounts of plastic waste, the project focuses on the lifecycle stages of (i) Production of plastic products, (ii) Plastic use, and (iii) Collection / sorting / recycling to ensure that less plastic is wasted and strategically prevent plastic litter entering the ocean.</p> <p>To achieve these objectives, the project leverages UNEP's technical expertise and COBSEA's intergovernmental mechanism to facilitate regional learning and coordinated action. Project partners include national and local government; the private sector including producers, retailers, and associations in the packaging, consumer, and institutional products industry; academic and research institutes; international organizations as well as civil society and non-governmental organizations. The project promotes a gender and human rights-based approach to identify people-centred and equitable solutions and actively engages all groups of society, including consumers, informal waste workers, and coastal communities who are most vulnerable to the impacts of marine litter.</p>

2. OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS 2021

The unprecedented coronavirus pandemic took a toll on the SEA circular project implementation like every other socio-economic activity across the world. Regardless of its versatile challenges, the SEA circular project has accelerated its delivery in all parts of the annual work plan 2021 with significant achievements in engaging new private sector projects, which are cross-cutting across the value chain for enabling Extended Producer Responsibility and plastic circularity. Similarly, science and policy interface activities have achieved a lot. The SEA circular project has also made further development in raising awareness and capacity building amongst practitioners, and also incorporated gender and human rights-based approach in the plastic value chain area.

The pandemic has continued to impact the implementation modalities as well as the context in terms of waste generation and management and the use of plastics last year. Although workplan 2021 made of impacts of COVID-19, it needed further adjustments in terms of implementation modalities and, in some instances, project activities. Administrative procedures of partners have caused further delays in project implementation.

The key achievements under the project workplan 2021 focused on awareness-raising through collaboration with private sector entities to showcase innovative approaches in addressing plastic waste as well as the plastic value chain. The project has made noteworthy progress in relation to engaging and training businesses to measure their plastic footprint as a basis for the adoption of plastic reduction and neutrality targets in Thailand and Malaysia. Two pilot demonstration sites in Malaysia (in Penang and Petaling Jaya) displayed the key roles of different stakeholders (local governments, enforcement agencies, private sector, informal sector, and households) in increasing, sorting, and recycling at source, and reducing plastic waste leakage.

The project has contributed to strengthening the science-policy interfaces leveraging COBSEA's regional mechanism and formal process towards strengthening marine litter monitoring as well as supporting national policy and marine litter management planning. During the 2020-2021, the project built the foundation for a robust marine litter monitoring programme through planning and data collection activities and compilation of research data that contributed to a pool of knowledge and information on managing marine litter in the South-East Asia region. The project has supported developing the national action plans on marine litter, especially, for Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam. The project actively worked with the Working Group on Marine Litter (WGML) and supported the establishment of the Expert Working group on Marine Litter Monitoring in June 2021.

The project promotes a gender and human rights-based approach to identify people-centred and equitable solutions and actively engages all groups of society, including consumers, informal waste workers, and coastal communities who are most vulnerable to the impacts of marine litter.

Key highlights and achievements for 2021

Markets, private sector, and plastics value chain

- Engagement with private sector entities, like key players for plastic value chain, led to several innovative and circular economy approaches implemented by the private sector. These approaches have been captured in the form of 10 case studies for wider knowledge sharing within the region. Through SEA circular's business roundtables, two private sector entities from the hotel and hospitality sector - Six Senses Resorts and Hotels and hotel amenities provider Guava Amenities have committed to and signed with the UNEP-led Global Tourism Plastics Initiative.
- Through direct engagement and guidance, food delivery company Gojek expressed commitment to commence a plastic accounting programme and has developed a sustainability report in preparation for that programme.
- Strategic partnership with the Solid Waste Association of Thailand (SWAT) resulted in 12 Thai or Thai-based organizations from the food and beverage, plastic production, and academic sectors commit to a plastic measurement and reduction strategy program starting in 2021. These twelve participating organizations from five important sectors (plastics and packaging, food and beverage, hotel and hospitality, municipality, and education) have also completed the training program on plastic footprint measurement to identify baseline plastic footprint and areas for action. The trainings were conducted by experts from the SWAT and Ocean

Recovery Alliance under a partnership agreement with SEA circular project. Similarly, 10 private organizations in Malaysia completed the training programme on plastic footprint disclosure.

- Two pilot demonstrations to increase collection, sorting and recycling at city-level have been successfully completed in two townships of Malaysia– Petaling Jaya and Penang. The case studies displayed successful models of tax rebate, role of private sector, community-based approach and public-private partnerships as well as highlighted the vital role of the informal sector in plastic waste management.
- The SEA circular project has formed partnerships with World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) – Philippines and Indonesia Business Council for Sustainable Development (IBCSD) in 2021 to scale up market-based solutions activities. These partnerships are built on projects related to Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) implemented in Malaysia and Thailand, which will generate further knowledge and build capacity of Producer Responsible Organizations (PROs) in Indonesia and the Philippines. However, a potential further roll out in Viet Nam and Cambodia is planned in 2022. The enablement of EPR in these countries will include support in forming technical working groups with multistakeholder within the plastic value chain to provide practical recommendations for implementation of EPR schemes. Other projects in the pipeline will provide practical enablement support towards achieving the plastic circularity goal across the SEA region.

Data, Assessments, Science and Policy

Key contributions towards the objectives of COSBEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAPMALI) through the SEA circular project include:

- In Cambodia, a Situation Analysis on marine litter sources was conducted as well as developed policy recommendations in both English and Khmer languages. It has also developed concept for national marine litter monitoring programme.
- In Malaysia, the project has provided support in launching Malaysia Marine Litter Roadmap 2020-2030 and developing National Monitoring Programme (for launch in October/November 2021).
- In Thailand, the project has developed policy paper to support forming regionally coherent National Action Plan on Marine Litter and concept for national marine litter monitoring programme. Additionally, the project held technical consultations. In addition, it has concluded the study on material flow analysis to assess plastic leakage going into landfills in Thailand and the results of the study contribute to establishment of national baseline on plastic leakage in the country.
- In Vietnam, the SEA circular project provided technical support developing implementation roadmap for National Action Plan on marine litter.
- The partnership with UN-HABITAT under the SEA circular project used Waste Wise Cities Tool (WaCT) to assess sources, flows and pathways of plastic pollution from land-based activities in five countries - Cambodia (Kep and Sihanouk Ville), Vietnam (Tam Ky and Hoi An), Malaysia (Seremban) and Thailand (Chon Buri). The findings and assessments under this project are aimed at supporting the development of city-level waste management action plans to address plastic waste. It also generated understanding of (i) challenges on municipal waste treatment policy and infrastructure; (ii) proposing solutions; (iii) resources for implementing the solutions; and (iv) identifying stakeholders and partners.
- In partnership with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Australia, the Regional Guidance on Harmonized Marine Litter Monitoring Programmes was developed, which has been adopted by national focal points and delegates to Part 1 of COBSEA Intergovernmental Meeting 25 (IGM 25) through silence procedure in November 2021. Furthermore, the guidance will be the basis for further technical assistance from SEA circular project to support the establishment of national marine litter monitoring programme planned in 2022.

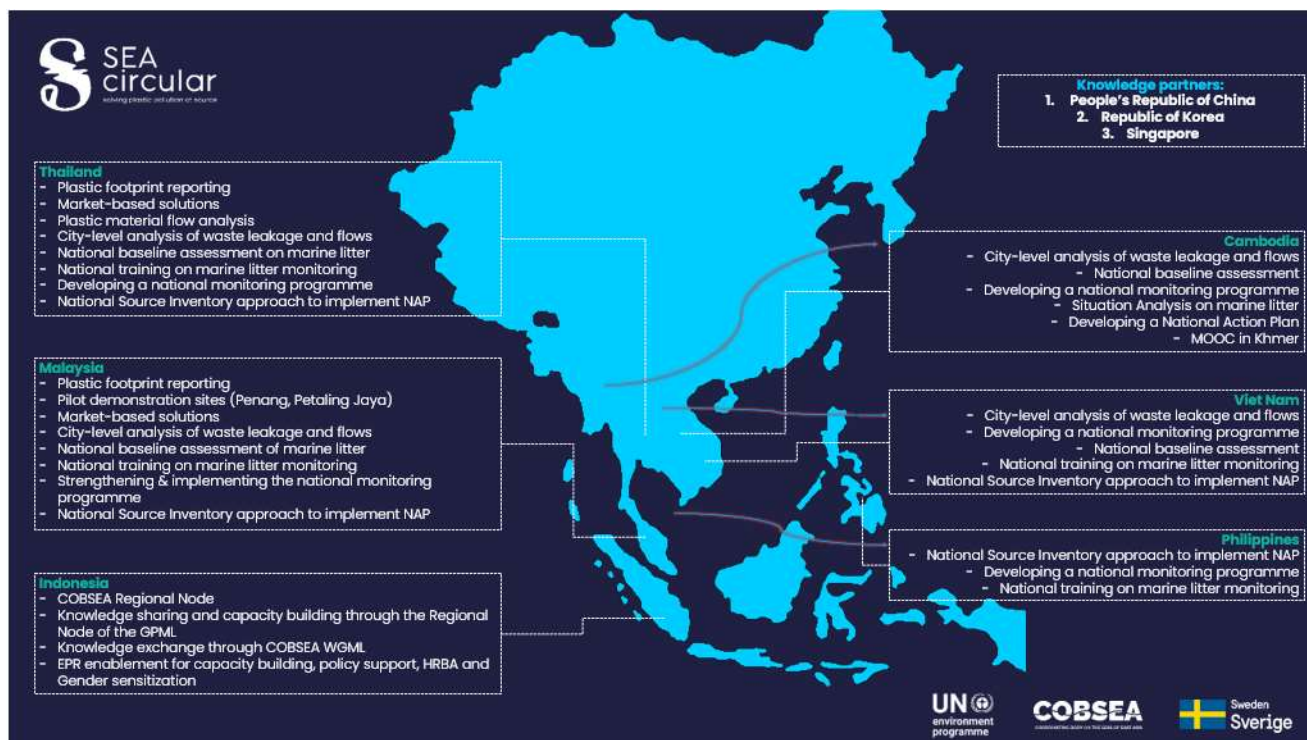
Campaigns, Outreach and Networking

- The project has completed the [100 Days to #BeatPlasticPollution Campaign](#) – and featured stories of over 30 South-East Asian sustainability advocates. It reached over 20 million people over a period of 100 days and engaged more than one million people in 45 countries. The campaign assets/ toolkits include four Augmented Reality (AR) effects and achieved an engagement rate of 2.5%.
- The annual event of SEA circular project, **SEA of Solutions (SoS) 2021**, was held on 16-18 November 2021 together with the Ministry of Environment and Water of Malaysia as co-host. The event, which was delivered virtually, convened over 800 delegates representing different stakeholder groups from the public, private, development sectors, and civil societies advocating gender and human rights inclusiveness in addressing plastic waste. With six thematic sessions and one high-level panel dialogue, SEA of Solutions 2021 served as a platform for information exchange, collaboration, and partnerships for marine litter and plastic pollution prevention. This year's theme called upon plastic value chain stakeholders to unite in "Accelerating solutions to reduce plastic waste," which was concluded with 10 action-points on solutions to addressing plastic waste. Daily highlights and session summaries of the event are available [here](#). SoS also served as a platform for project stakeholders to network and share best practices (especially, the case studies from Petaling Jaya, Malaysia on tax rebate to encourage households level waste segregation at source and, from Penang on formalizing the informal sector who play a key role in the plastic value chain to increase the rate of sorting, collection, and recycling of plastic waste).

In addition, the project successfully leveraged additional funds and commitments to further address plastic waste and marine litter management by private sector entities and development partners – building on activities of the SEA circular project.

This annual report provides information on progress made in relation to outcome and output indicators (as defined in the Project Results Framework, see Annex 1), as well as against the project workplan 2021.

Snapshot of activities by countries is shown below:



2.1 Overview of progress against output indicators

Overall, 53 percent of the projects in the 2021 workplan were completed, while 17 percent of the projects are at the advanced stage of completion; 13 percent of workplan is at a halfway of completion, while another 13 percent are at a stage of being initiated. However, projects not initiated represent 4 percent of the work plan 2021. A qualitative and quantitative assessment of progress against outcome and output indicators is provided below in section 3.4 and 3.5.

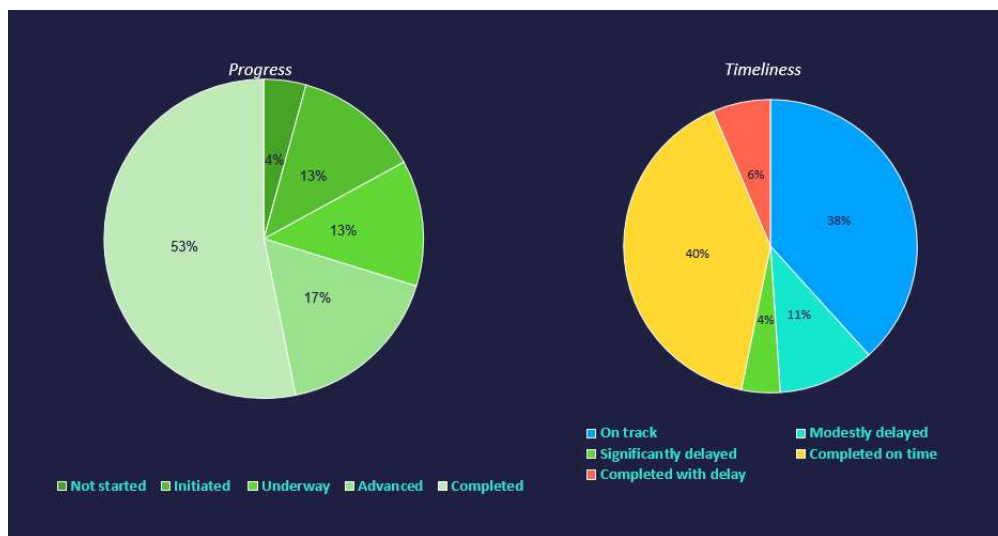


Figure: Implementation status summary – 47 activities in the 2021 workplan

[Report](#) on a spike of single use plastic consumption brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, due to the increased use of medical and personal protective equipment and the rise of e-commerce and food deliveries. On the other hand, due to the pandemic restrictions and the fall in oil prices during this period, plastic waste collection and recycling have seen a significant drop. This overwhelmed situation has affected targeted site sampling and consistent and reliable data collection on outcome indicators, where indicators rely on multiple data sources and types. Moreover, the COVID pandemic has crucial bearing on plastic consumption, recycling, and disposal and consequently also on project activities.

Following the project's midterm review (held from June to November 2021) and, reflection on the project strategy as well as considering the outcomes of projects in 2021, new project ideas with a cross-cutting approach in the plastic value chain were identified and proposed in the work plan for 2022 to expand the reach to more actors and stakeholders in plastic value chain. This approach is further illustrated in the figure below on the different components of the plastics value chain and mapping of the stakeholders and key players involved and to be included in addressing the plastic waste/pollution. This is in line with SEA circular's cross-cutting theme on promoting gender and human rights-based approach for people-centered and equitable solutions for those who are most vulnerable to the impacts of marine litter.



Figure: SEA circular plastic value chain approach

Output 1: Market-based solutions towards “less plastic wasted”

Output Indicator	Progress update
<p>Number of companies operating in South-East Asia publishing sustainability reports with information on Plastic Footprint:</p>	<p>Plastic footprint training was delivered and followed through to 10 organizations in Malaysia and 12 organizations in Thailand aiming to establish a baseline for their organisation, and to report their own plastic footprint.</p> <p>The experiences and progress made by the participating organizations in Thailand were shared in the roundtable meeting to close out of the project. 170 organizations took part in the meeting as the outreach and networking enabled by the project through various activities was significant and expected to lead to more collaborations. This event was also widely covered by the media as well as a press release followed by the meeting.</p> <p>Plastic footprint reporting and disclosure encourages responsible business practices, setting targets for reducing plastic footprint in business operations and, contributing to sustainable consumptions and productions.</p>
<p>Number of pilot demonstration on environmentally sound waste management supported:</p>	<p>During an unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic, Malaysia was able to implement and complete two pilot projects in two locations (Petaling Jaya and Penang) under the SEA circular project to demonstrate how cross-sector partnerships and strengthening the collaboration of the <i>quadruple helix</i> can help city councils and municipalities to promote innovative circular economy approaches and transformation changes to provide better integrated waste management solutions for the residents at 4 pilot locations.</p> <p>Key actors and national stakeholders along the value chain ensured an inclusive approach was applied with communities on the ground to inculcate long term behaviour change and shifting from a take-make-use-dispose attitude towards a lifestyle where they practice plastic re-use and recycle, find ways to reduce and eliminate single-use plastics and hard-to-recycle plastic packaging by first segregating waste at source correctly at households and applying circular economy solutions that minimize plastic wasted along the plastic value chain.</p> <p>Both pilot projects aim to support Plastics Sustainability in Malaysia Roadmap 2020-2030 and Malaysia’s National Marine Litter Policy and Action Plan 2021-2030.</p> <p>These two projects were discussed in detail during the SEA of Solutions 2021 event session 3 on <i>Cities and Urbanization towards less plastics wasted</i> and Session 4 on <i>Plugging the plastic leakage: Enabling extended Producer Responsibility through Producer Responsible Organizations</i>.</p> <p>Detailed case studies on these projects are also available in the SEA circular website and will be referenced in the planned SEA circular Solutions Report ¹ that will accommodate all the knowledge assets developed and produced with support of the SEA circular project. The Petaling Jaya case study is also featured as a success story in UNEP’s annual report for 2021 (page 19) on how to increase recycling at source through a community-based approach.</p>

¹ A knowledge compendium on plastic waste management and plastic value chain to accelerate solutions for plastic pollution, which was recommended by the Mid-term reviewer of the project, while a title for this compendium is being explored

	In Thailand, planned support for demonstration sites was not comprehended due to the pandemic restrictions and the lack of interest from parties involved. However, SEA circular has been engaging with various partners, since late 2021, who are working on the Koh Samet demonstration sites and discussion will continue in 2022 on support from SEA circular project.
Changes in policies in Malaysia and Thailand concerning recycled plastics:	In Malaysia, the project supported the dialogues and awareness raising on the national roadmap for plastic waste. Furthermore, engagement of the private sector in the voluntary Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) phase demonstrated the progress with their producer recycling organization.
Amount of co-financing raised from private sector stakeholders towards achieving Output 1 (cash and in kind, USD):	The efforts and in-kind contribution by partners in projects in Thailand and Malaysia were not quantified, however, these were meaningful towards the completion of the projects and further scaling up and replication led by private sector entities – especially in Malaysia. Going forward, we will encourage and request implementing partners to keep track of the contributions of collaborating private sector organizations to ascertain their contributions.
Saving achieved (including avoided costs) by companies and other entities through improved management of plastic value chain:	These cost savings were not quantified as part of the project and were not reported by participating companies. While plastics footprint reporting enabled companies to measure, set baseline and chart out plastic reduction strategies, the actual quantification of cost savings delivered through plastic footprint reductions requires more time for monitoring and tracking the results. Though not covered in the scope of the agreement, we will attempt to reach out to the participating companies through our implementing partner (SWAT) to obtain information on the savings realized because of their plastic reduction strategies. Nevertheless, a top-down approach and commitment set by participating companies show behavioural change towards less plastics wasted.

Output 2: Strengthening the scientific basis for decision making

Output Indicator	Progress update
Number of COBSEA countries publishing marine litter monitoring results:	Four COBSEA countries currently have an established monitoring programme (China, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Singapore); national monitoring programmes are under development in five countries – Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam. Malaysia has developed a national monitoring programme framework while Monitoring programme concepts have been developed for Thailand and Cambodia. Regional Guidance on Harmonized National Marine Litter Monitoring Programmes was adopted by IGM 25.1 to guide development of harmonized monitoring programmes in COBSEA countries.
Number of COBSEA countries that incorporate pollution loading as well as environmental, social, and economic impact indicators in marine litter reporting:	The regional monitoring inventory developed by COBSEA, and CSIRO shows that while all nine COBSEA participating countries undertake some efforts to monitor and assess marine litter in the environment, most monitoring practices focus on coastal clean-ups and/or one-off measurements rather than systematic national monitoring of sources, pathways, and impacts. The project aims to strengthen and harmonize these approaches.
Number of COBSEA countries that include a citizen science approach in baseline data development and national monitoring programmes:	Five COBSEA countries apply a citizen science approach under the International Coastal Clean-up (China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand). The Regional Guidance on Harmonized National Marine Litter Monitoring Programmes includes recommendations for strengthening and incorporating robust data from citizen science approaches.
Number of new research projects/partnerships on marine litter and	The regional research database captures research efforts in the region; to date, the database includes close to 750 publications.

plastic pollution, including environmental, social, and economic impacts and governance aspects:	Since 2019, 424 research publications have been identified while 300 publications relate to marine sciences only, 100 publications relate to socio-economics only, and 24 involve both. The regional research network will catalyse collaborative research.
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Output 3: Outreach on marine litter and plastic pollution

Output Indicator	Progress update
Number of individuals completing Massive Open Online Course and distribution among stakeholder groups (government, private sector, academia, civil society, and community-based organizations).	<p>MOOC training was launched in 2020 and there was no training offered in 2021.</p> <p>A total of 9,537 registrations were made by 9,040 unique participants in 2020. The leadership track was available in all languages, but participants from the Arabic, Chinese, French, Indonesian, Portuguese, Thai, or Vietnamese MOOC needed to enrol in the English, Spanish, or Russian MOOC to continue with the Expert track. Enrolment in languages from the region was as follows: Chinese 903, Vietnamese 323, Indonesian 188, Thai 110. The level of participation from the Southeast Asia region countries increased when the modules are made available in national languages. SEA circular project is supporting the development of the training module in one additional language in Khmer targeting uptake in Cambodia. The next MOOC training is planned to be launched in 2022. <i>(2020- 2021 MOOC on Marine Litter Assessment report is available)</i></p>
Change in consumer awareness in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam:	<p>The consumer survey by Food Industry Asia in 2020 did not reveal any meaningful change in consumer behaviour. The recommendation was for more policy and regulatory measures to address the problem of post-consumer plastic packaging. The second phase of the survey project will be conducted in 2022.</p> <p>Engagement of Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs), Goodwill Ambassadors and Sustainability Advocates, and the social media platforms (Instagram and Facebook) for the Beat Plastic Pollution campaign to inspire behavioural changes on consumption of single-use plastics to encouraging the use of reusables with increased outreach (over 20 million outreached) and engagement (over 1 million). Overall, the engagement rate (2.5%) compared to the outreach level was exceptionally good and higher than expected for similar online campaign efforts. It shows that this kind of approach is highly effective for engaging youth.</p>
Increased media coverage of social and economic impacts of plastic pollution and marine litter:	<p>With the increased use of safety and hygiene protection brought about by the pandemic, the media coverage highlighted on this problem adding to the increase in plastic use and plastic pollution. 10 exemplary case studies were prepared for knowledge sharing, among which, four are made available on SEA circular websites, and they are further disseminated by the case study subject organizations themselves.</p> <p>Activities related to the projects in Malaysia and Thailand got local media coverage.</p>

Output 4: Regional networking for exchange, cooperation, and integration

Output Indicator	Progress update
Number of COBSEA countries adopting or revising national marine litter action plans or equivalent in line with COBSEA RAP MALI:	<p>5 COBSEA countries have developed national plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Viet Nam National Action Plan for Management of Marine Litter (2019) - Philippines' National Plan of Action (2021) - Malaysia National Marine Litter Policy and Action Plan (2021) - Thailand National Action Plan on Marine Litter (not yet launched)

	<p>– Indonesia Plan of Action on Marine Plastic Debris 2017-2025 Technical assistance in Cambodia is ongoing toward developing a National Action Plan (or similar). China, Republic of Korea, and Singapore have several policies, plans and regulations related to marine litter and plastic waste.</p>
Number of national or local/municipal regulations adopted, aiming to tackle marine litter e.g. by reducing or eliminating single use plastic, expanding markets for alternative materials, promoting plastic segregation and recycling, etc.:	The soft launch of Malaysia National Marine Litter Policy and Action Plan (2021) at the SEA of Solutions 2021 event has been acknowledged with support from the SEA circular project activities.
Number of products or polymers subject to recycling or reduction mechanism adopted regionally/by multiple countries:	Data is not publicly available; survey findings by UN-Habitat will provide information on the type of plastics leaked into the environment. However, national progress reporting against COBSEA RAP MALI (2022) will contribute to progress tracking.
Year-on year percent increase in regional marine litter knowledge hub online content as well as traffic:	The Terms of Reference of the Regional Node were adopted, and the web platform of the Regional Node is planned to be launched in 2022.
Year-on year percent increase in participation in a SEA of Solutions partnership week across government, private sector, academia, and civil society, with attention given to the participation/representation of disadvantaged groups:	SEA of Solutions 2021 took place on 16-18 November in a virtual format which was co-hosted by the government of Malaysia and had 856 registered participants from 70 countries. SEA of Solutions is an annually occurring event which was first launched in 2019 together with the government of Thailand as the co-Host, gathering over 500 registered participants from 40 countries. In 2020, co-hosted by the government of Vietnam, about 750 participants from 50 countries explored and addressed priorities in the region to help combat a resurgence in the use of plastics in response to the impacts of the pandemic. This year, SEA of Solutions aimed towards revisiting and showcasing actions and innovations to support countries, industries, and communities to get back on track and build back better – with renewed commitments, solutions, and clear directions on the way forward during and beyond the pandemic.

2.2 HRBA and gender equality

The plastic value chain depends on the formal and informal waste management stakeholders in the focus countries of SEA circular project. The lack of waste management infrastructure and capacity for segregated waste collection means the informal sector plays a significant role to enable plastic recovery and recycling. This means, for big brands embarking on their efforts towards extended producer responsibility depend on the informal sector. Hence, as part of responsible business conduct, it is important that human rights aspects are considered and addressed to alleviate the plight of the informal sector in waste management.

In 2021, the cooperation with UNEP Law Division and partners in the region including the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre was further strengthened to leverage expertise on environmental rights.

Issues of plastic pollution and human rights in the region were discussed and solutions highlighted at multiple events throughout the year, including:

- Sharing lessons learned from South-East Asia as a speaker at the session on ‘Improving Business and Human Rights in Transboundary River Basins in South Asia’ of the 2nd UN South Asia Forum on Business and Human Rights;
- Co-organizing two sessions on environmental rights including related to tackling plastic pollution at the Asia Pacific United Nations Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum (1-4 June 2021): ‘Business Responsibility and Collective Action to Uphold Environmental Rights’ and ‘Engaging Business to Promote, Protect and Respect Children’s Rights to a Healthy Environment’;

- Giving a lecture on 'The Marine Environment, Marine Litter and Human Rights' at the '2021 Summer/Winter School: Critical perspectives in Human Rights and the Environment' hosted by UNEP and the Global Network for Human Rights and the Environment (24 June 2021).

Co-funding was leveraged through a strategic partnership with the UNEP Law Division and Dalhousie University to develop a toolbox on human rights and plastic pollution. [The toolbox](#) provides access to capacity building resources, guidance documents, frameworks and other tools for policy makers and businesses to address the nexus of human rights, gender and plastic pollution. The gap analysis of existing resources conducted by Dalhousie University further informed the design of dedicated training modules on human rights, gender consideration and plastic pollution to build capacity for responsible business conduct (following up on capacity needs identified at the dialogue held on 17 December 2020).

A further cooperation agreement with Dalhousie University has been formalized to develop and deliver training material that can be beneficial to all stakeholders implementing efforts to realize extended producer responsibility in the plastic value chain through producer responsibility organizations. The target audience for this training will be personnel from organizations in the private sector, government agencies, academia, civil societies, waste management companies, and producer responsibility organizations and representatives from the informal sector; these groups will be engaged by the project partners with whom agreements are currently being developed for projects in the Philippines and Indonesia. The content of the training will sensitize stakeholders on responsible business conduct, raise awareness and to encourage improvements to be made considering human rights related matters in the plastic value chain, particularly in waste collection and management.

Opportunities and potential partnerships to strengthen the evidence base for informed decision making on the impact of plastic pollution and COVID-19, on the needs and interests of disadvantaged groups, such as the informal waste sector and remote communities are being explored further in 2021. An agreement is under development to compile available evidence and include clear recommendations related to plastic pollution impacts exacerbated by COVID-19 and environmental rights in guidance on sustainable plastic value chain management.

2.3 COVID-19 implications

Among the many adverse consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic is the sudden surge in the volume of plastic waste, particularly for products used for personal protection and healthcare purposes. According to a recent [report by the Circular Capital](#), more than 40% of actors in the recycling value chain are at risk of permanent closure or bankruptcy; recyclers in the region are faced with a 50% drop in demand for recycled plastics and 21% drop in sales prices for recycled plastics; the volume of plastic collected and sorted by the informal sector has dropped by an estimated 65%, affecting the most vulnerable workers in the value chain. A hospitality-sector specific survey conducted in region shows that since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, up to 50% of respondents expect at least 50% decrease in revenue in South-East Asia, while other sources have predicted a 30% closure of businesses in the tourism industry. With restructuring, massive human resource cutbacks and even threats of closure, engagement with the business sector on plastic value chain reform has become much more difficult. Meanwhile, the e-commerce and food delivery sectors are significantly increasing the use of not only packaging, but single use plastics. These sectors need to find ways to reduce the use of excessive plastics in their packaging and particularly in the food delivery business, provision of single use plastic utensils is gradually being reduced.

The increase in single-use and hard-to-recycle products associated with medical and hygiene measures requires a sound environmental response that does not jeopardize progress made. The SEA circular project is supporting governments and economies to "build back better" and seize opportunities for leapfrogging to sustainable production, consumption, and waste management. To respond to COVID-19 travel restrictions and increases in plastic waste, activities of the SEA circular project have been adjusted and repurposed. This includes shifting to desk-based or virtual working modalities and cooperating closely with partners on the ground in target countries as well as postponing activities that cannot be adapted or conducted virtually. Additional efforts have been initiated and are underway to tackle COVID-19 related marine litter impacts with a focus on disadvantaged groups and green recovery (see Section 3 for detailed information on adjustments to activities). This includes:

- Addressing the existing hurdles to reduce plastic waste and boost the adoption of recycled content in virtual industry roundtables (conducted in 2020 and continuing in 2021) while also highlighting the new difficulties with COVID-19 requirements and trends toward identifying better business strategies;
- Op-eds have been prepared for publication in leading newspapers of the region in Q1 of 2021. These address the intention-action gap to tackle the region's plastic waste crisis, challenges and risks faced by the informal waste sector during COVID-19, as well as business plastic neutrality through community-based initiatives.

- The Solutions Report being prepared through the project will address COVID-19 related changes to plastic consumption and waste, the role of informal waste workers and inclusive solutions to mitigate risks from hazardous and low value waste to their health and livelihoods;
- SEA of Solutions (SoS) 2021 encompasses sessions dedicated to addressing impacts of COVID-19 on plastic pollution and vulnerable groups as well as raise awareness and accelerating solutions to build back better;
- A [short video](#) on COVID-19 impacts and engaging informal waste workers to build back better was shown at SEA of Solutions.
- Building on waste flow analyses conducted with UN-Habitat and the GPML, activities in 2021 will include an analysis of the role of waste pickers and plastic pollution related impacts of COVID-19 to inform integrated waste management.

To support the efforts to create a Solutions Report and to begin seeking out innovations, improvements and exemplary technical, business models and behavioural change efforts, a private sector business analyst consultant is engaged and has come on-board in December 2021. In addition, the cross-cutting projects focused on supporting the realization and scaling up of the producer responsibility organizations are expected to uncover good practices, challenges, and opportunities that the pandemic has thrust upon stakeholders in the plastic value chain. These examples will be captured and shared as part of the knowledge management resource that the Solutions Report will enable.

2.4 Project governance and institutional arrangements

To strengthen capacity of the Project Implementation Group and accelerate the project implementation rate, the Project Implementation Group was restructured to include a new project coordinator position at P4 level, and two full time programme management officers at P3 level – a Markets and Plastic Value Chain programme officer, and a Marine Litter programme officer - supported by a full-time administration officer. This new structure was put into effect as of 25 May 2020. Jerker Tamelander, COBSEA Coordinator, functions as interim project coordinator until April 2021. The new project coordinator came onboard in May 2021 while the Programme Officer in charge of Markets and Value Chain joined the team in July 2021. Additionally, a long-term Communications Officer has been come onboard in December 2021.

Two update and dialogue webinars for the Project Steering Committee (PSC) were organized on 20 April 2021 and 14th September 2021 to share information on progress in implementation of the project workplan 2021, status of preparations for SEA of Solutions 2021, updates on the 100 Days to Beat Plastic Pollution campaign for behavioural change on single-use plastic, updates on the mid-term review process, and highlights from 2 PSC members: Malaysia's Marine Litter Policy by the Ministry of Environment and Water and, global inter-governmental process on plastics by GPML.

The fourth annual meeting of the SEA circular Project Steering Committee (PSC-4) was convened on 10th November 2021 to review the interim Annual Report 2021 and the draft annual costed Workplan for 2022 and guide their finalization.

2.5 Mid-term review

The Mid-term Review of the SEA circular project was conducted in its 3rd year of the project and the review covered the project implementation duration from August 2018 till July 2021. The terms and reference for the Mid-term review and the reviewer was approved by the PSC members. The recruitment process was successfully completed, and the expert reviewer came onboard in June 2021. The review process was carried out from June to November 2021.

The objectives of the Mid-term Review are to analyse whether the project is on-track in terms of its implementation, what results have been achieved so far and what problems or challenges the project has encountered, and whether any corrective actions would be required. The assessment and recommendations from the review will be useful for implementing activities in SEA circular final year (workplan of 2022).

The scope of review includes:

- design and implementation of the project over the entire project period;
- results of the project at regional level;
- changes generated and contributed towards in terms of the participating countries, organisations and individuals;

- the implementation and results of the project for all participating agencies in countries partaking in COBSEA, including governmental, civil society, academic and private sector partners;
- modes of implementation of the project, including regional meetings, trainings and country level activities implemented as part of the project;
- annual SEA of Solutions week and other means of coordination and networking supported as part of project implementation.

Methods for data collection of the review include a desk review, review of project monitoring data, semi-structured interviews with selected stakeholders, targeted mini-surveys and country case studies. A total of 42 people were interviewed including project staff, UNEP staff, PSC members, project donor, and representatives of implementing agents and national governments for this assessment.

The Mid-term review was concluded in November 2021 and have proposed 7 key recommendations for uptake in implementing the remainder of the project duration. A UNEP management response will be prepared in February 2022 for submission to Sida.

3. IMPLEMENTATION AGAINST THE 2021 WORKPLAN

This section provides reporting on progress made in implementation of activities in the 2021 workplan, identifying activities in the 2021 workplan, intended deliverables, a progress rating, and a brief narrative. The 2021 workplan includes 47 individual activities. Where relevant, to aid reporting and ensure clarity, reporting is against clusters of two or more activities, as indicated in the tables.

3.1 Output 1: Market-based solutions to 'less plastic wasted'

The pandemic restrictions and the competing priorities for businesses effected by the challenges and difficulties caused difficulties in progressing all the planned activities of Output 1. Despite these challenges, ongoing projects were continued, and delivery dates were extended to complete certain projects.

Result 1.1: Stakeholders in South-East Asia measure and report their plastic footprint

Activity (cluster)	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Supporting the delivery of market-based solutions and coordination, management of private-sector and civil society partnerships, technical and other support to private-sector implementing partners (SOS and partnership consultant in Project Implementing Group)	10 organizations in Malaysia, 12 organizations in Thailand participated in the Plastic Disclosure Program; these organizations measured and reported their plastic footprint. These reports provide the baseline figures for the participating companies. From these baseline figures, the companies then set their targets for further improvements on their plastic footprint, identifying strategies to achieve these targets.	100 % completed
Engagement of businesses in plastic footprint disclosure, virgin plastic reduction and plastic neutrality through roundtables and commitment frameworks.	Reports on plastic disclosure training and technical support in Thailand and Malaysia were completed.	
Business engagement and training for plastic waste reduction, following a stepwise approach: measure --> commit --> off-set --> strategize for reduction --> plastic neutrality (continued from 2020).	10 exemplary practice cases of plastic value chain transformation, virgin plastic reduction and plastic neutrality	
Identification and dissemination of sector-specific plastic value chain best practices to achieve		

less plastic wasted, including informal sector recovery efforts and recycling technologies.

Narrative

The projects in Malaysia and Thailand provided valuable insights into the private sector led efforts, and collaborative models of private sector, civil society, and govt. agencies.

During the year, two business roundtable events were conducted for the hotel and food delivery sectors. Following this, adjusting for the business priorities during the pandemic, instead of organizing more roundtables, efforts were put into the follow through with activities of engagement and execution of the project deliverables in Thailand and Malaysia.

Project partners in Malaysia and Thailand followed through the activities to support the training and follow up with the plastic disclosure program. In parallel with the partners in Thailand and Malaysia, the training provider partner for the plastic footprint baseline and monitoring was the Ocean Recovery Alliance (ORA).

The roundtable by project implementation partner, The Solid Waste Association of Thailand (SWAT), in September highlighted efforts of the private sector organizations from various sectors who participated and marked the completion of the project in Thailand.

In Malaysia, in addition to the plastic disclosure program, the partnership with the Ministry of Environment and Water (KASA) included demonstration sites in Petaling Jaya and Penang which were successfully completed. As part of the project, KASA also facilitated a multi-stakeholder policy and technology roundtable for reduction, elimination, re-use, and recycling of plastics. This helped KASA to identify and prioritize appropriate and effective business incentives to prevent marine litter in line with national and regional plans and to take steps to apply and integrate identified measures into national planning.

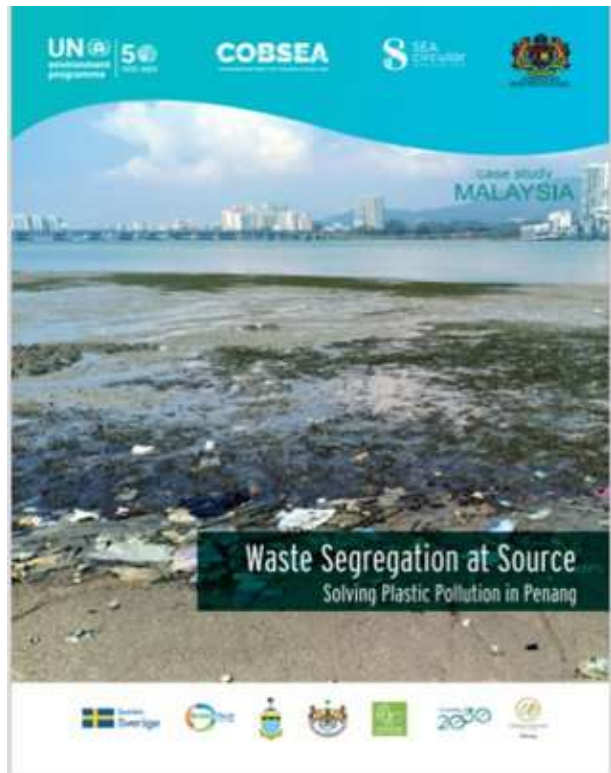
The Closeout meeting with the various stakeholders in August, marked the completion of the project. The project close-out meeting for case studies of Penang and Petaling Jaya highlighted the need for extended producer responsibility (EPR) to reduce waste leakage and scale-up collection and recycling. MAREA, the producer recycling organization in Malaysia has been established by leading consumer product brands in Malaysia.

The projects in Thailand provided insights for private sector led efforts, and collaborative models in the private sector, civil society, and govt. agencies. There was also development of potential collaboration by coming together ideas between participating organizations during the project.

Ten “good practice cases” were produced from the above-mentioned projects. In addition, work to create a standard template for future cases and outreach has been commissioned.

Going forward, the projects in Malaysia and Thailand have provided significant insights for future projects. We intend to continue with projects that will be cross-cutting, engaging with stakeholders across the plastic value chain and reaching both the formal and informal sectors.

The SEA of Solutions event session will cover and provide further insights into the future projects that will also address the other SEA circular target countries.



Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Training and awareness raising focusing on business and human rights, including rights and responsibilities, the importance of social considerations in plastic value chain transformation, and developing the capacities of duty-bearers (governments and businesses) to fulfil their obligations and address the needs of disadvantaged groups	Development of training material and delivery of training, addressing human rights themes for stakeholders in the plastic value chain. The partnership agreement has been signed-off on 1 st of November with the implementing partner, Dalhousie University.	50% ongoing

Narrative

A partnership agreement has been signed off for development of content and delivery of training. Views and inputs from several experts for this training content based on the target audience were received to help shape the training content.

The training will be delivered to various stakeholders who shall be participating in the SSFA projects related to EPR and PROs in Indonesia and the Philippines. Training will also be provided to trainers to enable local level trainings in the project countries. A region wide dialogue is planned for the workplan of 2022.

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Plastic value chain analysis for the beverage, food, and retail industries and for low-value materials including flexibles, with a focus on COVID-19 impacts, and with consideration of gender-specific needs and the role of disadvantaged groups. Identification of key sources and types of wasted plastic, including plastic unfit for circularity, with a focus on project demonstration sites	Detailed plastic material flow and value chain analysis final report has been submitted with some minor revisions provided by the SEA circular team. Landfill composition analysis from site work at landfills provided new primary data on plastics in dumpsites. The findings covered recyclable and difficult to recycle plastics.	100% Completed

Narrative

SSFA project with Chulalongkorn University has progressed to completion despite the pandemic related restrictions and delays. The second interim report was submitted in August and final report submitted on the 31st of December.

The knowledge and data gained from this study is useful for calibration and comparison with similar studies in other cities conducted in partnership with UN-Habitat. Findings from the material flow analysis study in Thailand have been shared with UN-Habitat to support their plastics hotspots project studying landfill compositions.

The landfill composition study field work experienced delays due to the pandemic restrictions. Despite this, work at most sites were completed and data from these sites were complemented with relevant secondary data.

The study by Chulalongkorn University also covers the identification and types of plastics unfit for circularity. In combination with the studies in selected cities in the region by UN-Habitat, this will provide good data for decision makers and the private sector to focus their own efforts to lower their plastic footprint.

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
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<p>Support the creation of a standard for plastic neutrality in South-East Asia involving affected communities and informal sectors to help offset/inset the plastic footprint of corporations as the end goal of business plastic value chain transformation</p>	<p>Analysis report on designing plastic neutrality credit systems.</p> <p>A partnership agreement has been signed off with the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) on the 10th of December to study the current landscape of plastic credits and to provide expert recommendations towards a harmonized approach.</p>	<p>50% Ongoing</p>
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Narrative

Creating plastic neutrality standard needs to be supported by the early-stage evolution of various methodologies. With a lack of consensus on the evolving space of plastic credits, the project has aimed to conduct a situation analysis study to further support the path towards achieving a harmonized standard. This study will focus not only on what suits big businesses but also the informal sector who play a vital role in the plastic value chain and who will also be affected by plastic neutrality standards. This study will bring about recommendations on the emerging and evolving situation around plastic neutrality to support further progress towards a harmonized standard. Following the concept note on the scope and aim of the study, the SSFA has been signed off in December 2021 with the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA) for the execution of the study.

Result 1.2: Stakeholders in South-East Asia demonstrate ability to manage the plastic value chain better

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
<p>Identification of inclusive market transforming solutions on plastic reduction, re-use, and recycling, contributing to the solutions report.</p> <p>Identify successful applications of infrastructure and operational innovations for circularity at city-wide level, for reapplication across region, through demonstration projects at target sites. This will include advancing implementation at two sites in Malaysia and one in Thailand, and planning and initiating activities at one additional site in Thailand</p>	<p>Reports from Thai stakeholders were completed as required by the project with partner Solid Waste Association of Thailand (SWAT).</p> <p>Demonstration site implementation progress reports for Penang and Petaling Jaya completed.</p>	<p>100% completed</p>

Narrative

The project with SWAT in Thailand engaged with several large companies and actors in the plastic value chain. These companies were already incorporating innovation and Research & Development (R&D) into their long-term strategy, producing packaging with less plastic, mono-plastics for better recyclability and some were even exploring using no labels and marking with laser markers. In Thailand, however, work did not proceed with the demonstration sites due to the pandemic restrictions and competing priorities by the potential partners.

Nevertheless, good examples were encountered amongst the participating organizations in the project with SWAT. One outstanding example was that of Wieng Theong municipality located in the Theong district, a mountainous area in the eastern part of Chiang Rai province, northern Thailand. This municipality implemented community-based recycling efforts that led to lower assessment rates for households and significant reduction of landfill bound waste with an increase in plastics collected for sale to recyclers.

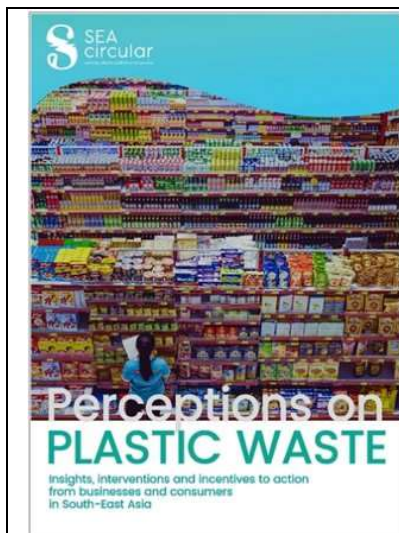
Demonstration projects supported in Malaysia (Penang and Petaling Jaya) were completed successfully; both demonstration sites have been written and published in case study format. These demonstration sites included community-based efforts, segregation at source and voluntary extended producer responsibility through producer recycling organizations. It also highlighted an example of an incentive program that lowers household assessment rates based on participation in the segregation at source program. The example of Petaling Jaya generated interest

from other municipalities who are considering replicating the household assessment rate incentive to develop a plan for segregation of recyclable waste at the household level. Contributions from the private sector, for example Nestle and other partner organizations helped to enable the additional cost required for the collection and management activities.

Good examples, including the above-mentioned examples, are being developed into case studies and are made available on the SEA circular website where several more on-going and new cases will be uploaded. These cases will also be included in the project Solutions Report that will enable further sharing as useful reference to practitioners.

Result 1.3: Business incentives for plastic reduction and recycling identified and applied

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
<p>Review and analysis, including further analysis of data from perceptions survey in 2020, to support identification and monitoring of benchmarks concerning incentives for businesses to reduce plastic wastage.</p> <p>Technical capability building for sector-specific circularity (e.g., easy to recycle segregation, recyclable design, closed-loop recycling) focusing on Thailand and Malaysia, to identify most incentivized first steps for industries and individual businesses to commit to circularity</p> <p>Preparation of a solutions report (South-East Asia Plastic Value Chain Management) for knowledge sharing, replication and scaling up of proven solutions to reduce wasted plastics</p>	<p>Report on implications of industry and consumer perceptions for development and application of business incentives.</p> <p>Capacity building event reports.</p> <p>Updated annotated outline and timetable for the solutions report, with TOR/implementation agreement for implementing partner.</p>	<p>75% advanced</p>
Narrative		
<p>The findings from the first phase of the consumer perception survey, which was conducted in 2020 by the Food Industry Association (FIA), indicate a low-level of concern from consumers towards plastic waste unmanaged and excessiveness in use of plastics including single use plastics, suggest regulation and producer responsibility approaches should be designed and applied. The FIA, as part of the existing SSFA, will be required to conduct a second and final survey in 2022.</p>		



In regard to capacity building, as part of the SEA of Solutions 2021, session topics have been shaped to bring about focus on enablers for capacity building in scaling up collection, recycling, and a lower use of virgin plastics to improve the overall plastic footprint. With sessions on technology, innovations, EPR and enablers for investments that will be discussed, this is expected to bring about new ideas for workplan 2022 activities to increase scale and momentum of desired outcomes.

Going forward, a business analyst consultant has been approved to come on board from December to develop a Solutions Report for further progress. The good practice case studies have contributed to this activity. A more complete body of work to be prepared as part of a project report that has been added as an activity in workplan 2022, in line with the recommendation of the mid-term reviewer.

3.2 Output 2: Strengthening the scientific basis for decision making

In 2021, considerable progress was made toward strengthening the scientific basis for decision making related to marine litter and plastic pollution. To address data gaps for effective interventions, hotspot assessments of waste leakage have been conducted, adapted to COVID-19 travel limitations. Regarding marine litter monitoring, a key milestone of the project was developing Regional Guidance on Harmonized National Marine Litter Monitoring Programmes for the COBSEA region as an intergovernmentally agreed document which will guide further technical assistance and facilitate data comparability to address the transboundary challenge of marine litter. At national level, technical assistance was provided to lay the foundation for robust national monitoring programmes that are crucial for evidence-based policies and tracking the effectiveness of interventions. Capacity needs and gaps were assessed, and will be addressed through targeted trainings to build ability to systematically monitor marine litter in the environment in line with Regional Guidance and globally established methods. Further efforts have been made to strengthen the science-policy interface by developing a research database and foundations for a research network to be integrated in the Regional Node (Output 4). Progress made in 2021 will enable COBSEA and UNEP to meet results under Output 2 in the last year of the project.

Result 2.1: Marine litter status and trends are monitored, assessed, and reported at national and regional level

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Country-specific webinars/trainings and other technical support to adapt and apply methodology for on-site hotspot assessments; Implementation of marine litter hotspot assessments at identified sites, including technical assistance in application of methodology and reporting of findings, building on regional hotspot modelling and field surveys of waste flows conducted in 2020 (in Cambodia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam, and Indonesia as needed)	Revised and elaborated implementation plans for hotspot assessment target areas/sites; hotspot assessment reports.	75% Advanced
Narrative		
In partnership with UN-Habitat, hotspot assessments of plastic waste leakage were conducted at city-level in selected sites in SEA circular countries, complemented by regional modelling of source hotspots. The implementation modality for this activity was originally adjusted to use rapid on-site assessments and modelling		

including the use of secondary data where available, to provide information on waste leakage for evidence-based action in the face of continued COVID-19 travel restrictions. Workshops, trainings were held and surveys at household level and landfills using UN–Habitat’s Waste Wise Cities Tool (WaCT) were conducted in Kep and Sihanouk Ville in Cambodia, in Tam Ky and Hoi An in Viet Nam, in Chon Buri in Thailand, and in Seremban in Malaysia. UN–Habitat co–funded similar activities in Manila Bay in the Philippines. Sites were selected based on consultations with national partners and SEA circular project partners, to address data gaps and avoid duplication of similar efforts with development partners. Waste flow analyses will be completed, and stakeholder consultations held with local authorities to inform priority policy and infrastructure interventions and investments based on data collected by November 2021. Collaboration is ongoing with the UNEP Ecosystems Division in Nairobi and the GPML toward integration of regional data layers in the Global Digital Platform on Marine Litter.

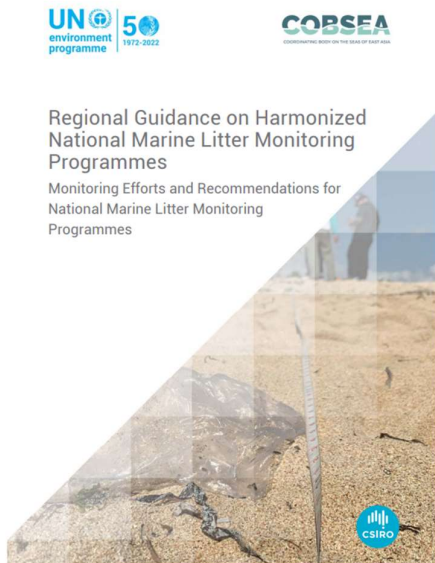


In Malaysia, additional support was provided to the Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA) to model waste leakage based on available secondary data, building on National Guidance for Plastic Pollution Hotspotting and Shaping Action approach developed by UNEP, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Life Cycle Initiative. Estimates show significant data gaps that require national baseline assessment of marine litter accumulation in the environment to further inform monitoring efforts and track policy impacts.

This work on waste leakage hotspots will be complemented by national baseline assessments of marine litter accumulation in different habitats in 2022 to address data gaps and provide the foundation for robust national monitoring programmes. Plans for further assessment have been drafted for Malaysia, Cambodia and Thailand and will be revised and elaborated in 2022. A respective Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) is expected to commence in Q4 of 2021.

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Regional guidance on harmonization of national marine litter monitoring (for consideration at IGM 25), including establishment of Expert Group on Monitoring	Final regional guidance and final ToR of Expert Group approved by IGM	100% Completed

Narrative



Monitoring and assessment are indispensable in identifying marine litter status, trends, and its most critical impacts, and to support development, tracking and evaluation of policy and management interventions. The COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI) recognizes that the absence of adequate science-based monitoring and assessment programmes is a significant barrier to addressing marine litter (Action 3). In 2020, a regional inventory of monitoring efforts in COBSEA countries was conducted and in 2021, COBSEA Regional Guidance on Harmonized National Marine Litter Monitoring Programmes was prepared in partnership with CSIRO as per guidance of the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter (WGML).

The Regional Guidance provides practical recommendations to address monitoring needs and capacities in the region and apply global guidelines on monitoring methodologies for robust data collection over time. The document was developed in close consultation with the WGML and monitoring experts in an iterative process based on country inputs.

A second webinar on harmonized monitoring to gather country feedback was held on 18 March 2021 (following the initial webinar in October 2020), the regional monitoring inventory and draft Regional Guidance were presented at the third meeting of the WGML on 29-30 June 2021 and developed further with input received, for consideration by part 1 of the twenty-fifth intergovernmental meeting of COBSEA (IGM 25) on 8-9 September 2021. Following discussion during the meeting and further review by participating countries, the Regional Guidance document was adopted by silence procedure and shared with countries as a COBSEA intergovernmental document in October 2021. The document is a significant step toward achieving Action 3 on Monitoring of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI) and provides the basis for further technical assistance to strengthen and harmonize monitoring approaches in COBSEA countries.

The third meeting of the COBSEA WGML on 29-30 June 2021 established the Expert Group on Monitoring of the WGML. The Expert Group will support the application of Regional Guidance.

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Develop plan toward regional assessment of marine litter status and trends (incl. procedures and institutional structures)	Plan in the form of WGML document	50 % - Ongoing
Narrative		
This activity was initiated in 2021 to continue in 2022 building on further support for robust national marine litter monitoring programmes. The idea of developing a COBSEA regional report assessing the status and trends of marine litter in the region was discussed with the WGML at its third meeting in June 2021 and subsequently included in the biennial workplan for implementation of the RAP MALI. Countries recommended the development of a plan to identify the need and scope for the preparation of a regional report on marine litter status and trends for the second half of 2022, based on national marine litter monitoring efforts which require further strengthening. This activity is part of a partnership agreement between UNEP and CSIRO Australia to strengthen capacity and provide technical assistance for national marine litter monitoring in five countries.		

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Capacity building for strengthening and harmonizing national marine litter monitoring and national source inventories, including regional/national trainings in Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, Viet Nam, Malaysia (as needed) and development/use of virtual learning modules	Training modules/materials; and summary report of trainings	75 % Advanced
Narrative		
Activities will continue in 2022 to address national capacity needs. Initial training modules and videos were developed in 2021 in partnership with CSIRO as the basis for a monitoring training programme that can be adapted to national needs. Training plans identifying capacity gaps and needs, target groups, key priority areas and suggested implementing modalities were developed in consultation with national partners for Malaysia, Thailand, and Cambodia in 2021 as the basis for national trainings to be rolled out in 2022. Collaboration is ongoing with the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML) and UNEP partners involved in the Training of Trainers on Monitoring and Assessment held by COBSEA in 2019. Video and training material developed at the Training of Trainers will be incorporated, as relevant, in further development of the training programme and roll out at national level, in cooperation with CSIRO.		

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Technical support and guidance to strengthen and further develop national marine litter monitoring	Monitoring programme descriptions	100% Completed

<p>programmes in line regional guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Malaysia, Thailand: Develop monitoring programme in line with national planning and regional guidance - Cambodia, Viet Nam, Philippines: Draft monitoring programme based on inventory, stakeholder consultation and regional guidance 		
Narrative		
<p>Technical support was provided to the focus countries in 2021 to strengthen and further develop marine litter monitoring programme in a step-by-step process. With support from technical partners, consultations were held with national focal agencies responsible for marine litter monitoring, existing monitoring efforts were identified (and included in the regional monitoring inventory, see above) and monitoring objectives and steps for implementation were captured in monitoring programme concepts.</p> <p>In Malaysia, a national monitoring framework and implementation plan was developed as a living document, based on the country's Clean-Coast Index, for further development to include additional habitats and methods over time, with additional technical assistance and capacity building through COBSEA.</p> <p>In Cambodia, limited existing monitoring efforts were identified and a monitoring programme concept was drafted based on country consultation, highlighting fundamental capacity needs and data gaps which require further technical assistance and baseline assessments to inform the development of a robust national monitoring programme in 2022.</p> <p>In Thailand, stakeholder consultations were held with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE) and CSIRO, and a monitoring programme concept developed and shared, identifying remaining capacity and data gaps that require national baseline assessments and targeted training which will be provided in 2022.</p> <p>Existing monitoring efforts and gaps were identified in Viet Nam and the Philippines, highlighting the need for further targeted capacity building and national baseline assessments to inform the development of a monitoring programme, which will continue in 2022, in line with COBSEA Regional Guidance (see above).</p>		

Result 2.2: Decision makers and academic community in the region have access to marine litter research and data on marine litter

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
<p>Expand and update marine litter research database (incl. research in languages of the region) and develop/adapt a web platform for public access. linked to the GPML Regional Node of (Output 4.3); Facilitate interdisciplinary regional exchange and collaborative research on marine litter through further development and establishment of a regional research network, linked to the GPML Regional Node (Output 4.3)</p>	<p>Updated web-based database; Research network ToR (or similar document), minutes of (virtual) meeting</p>	<p>100% Completed</p>
Narrative		
<p>In partnership with the National University of Singapore (NUS) and building on the initial plastic pollution research catalogue, compiled in 2019/20 (funded and led through COBSEA), the scope of marine litter research from the region was expanded and updated, including research in languages from the region and across disciplines. The</p>		

research catalogue was developed into a web database, designed for integration into the East Asian Seas Regional Node of the GPML (under Output 4), once established. The web interface, including visualizations of marine litter research efforts and a searchable interface will be accessible by the end of the year. Collaboration is ongoing with the UNEP Ecosystems Division in Nairobi and the GPML toward integration of regional data layers in the Global Digital Platform on Marine Litter.

In partnership with NUS, a series of four webinars were held on marine plastic research in the region targeting researchers and practitioners, to inform the development of the research database and a regional research network. The webinars aimed to identify ways in which marine plastics research is organized in the region with a practical focus of field and lab studies; difficulties encountered as well as barriers to data integration and comparability; and how the regional research database (see above) may better support issues identified, including feedback on metadata and data input. Webinar sessions included: 'Field sampling for marine plastics - Good practices and current constraints' (31 March 2021), 'Sampling processing techniques - Practices and constraints' (7 May 2021), 'Data templates and comparability - Developing benchmark units for conversion' (2 June 2021), Using the regional research inventory for research and progress in responding to marine plastic pollution (8 July 2021).

Terms of reference were developed, based on consultations with researchers and academia in the region and a scoping of existing research networks and partnerships, to inform the establishment of a regional research network on marine litter under the COBSEA Regional Node. The regional research network will address knowledge gaps and catalyse collaborative research to inform evidence-based policy and decision making and help to bridge the science-policy gap.

Result 2.3: Obstacles and opportunities for policies and regulations to reduce plastic wastage and pollution based on best available evidence are identified

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Analysis of plastic pollution impacts, including COVID-related impacts, on vulnerable groups such as informal waste pickers to develop guidance for integrated waste management and plastic solutions	Recommendations report	25% Initiated
Narrative		
Plastic pollution disproportionately impacts vulnerable groups such as informal waste pickers. It is estimated that these impacts are exacerbated by COVID-19 and the respective increase in single-use plastic and hazardous waste. Meanwhile, plastics credits are evolving to support enablement of circularity. How will plastic credits effect vulnerable communities in the informal waste management sector? To address this question, a research study is planned in partnership with the Yunus Environment Hub, which is in the final stage of signing off, focussed on plastic credits and how it will impact the informal waste sector. This research will address plastic waste management in an inclusive manner that protects the environmental and human rights of vulnerable communities. Connected to output 1 where a training package is being developed on environmental and human rights matters relevant to stakeholders in the plastic value chain, this research will consider contributions of and impacts on informal waste collectors and how plastic credits and the evolving landscape towards a plastics standard should include responsible business conduct and how credits will affect the vulnerable groups that support plastic waste collection for recycling, through a human rights lens. The research project is expected to commence upon signing of the partnership agreement in February 2022.		

3.3 Output 3: Outreach

The outreach activities under output 3 were impacted by COVID-19 travel restriction, however, to achieve the aims of the outreach activities efforts were continued by virtual means. Training on Marine Litter MOOC was run in 5 languages from the COBSEA region (Chinese, English, Indonesian, Thai, and Vietnamese) with continued effort to offer the training in Khmer language. Meanwhile, case studies on good practices in the plastic value chain were developed in-house and professionally edited and presented in a fresh new format. These case studies are uploaded on the SEA circular website along with case studies of projects showcasing demonstration projects in Malaysia.

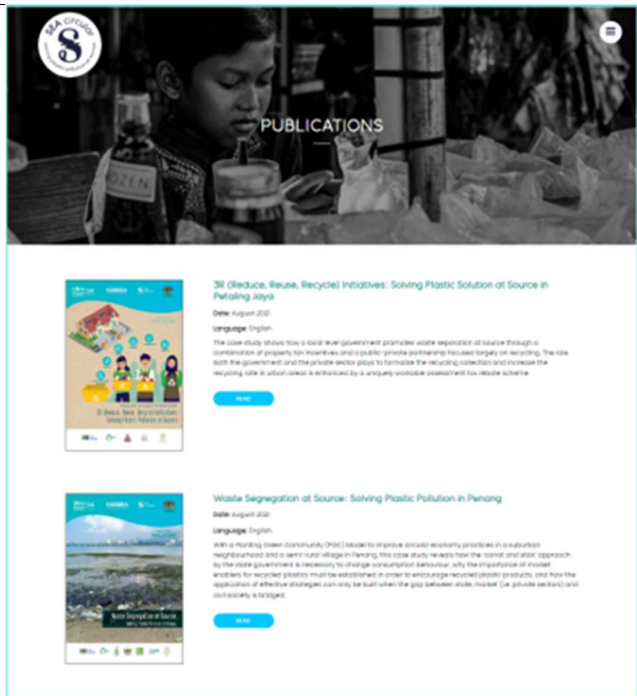
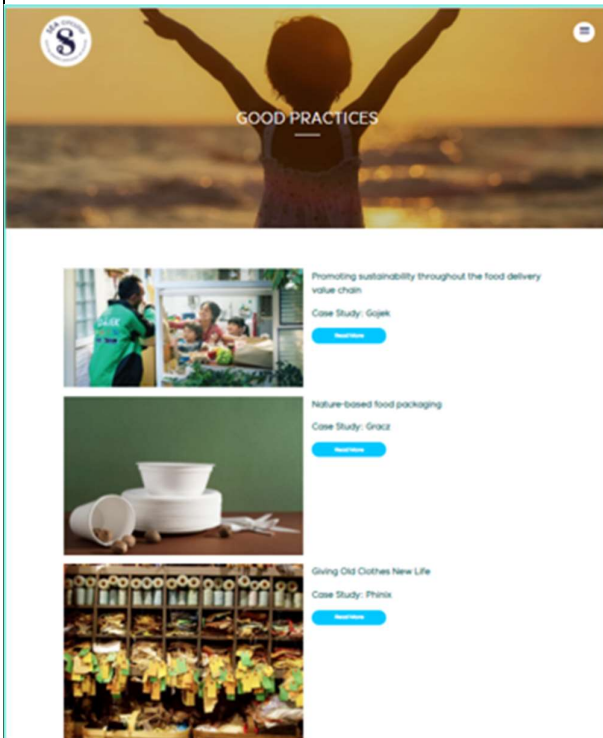
To raise awareness and engage with the younger generation, a campaign called 100 Days to #BeatPlasticPollution was initiated in September 2021 to create region-wide awareness on plastic pollution and public support for policies to change plastic value chain management towards less plastics. This campaign features exciting augmented reality (AR) games.

Result 3.1: Project products and results reach target groups and inform efforts to tackle marine litter and plastic waste

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
<p>Implement and update as needed project Communication Strategy including planning and managing outreach activities under output 3, mapping of target groups and outreach channels, effectively using media and social media channels including press events (Comms Consultant in the Project Implementation Group)</p> <p>Develop and disseminate audio-visual material, infographics and written products on key data, messages, and project findings/activities</p> <p>Graphic design and dissemination of project knowledge products, other deliverables, and presentation materials, in line with project branding and, where needed, prepared in national languages.</p> <p>Updating and further development of project website, including news of events/launches, resources, newsletters, sharing information and materials related to internal/external events as well as relevant activities of UNEP and COBSEA; and further development and updating of SOS website for SOS 2021.</p> <p>Develop/design an online catalogue of outreach and communication resources in the region, and related web-based knowledge management services linked to the GPML Regional Node</p>	<p>Project outreach deliverables as described herein.</p> <p>Short videos, news/web stories, op-eds, infographics, social media posts</p> <p>Country briefs, guidance documents, reports, presentations, slide-decks.</p> <p>New and revised website pages/sections and updated content.</p> <p>Outreach resources database.</p> <p>Behavioural change campaign – on 100 Days to Beat Plastic Pollution was launched on 1st September’21 and rolled out for 100 Days until 10th December’21.</p>	<p>100% completed</p>
Narrative		

The outreach plan, communication strategy and activities in 2021 has been responsive to the situation surrounding the pandemic restriction. We have been mindful of the business priorities to focus efforts on where best traction could be gained.

Material to support outreach activities such as case studies and other creative content development activities in the form of design, layout, infographics, and professional editing were commenced. The assets from these activities have been and will be further made available through our websites and offered to partners and organizations participating in our projects.



As for the knowledge management services linked to GPML, the MOOC (Massive Online Open Course) continue to be offered and in plan for further translation into other languages.

The Sea of Solutions 2021 event website was developed and helped outreach of the event by providing regular updates for the event participants and network of SEA circular. Following the event, the website was updated with the relevant event information and uploaded various session briefs which address important and interesting topics in the plastic value chain for further knowledge sharing.

Result 3.2: Consumer awareness of solutions to marine litter and plastic pollution is increased to inform decision making and behaviour change

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Consumer awareness surveys in 2021, conducted in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam	Second analysis report of consumer and business perceptions of plastic waste using 2020 data as pre-COVID baseline.	75% advanced
Develop/expand and disseminate regionally appropriate training and education material in national languages of the East Asian Seas region (e.g. Khmer, Malaysian, Korean - TBD), including modules on HRBA/environmental rights/GE and marine litter for the MOOC and other tools developed by UNEP	MOOC Expert Track and Leadership Track modules Short films of good practice initiatives. Toolbox for campaigns. Criteria for distinction in plastic value chain transformation for 4 business sectors.	

Develop audio-visual and other outreach material to display community-based and inclusive solutions including at project demonstration sites (e.g. initiatives engaging informal waste collectors and coastal communities)

Develop a toolbox for implementation of coherent campaigns at national or sub-national level, support rollout of campaigns (incl. #CleanSeas pledges) with streamlined messaging on plastic pollution, marine litter, and solutions. This will draw on scoping of existing (sub)national and regional campaigns

Establishment of a Plastic Neutral/Best-in-Class plastic value chain transformation award based on the project's business engagement efforts, to motivate business commitment towards plastic neutrality, with awards to be launched in SOS

Narrative

Plans and activities identified under this activity were reviewed, sensitive to the needs and priorities during the pandemic and in consideration to how it can support other project activities further.

Consumer awareness survey, connected to the output 1, was conducted by Food Industry Asia (FIA) attempted to gauge the awareness of consumers towards solutions marine litter and plastic pollution. The first phase of this study was made in 2020. The follow up, second phase is to be conducted in 2022. The initial baseline revealed that the consumer awareness was at a low level. This tells us that more needs to be done to raise awareness towards improving the situation on plastic pollution in our environment. In view of this, we need to consider for the workplan in 2022, outreach activities that can further raise awareness of consumers to translate into actions that could influence actions in the national action plans.

Meanwhile, one major effort, incorporating all the elements of planned outreach efforts to reach a wider audience through social media channels, utilizing augmented reality games was successfully launched in September. The 100 Days to Beat Plastic Pollution campaign targets youths and aims to support behavioural changes, raise awareness on the plastic pollution problem and help consumers make informed decision while they pledge to make their own individual changes to reduce plastic pollution.



An award was considered as an activity to recognize and motivate transformation in the plastic value chain for businesses to reach at plastic neutrality. This activity is incorporated in the workplan 2022.

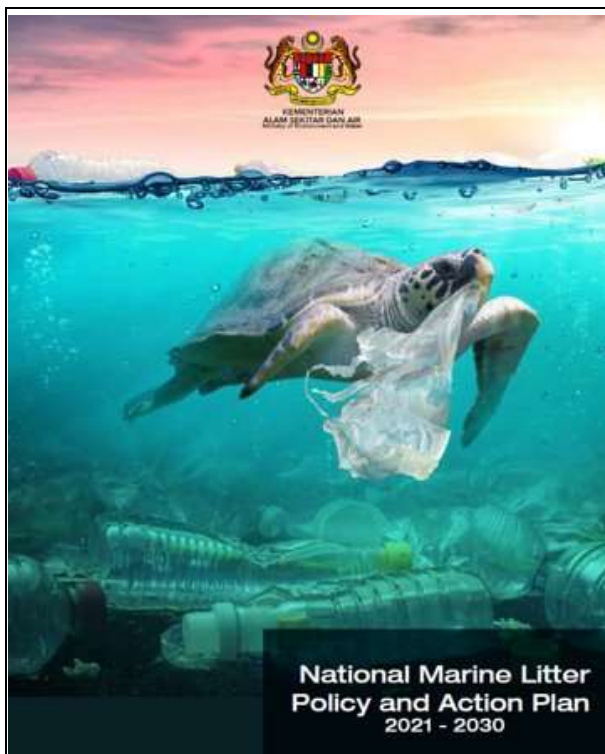
3.4 Output 4: Regional networking

In 2021, satisfactory progress was made toward strengthening national marine litter planning, coordination with regional partners, constituency engagement, knowledge sharing and networking on marine litter, despite continued challenges posed by COVID-19. Consultations and dialogues at national and regional level were held successfully using virtual means and technical assistance provided in collaboration with national-level partners. The project constructively leveraged the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter throughout the year to consult and national focal agencies and actively engage the wider COBSEA region beyond SEA circular target countries in lessons learned and knowledge sharing. With new additions to the project team and necessary adjustments due to renewed COVID-19 outbreaks, the aim and implementation modality of networking activities under Result 4.2 are currently being reassessed. Building on the success of the past year, SEA of Solutions will once again take place in November in a virtual format, co-hosted by the Government of Malaysia. Activities in 2021 have provided a solid foundation for achieving results under Output 4 in 2022, including the establishment of the East Asian Seas Regional Node of the GPML as a marine litter knowledge hub beyond the life of the project.

Result 4.1: Regionally coherent national marine litter plans, policies, regulations and/or standards to prevent and reduce plastic pollution

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Track progress on national marine litter planning in the context of the RAP MALI	Progress assessment report	25 % - Initiated
Narrative		
A progress reporting format for COBSEA participating countries on national marine litter planning and interventions was developed at the Technical Consultation of the WGML in June 2020 and revised further with input from the WGML. COBSEA progress reporting will help to track progress made in participating countries at national level toward achieving regional priorities identified in the RAP MALI. As part 1 of IGM 25 took place virtually focusing on urgent issues for decision making, participating countries requested to postpone consideration of the progress reporting format, timelines, and process for reporting for adoption by part 2 of IGM 25 as soon as possible in 2022. The project workplan will be updated accordingly.		

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Technical support and guidance to strengthen national marine litter planning in the context of COBSEA RAP MALI: - Malaysia: Develop and launch Marine Litter Roadmap 2020-2030 - Thailand, Philippines: Develop implementation roadmap of priority actions - Cambodia: Draft NAP or similar document - Viet Nam: Implement NAP Roadmap (incl. developing project proposals) and develop ToR of International Centre on Marine Debris	Policy papers, NAPs on Marine Litter/Marine Litter Roadmaps	100% Completed
Narrative		



Technical assistance for marine litter planning continued in 2021, with support from technical project partners, in line with the RAP MALI. In May 2021, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) endorsed their Regional Action Plan for Combating Marine Debris in the ASEAN Member States (2021-2025), which partly overlaps with the COBSEA RAP MALI because of the overlap in membership. In consultation with national partners and ASEAN Secretariat, efforts were made to avoid duplication in technical assistance provided related to marine litter planning and to avoid duplicative reporting burdens for member countries.

In Malaysia, support was provided to develop the National Marine Litter Policy and Action Plan based on extensive stakeholder consultations. The policy document was launched at SEA of Solutions 2021 aiming to address marine litter through robust policies, to improve coordination across government agencies and stakeholders, foster further research, deploy innovative technologies, and foster access to finance. Complementary to and building on SEA circular activities, COBSEA and the UNEP Law Division provided national guidance to the Ministry of Environment and Water of Malaysia (KASA) on legislative governance for implementation of marine litter policies, plans and

regulations.

In Thailand, a policy paper was developed based on consultations and shared with the Director General of the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) and Pollution Control Department (PCD) to support development of Thailand’s National Action Plan (led by the World Bank and ASEAN).

In Cambodia, the Situation Analysis, and its summary for policy makers in English and Khmer were presented to Ministry of Environment of Cambodia for further feedback and endorsement which was revised accordingly. Based on recommendations of the Situation Analysis, stakeholder consultations are planned in Cambodia, in collaboration with development partners working on marine litter in the country, to support the development of an evidence-based National Action Plan on Marine Litter (or similar framework document) in 2022. Complementary to and building on SEA circular activities, COBSEA and the UNEP Law Division provided national guidance to the Ministry of Environment of Cambodia on legislative governance for implementation of marine litter policies, plans and regulations.

Nevertheless, further technical assistance needs for implementation of Viet Nam’s National Action Plan for Management of Marine Litter and the Philippines’ National Plan of Action (NPOA) are under discussion with COBSEA focal points.

On the other hand, complementary to and building on SEA circular activities, COBSEA and the UNEP Law Division provided national guidance to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) of the Philippines on legislative governance for implementation of marine litter policies, plans and regulations. Following up on progress made so far, in 2022, the project will support the implementation of a National Source Inventory approach developed by UNEP to ensure evidence-based implementation of marine litter action plans.

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Analysis of implications of AHEG process and its outcomes for COBSEA countries, assessment of readiness and needs (carried out with/through WGML and with support from COBSEA countries and GPML)	Readiness study or similar	100% Completed
Narrative		


Republic of Korea proposed the development of a regional COBSEA report on global response options to marine litter. The proposal was discussed with participating countries in bilateral consultations and the third meeting of the Working Group on Marine Litter (WGML) in June 2021. Based on consultations, participating countries decided against a regional report and requested the COBSEA Secretariat and GPML to provide support to build country readiness for implementation of global response options negotiated by part two of the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) in February 2022. COBSEA provided Secretariat support to participating countries to engage in formal and informal international processes and events related to global response options, including discussion of a possible international agreement on marine litter, at the Ministerial Conference on Marine Litter and Plastic Pollution (co-convened by Viet Nam on 1-2 September).

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Meetings of the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter (WGML) and its Expert Group and associated meetings	Report of the meeting	100% Completed
Narrative		
<p>The third meeting of the Working Group on Marine Litter (WGML) was held on 29-30 June 2021. The WGML provided an update of SEA circular activities, established the Expert Group on Monitoring, provided further input to the biennial workplan for implementation of the RAP MALI and the Regional Guidance on Harmonized National Marine Litter Monitoring Programmes, and endorsed the Terms of Reference of the East Asian Seas Regional Node of the GPML, for consideration to adopt by part one of IGM 25. The meeting provided important feedback and input for the preparation of IGM 25. The fourth meeting is planned in-person in Viet Nam preceding part two of IGM 25 in 2022 and webinars on specific issues are planned as needed. The project continues to leverage the WGML to solicit country input, share knowledge, and foster country ownership.</p>		

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Knowledge sharing through ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment (AWGCME) and other working groups as relevant; meetings related to the Regional Action Plan being developed in the context of the ASEAN Framework, and other relevant meetings; and regular COBSEA-ASEAN inter-Secretariat communication, including identification of potential joint activities	Presentation and other inputs to AWGCME meeting as well as other relevant meetings	100% Completed
Narrative		
<p>A concept note identifying areas for coordination and knowledge sharing was shared with the ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment (AWGCME) to inform further discussions. ASEAN Secretariat was invited to join the third meeting of the WGML and part one of IGM 25 and the ASEAN Regional Action Plan was presented to the WGML in June 2021. Areas for strengthening coordination and collaboration were further discussed with the WGML and a consultation was held with ASEAN Secretariat in August 2021, identifying three substantive priority areas for strengthened coordination: (1) Harmonizing monitoring and baseline assessments tools and efforts, including building on COBSEA Regional Guidance and the toolbox for measuring plastic pollution developed by ASEAN and World Bank; (2) Marine litter knowledge management, including through Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) Regional Knowledge Management Centre for Marine Plastic Debris and the East Asian Seas Regional Node of the GPML; (3) Private sector engagement and economic standards for plastic management. A concept note was developed on this basis to guide organization of regional consultations with development partners and member countries in 2022.</p>		

Result 4.2: Information sharing and stakeholder engagement to support targeted action on reduction in plastic pollution and wastage

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Organization of SEA of Solutions 2021 partnership week for constituency engagement, to share and promote innovative and inclusive solutions and catalyse action	Event programme and plan (incl. contingency for COVID-19), event report, pledges for plastic pollution reduction	100% completed

Narrative	
<p>SEA of Solutions 2021 was launched on 16-18 November 2021 in a virtual format together with the Ministry of Environment and Water of Malaysia (KASA) as co-host. This year's theme centered on "Accelerating solutions to reduce plastic waste" by exploring policies, partnerships, innovative technologies, and financing that help address present challenges and potential impacts of future disruptive global events.</p> <p>The three-day programme covered the following thematic sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer awareness and outreach to combat plastic pollution; • Innovations in sustainable packaging and its value chain; • City-level actions through policymaking, partnerships, and community engagement; • Corporate commitments and leadership through extended producer responsibility; • Transition towards circular economy; and • Sustainable and innovative financing pathways. <p>Event resources and outcomes are available at https://sos2021.sea-circular.org.</p>	

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Compilation of readiness for and progress with local implementation of policy and regulatory frameworks based on project findings (incl. e.g. Perceptions report and underlying data, closed-loop recycling capability building activities, Packaging Industry Regulations & Standards for Design, Labelling, Recovery & Recycling in ASEAN), desk research and consultation	<p>This report will be an enhanced toolbox of all the knowledge assets, including tool kits, studies, good practice case studies that will be useful for practitioners in the plastic value chain.</p> <p>This toolbox type project report has been recommended by the midterm reviewer so that it would be a useful reference to practitioners.</p>	50% ongoing

Narrative

A consultant with experience in knowledge management and development of knowledge assets with sound background in technical, sustainability and circularity has been engaged and is now on board since 15th December. The toolbox report is currently being designed and shaped to produce an interactive and easy to navigate knowledge product for SEA circular.

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
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Dissemination of findings, recommendations, tools, and knowledge products through relevant events e.g., the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) and other events of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the UN Ocean Conference; Meetings of the Ad hoc Open-ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics (AHEG), the UN Forum on Responsible Business and Human Rights, and UNEP events	Contributions to sessions, presentations, side events etc, (timing and format COVID-19 dependent)	100% completed
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Narrative

Activities and knowledge developed under SEA circular were successfully shared in multiple events throughout the year. This includes:

- presenting regional marine litter governance mechanisms and SEA circular activities to Thammasat University (TU) students as part of the UN-TU Joint Teaching Programme (2 March);
- sharing project outputs and identifying areas for synergies at the virtual workshop on ‘Measuring Plastic Pollution in Asia Pacific’ organized jointly by the World Bank and UNEP (30-31 March);
- sharing lessons learned from South-East Asia as a speaker at the session on ‘Improving Business and Human Rights in Transboundary River Basins in South Asia’ of the 2nd UN South Asia Forum on Business and Human Rights;
- co-organizing two sessions on environmental rights including related to tackling plastic pollution at the Asia Pacific United Nations Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum (1-4 June 2021): ‘Business Responsibility and Collective Action to Uphold Environmental Rights’ and ‘Engaging Business to Promote, Protect and Respect Children’s Rights to a Healthy Environment’;
- the Programme Officer Marine Litter conducted a joint lecture on ‘[The Marine Environment, Marine Litter and Human Rights](#)’ at the ‘2021 Summer/Winter School: Critical perspectives in Human Rights and the Environment’ hosted by UNEP and the Global Network for Human Rights and the Environment (24 June);
- moderating a session at the APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) Workshop on Promoting Innovative Models in Reducing and Managing Land-based Debris into Oceans for Sustainable Development (27-28 July);
- sharing COBSEA’s and SEA circular efforts to strengthen regional governance on marine litter as a speaker at the webinar ‘Oceans Governance in Southeast Asia’ (29 September) hosted by the Asian Research Institute for Environmental Law (ARIEL);
- sharing updates of COBSEA marine litter activities, including under SEA circular, at the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) Virtual Workshop on Marine Litter Management (15-16 September).

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Convene quarterly coordination meetings among regional marine litter projects (group of project leads)	Meeting minutes	50% Ongoing

Narrative

A coordination meeting with UN-Habitat representatives was conducted on 5 November 2021 to ensure targeted activities can be delivered in time according to agreement and implementation plan. Project progress was discussed during the meeting on how to improve data on plastic waste leakage for decision making, to strengthen knowledge, technical capacity and governance for waste management, and to increase investments for and commitments to waste management improvement.

In addition, several coordination meetings were conducted in November and December, 2021 with regional implementing partners such as CSIRO Australia, FFI Cambodia, National University of Singapore, and Open University of the Netherlands aimed to ensure alignment of targeted project activities as described in the implementation plan of each agreement.

Result 4.3: An East Asian Seas Regional Node of the GPML improves knowledge management on marine litter

Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Establish the East Asian Seas Regional Node of GPML, including functions/services and hosting/operational arrangements	Terms of Reference/IGM document; web portal	100% Completed

Narrative

Terms of Reference for the East Asian Seas Regional Node of the GPML were drafted in 2020 and revised further in 2021 with input from the COBSEA WGML. The third meeting of the WGML in June 2021 further discussed the Terms of Reference and establishment of the Node and endorsed the revised Terms of Reference for consideration by part one of IGM 25. At the WGML meeting and during part one of IGM 25 held in September 2021, Indonesia reiterated interest to explore the role of the Regional Center for Clean Seas (RC3S) in Bali as host institution of the Regional Node. Participating countries welcomed this offer and requested the Secretariat act as interim host (in line with the Terms of Reference) to develop detailed hosting arrangements with Indonesia. The Terms of Reference of the Regional Node was adopted by part one of IGM 25 by silence procedure. In the coming months, the COBSEA Secretariat will work with the RC3S and submit a letter to the GPML Steering Committee expressing interest to establish and host the Regional Node. The Secretariat will work with the RC3S and WGML to establish organizational governance and operational structures of the Node with a view to transferring hosting responsibilities to the RC3S and any co-hosting institutions. A workplan and hosting arrangements will be presented to part two of IGM 25 as soon as possible in 2022.

SEA circular project conducted several meetings with the Open University (The Netherlands) in November and December 2021 to discuss the process of developing an agreement, for instance, Small Scale Funding Agreement (SSFA), related to designing the knowledge management system and web-based infrastructure of the Regional Node, the development of the capacity building and learning management platform of the Regional Node, and populate the knowledge management system of the Regional Node. Furthermore, SEA circular project has had a discussion with GPML representatives about the proposed activities of the SEA circular project and alignment with the existing platform developed by GPML. Considering the intended deliverables of SEA circular project and the development of Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) by GPML with Open University (which are highly complementary), SEA circular project has decided not to pursue a separate SSFA with Open University for several reasons:

- To be consistent with GPML structure on a global inventory of resources and stakeholders where the tagging functionality allows to sort and arrange according to regions;
- To avoid overlapping of project deliverables within UNEP;
- To ensure alignment with global platform in generating more communities of practices for relevant aspects that could provide a community for specific topics/regions; and
- To allow the proposed project activities to be led by GPML.

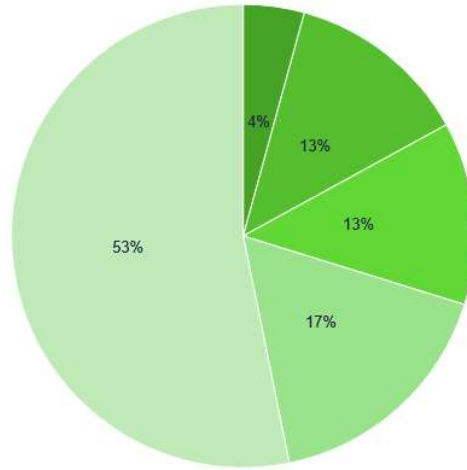
Activity	Deliverables	Progress (%)
Design and develop marine litter policy related knowledge management and networking services linked to the Regional Node; Design and develop marine litter science related knowledge management and networking services linked to the Regional Node, including a regional research network;	Online catalogue of policies, frameworks, and initiatives; Online database/catalogue of marine litter research; Online database/catalogue of training tools and resources as well as roster of experts	50% Underway

Design and develop capacity building knowledge management and networking services linked to the Regional Node, including a roster of experts		
Narrative		
<p>This is an ongoing and continuing activity in 2021 and 2022. Development of services and functions of the Regional Node are underway, in collaboration with the GPML and regional partners. Once the Node is formally established based on the agreed Terms of Reference, knowledge and information will be migrated to a dedicated web platform of the Node, which will be connected to the Global Digital Platform on Marine Litter. The Node will have three pillars of knowledge management and networking related to: (1) policy and initiatives; (2) science and research; (3) capacity building. Under pillar one, the Node, development of an online catalogue of policies, frameworks and initiatives is underway, building on <i>inter alia</i> the COBSEA-NUS review of marine litter research and initiatives in 2019/20 and SEA circular good practice case studies and knowledge products. Pillar two will house the marine litter research database and regional research network developed in partnership with NUS (Output 2). Under pillar three, a learning management platform will be developed in partnership with Open University of the Netherlands (who are leading similar efforts for the Global Digital Platform on Marine Litter) and the RC3S to include capacity building resources, training, and education on marine litter, including training on monitoring developed under output 2, a catalogue of experts developed by NUS, and access to the UNEP MOOC on marine litter. A respective SSFA to support the development of the web platform is under development with Open University. The Regional Node web platform is planned for launch in 2022.</p>		

3.5 Implementation status summary

A summary of implementation status of the 47 activities in the 2021 workplan as of 31st December 2021 is provided here. This includes progress made in delivery of activities, as well as timeliness in delivery of activities.

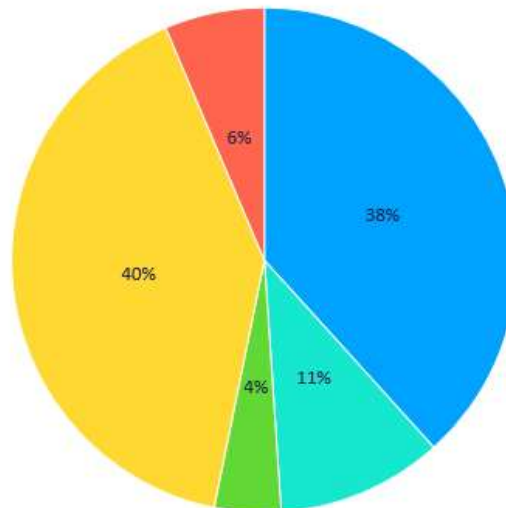
Progress in delivery of activities in the 2021 workplan



■ Not started ■ Initiated ■ Underway ■ Advanced ■ Completed

Not started	Implementation not started, planning may be underway
Initiated	Fully developed implementation plan, implementation modality/partner confirmed, implementation agreement in prep or initial steps of implementation taken
Underway	Activity ongoing, agreement signed/procurement process finalized, considerable progress made
Advanced	Activity nearing completion e.g. advanced or final draft of a report
Completed	Activity completed, deliverables, expenditure and progress reports from partner approved

Timeliness in delivery of activities in the 2021 workplan



■ On track ■ Modestly delayed ■ Significantly delayed
 ■ Completed on time ■ Completed with delay

On track	According to timeline defined in WP
Modestly delayed	No more than one quarter (3months) behind schedule
Significantly delayed	Two or more quarters behind schedule.
Completed on time	Activity completed in line with intended timeline
Completed with delay	Activity completed with delay

3.6 Co-financing leveraged in 2021

As a result of SEA circular project and funding by the Government of Sweden, the project results and desirables to date have attracted several engagement with new partners on complementary areas of work.

The project leveraged several co-financing contributions from partners in 2021, strengthening and broadening efforts towards achieving the intended results and outcomes of the project, including:

- from UNEP Law Division to develop a toolbox on human rights, gender equality and plastic pollution and a gap analysis to inform targeted training on HRBA for plastic pollution prevention. As a follow-up to the contribution from UNEP Law Division, SEA circular project is funding the development of training modules and will hold trainings in 2022. This directly contributes to Result 1.1 (co-financing grant valued at USD 20,000).
- from UNEP Law Division to strengthen national legislative governance in COBSEA countries to implement National Action Plans on Marine Litter (or similar) in line with the COBSEA RAP MALL. National legislative guidance was developed in Cambodia, Philippines, and Malaysia based on expressions of interest. This directly builds on technical assistance provided in result 4.1 and contributes to further progress against result 4.1 (USD 32,000).
- In 2021, the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (UNEP Ecosystems Division) supported staff in the COBSEA Secretariat related to the development of the Regional Node. This directly contributes to result 4.3 (USD 60,000).
- In 2021, CSIRO provided in-kind support towards the development of marine litter monitoring training modules (under the SSFA commenced in 2020). This directly contributes to result 2.1. and builds the foundation for activities in 2022.
- COBSEA Secretariat successfully mobilized funding from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) to lead regional knowledge management activities of the MA-RE-DESIGN project implemented jointly with GIZ and WWF. This project will support further development and effective operation of the Regional Node, capacity building and replication of good practices on marine litter management and monitoring, and regional-level constituency engagement (e.g. through continuation of SEA of Solutions), ensuring sustainability of SEA circular outputs. The project is expected to start in early 2022 and run for three years (USD 1,000,000). Similarly, COBSEA has been identified as Regional Executing Entity for a regional marine litter project led by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) with funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), which will contribute to regional knowledge sharing efforts through the Regional Node from 2022 to 2024 (USD 200,000). These activities build on results 2.1 and 4.3.
- The COBSEA Secretariat is supporting pilot activities in 3-4 sites in COBSEA countries in 2021-22 to demonstrate integrated plastic waste management for marine litter prevention, including in remote and island communities. Good practices will be compiled and shared for replication through the Regional Node and WGML. This activity is funded under the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and UNEP umbrella agreement and complements demonstration activities and knowledge sharing undertaken by SEA circular under output 1 and output 4.
- From the private sector, co-funding received from Nestle and other participating organizations enabled the demonstration project on segregation at source in selected pilot communities in Petaling Jaya to be executed. The funding came in the form of supporting any additional cost that may be incurred by the municipality in conducting this pilot project.

4. GOVERNANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Project governance and implementation arrangements were strengthened to accelerating implementation rate in line with discussions and recommendations arising from donor meetings as well as Project Steering Committee meetings.

4.1 Project Steering Committee

PSC-2 emphasized the need for active participation of all members in PSC meetings and recommended that a review of the membership be undertaken. This was also emphasized in the annual review meeting between Sida and UNEP in March 2020. In response to this, the composition of the PSC has been reviewed and revised to strengthen and diversify experience among members in the PSC that corresponds to priority aspects of the project (e.g. HRBA and business; sustainable consumption and production) for guiding the project towards impact.

As of October 2021, the composition of the PSC is as follows:

- i. Isabelle Louis (Chair), Deputy Regional Director at United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
- ii. Eddy Mazuaansyah Mohd Ali Murad, Under Secretary, Pollution Control Division of the Ministry of Environment and Water, Malaysia
- iii. Suwan Nanthasarut, Advisor to the Director General of the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR), Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Thailand
- iv. Heidi Savelli-Soderberg, Programme Officer, Marine Litter, Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- v. Åsa Stenmarck, Material Flow Expert - sustainable consumption, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency
- vi. Mr. Anh-Duc LUU, the Chair of the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter 2021 - 2022
- vii. Sara Öberg Höper (Observer), First Secretary, Programme specialist Environment and Climate Change, Development Cooperation – Regional Asia and the Pacific, Embassy of Sweden in Thailand
- viii. Vong Sok (Observer), Head, Environment Division, ASEAN Secretariat.

An Update and Dialogue Webinar for the Project Steering Committee (PSC) was organized on 20 April 2021, to share information on progress in implementation of the project workplan 2021, status of preparations for Mid-term review,

This was followed by a second dialogue and webinar on 14 September 2021 to update on the project progress including the Beat Plastic Pollution campaign, SoS 2021 preparation, among others.

4.2 Project Implementation Group

The Project Implementation Group was restructured, to include a new project coordinator position at P4 level, and two full time programme management officers at P3 level, supported by a full-time administration officer. This new structure was put into effect as of 25 May 2020.

The recruitment of a new P4 project coordinator position was successfully completed, and the Project Coordinator came onboard on 1st May 2021. Jerker Tamelander, COBSEA Coordinator, was the interim project coordinator from May 2020 to April 2021.

The project coordinator leads project implementation, responsible for project management including managing financial and human resources; overseeing activity implementation; monitoring and reporting; leading development of strategic partnerships; and liaison with the donor.

The P3 Markets and Plastic Value Chain programme officer is responsible for the implementation of project activities related to market transformation and moving businesses towards models in which less plastic is wasted. The position was vacated at the end of December 2020 and was filled in July 2021 using a Temporary Job Opening. The Job Opening was advertised on 8 February 2021 with a closing date of 21 February 2021. While some tasks are possible to advance

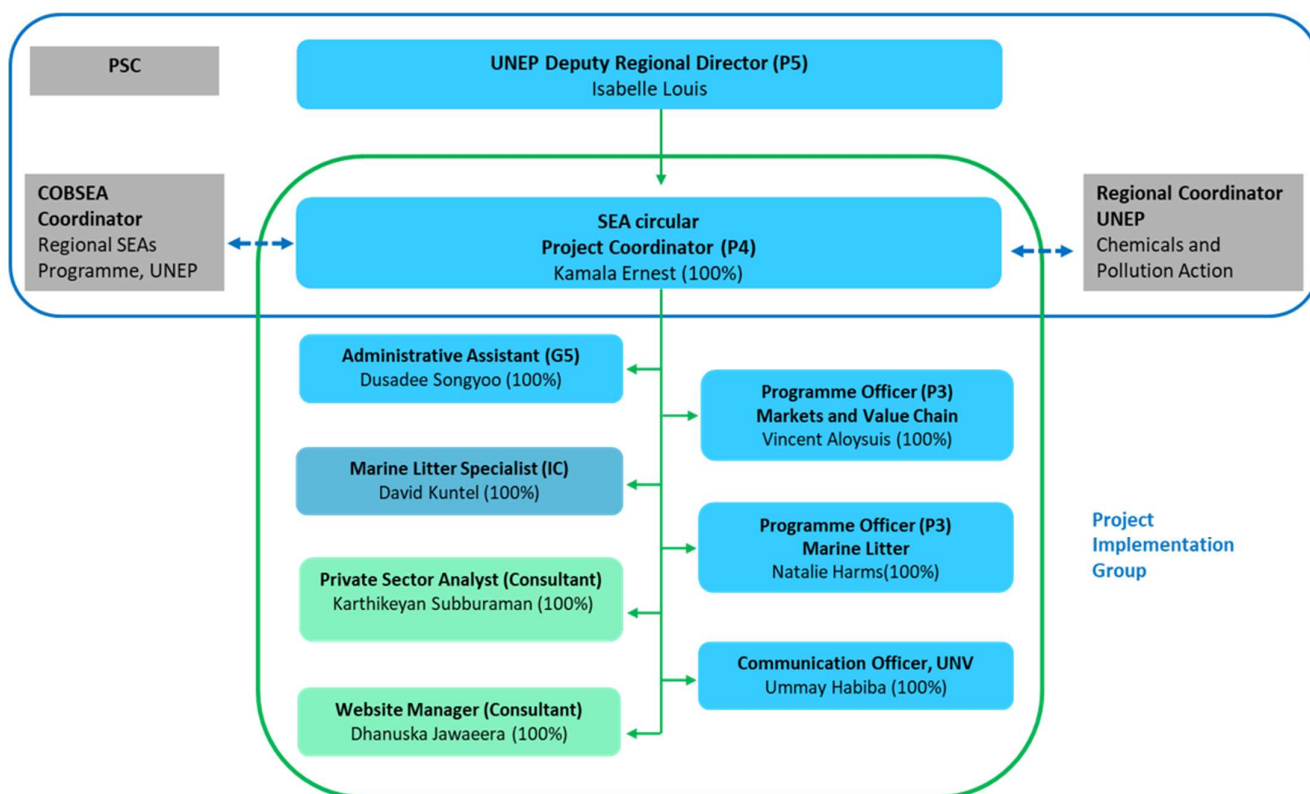
through reassignment to other members of the Project Implementation Group, this has entailed further delay to several activities, especially under output 1 of the project. A private sector Analyst position was filled by Mr. Kathik Subburaman (International consultant) to develop the knowledge products and compendium “Solutions Report” for the SEA circular project.

The P3 Marine Litter Programme Officer is responsible for the implementation of project activities related to the science basis for decision making and regionally coherent marine litter planning and has a role in the implementation of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI) including secretariat functions of the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter. Ms Natalie Harms was confirmed in this position in 2020, having previously served as COBSEA Programme officer (P2). During Ms Harms, parental leave from October 2021 to April 2022, a Marine Litter Specialist was recruited to fill in the functions of Marine Litter Programme Officer’s role related to the delivery of Output 2 and Output 4 of the project.

In addition, a dedicated Communications Officer (International UN Volunteer) was recruited to support the continuous communication and outreach needs and implementation of the project’s Communications Strategy. Ms Ummay Habiba came onboard in December 2021.

Human resources and administrative support functions were carried out by Ms Dusadee Songyee (G5).

The organogram of the project implementation group and project coordination group is shown below.



5. CHALLENGES, RISKS AND LESSONS LEARNED

5.1 COVID-19

Project responses

The immediate priority in response to the COVID-19 pandemic is to protect people by limiting the spread of the virus. Renewed COVID-19 outbreaks in the region have led to unpredictable lockdown measures and travel restrictions imposed in many project countries, requiring continued flexibility and adjustment to implementation modalities, as well as delays or postponement of activities where unavoidable.

All meetings, trainings, and events in 2021 were held virtually, using established platforms and tools, ensuring only modest impact on quality, results, and timeliness. Increasing acceptance by policy makers and other stakeholders of virtual discussion formats, including for formal and intergovernmental meetings, and close collaboration with technical partners has enabled continued consultation and knowledge sharing at national and regional level. Virtual meetings have enabled enhanced participation in many cases and have led to cost savings. However, interaction with and active engagement of stakeholders and informal discussions to advance issues, in particular with government partners, have proved more difficult in larger meeting settings. Moreover, many stakeholders seem to be experiencing virtual meeting 'fatigue.' Despite the pros and cons of the virtual meetings, going forward, travel will be considered very carefully to benefit from the new way of effective and efficient working enabled by virtual meetings, not forgetting the lower carbon footprint that can be achieved.

Alternate implementation modalities and partnerships have been developed for in-country implementation of activities without international travel to continue delivery of the project. Examples include conducting pollution hotspot assessments based on secondary data in Malaysia, applying a rapid assessment survey approach of waste leakage in selected cities in partnership with UN-Habitat, and developing hybrid training modules on marine litter monitoring.

Repurposing project activities to address COVID-19 impacts has been immediately possible in some instances, such as SEA of Solutions 2020. As for the projects in Thailand and Malaysia, execution depended on switching to conducting meetings, training, and follow-ups with participating organizations virtually. Though this posed some difficulty initially, it was managed well in time and progress of projects proceeded as planned. Field activities involved extra care towards safety and hygiene, though delays in activities were experienced due to movement restrictions as part of government pandemic controls.

Learning and experience related to project implementation in times of COVID-19 gained in 2020 were applied in 2021 and continue to apply in the 2022 workplan.

Risks and mitigation strategies going forward

The COVID-19 pandemic is expected to continue impacting project implementation in early 2022, however, travel within countries and the region is expected to be possible with some limitations. Activities will be planned to use virtual and remote means as feasible and key activities for the project that require some on-site implementation and travel that have been postponed will be implemented in 2022. The project will retain some flexibility to adjust activities and implementing modalities as needed to respond to possible renewed restrictions.

Temporary closure of office space and full time working from home modalities are currently being relaxed. Based on experience in 2020 and 2021, flexible working arrangements are unlikely to affect the Project Implementation Group and most project partners.

Only limited international travel is expected in 2022, with measures expected to ease throughout the year. Priority will be given to activities that require in-person participation, such as intergovernmental dialogues and mechanisms for decision making related to COBSEA. By applying a system-wide shift to participatory virtual meeting practices, building on lessons learned across the organization, and providing ample learning opportunities for partners in 2020 and 2021, risks associated with virtual meetings have been minimized and virtual means are considered and accepted as the 'new normal' by many project partners.

COVID-19 has had a significant effect on businesses, including in sectors targeted by the project such as recycling. This may be further exacerbated especially if recession deepens. This is likely to limit the ability of some business partners to engage in project activities, reducing their scope or causing delays. This will require agility and an adaptive approach. However, it may also bring increased opportunity to work with some key sectors on addressing COVID-19 specific waste generation and recycling challenges. SEA circular is actively collecting information such as guidelines and tools that could help business leaders make decisions on reduction of plastics despite the new hygiene and sanitation challenges brought about by the COVID-19 outbreak. Importantly, project efforts may also be further turned towards addressing systemic challenges through the COVID-19 response, contributing to building back better.

5.2 Human rights-based approach

Increasing awareness and capacity of duty bearers to implement a human rights-based approach (HRBA) to plastic pollution prevention and reduction remains challenging considering the economic and social pressures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. The crisis has exacerbated risks to disadvantaged groups from increased (hazardous) pollution, loss of jobs and income, and limited access to social and health services, and has shifted priorities of

governments and businesses to hygiene measures, with reduced emphasis on sustainable and inclusive practices, disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable. However, efforts were strengthened in 2021 to increase awareness and understanding of these risks and the importance of environmental rights, including through the SEA circular project.

Efforts to address risks exacerbated by COVID-19 and foster a HRBA include developing a toolbox on human rights and pollution and targeted training on responsible business practices (see output 1). Moreover, all project partners are vetted thoroughly in line with UNEP's safeguards and clauses have been included in all agreements and terms of reference in 2021 committing partners and consultants to implementation of a HRBA. The UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific has provided resources and trainings for staff related to HRBA and environmental rights and continues to mainstream HRBA and gender equality more effectively into project planning, management, implementation, and reporting. Effort is also made to raise awareness and sensitize the HRBA, gender equality and related issues in the HRBA training material, currently being developed by Dalhousie University as part of an SSFA in Output 1. This training material will be used to train participants from the private sector, producer responsibility organizations and various organizations in the plastic value chain supporting waste collection and recycling. The training will be tied in with EPR enablement projects in the Philippines and Indonesia specifically as well as on that will be offered to practitioners in the region. Training activities will occur before end of Q2, 2022.

5.3 Changes in the political and institutional landscape

In August 2021, the Prime Minister of Malaysia resigned after losing the parliamentary majority amid rising public discontent over the COVID-19 pandemic. However, excellent working relationships with national partners meant that no significant substantive adjustments to project activities were made. In Thailand, protests against government measures continued in 2021, however, this has not impacted project implementation. The project team will monitor how the political situation evolves to anticipate any impacts on the project and delays.

With the adoption of the ASEAN Regional Action Plan on Combatting Marine Debris in May 2021, accelerated discussions related to global response options at international level and continued focus on marine litter across a range of development partners, the risk of duplication and redundancy remains high. The project will continue to address this by working through COBSEA's formal regional mechanism where it has a mandate and comparative advantage and by strengthening coordination with the ASEAN Secretariat and its working groups. The role of a regional project coordination group originally established in 2020 is being revised to ensure it is fit for purpose. Internally, the project team continues to share activities and lessons learned with UNEP colleagues and across regional seas programmes, including through the UNEP Plastics Coordination Group and newly established task forces to address the new UNEP Programme of Work. Collaboration to integrate regional and global efforts, including through the COBSEA Regional Node and the Global Digital Platform on Marine Litter, continues through the GPML.

5.4 Internal factors

The project has faced challenges associated with long recruitment periods for UN staff and changes in the project team. However, in 2021, a full time Project Coordinator and P3 Programme Officer Markets and Plastic Value Chain have been recruited, as well as additional consultants and team support (see section 4).

To mitigate the challenges faced by the departure of the COBSEA Coordinator in April 2021, Mr. Mahesh Pradhan was instated as an interim COBSEA Coordinator with relevant experience in the region, ensuring a smooth handover.

Risks associated with the temporary departure of the Programme Officer Marine Litter in the COBSEA Secretariat for parental leave from 22 October 2021 to 31 March 2022 has been mitigated by the recruitment of an individual contractor within the SEA circular team.

6. Financial Report

A summary of financial updates is provided below for the expenditure rate, budget revisions in the following sections. Output based financial reporting and UNEP certified financial statement are also included at the bottom of Section 5.

FINANCIAL REPORT AS OF 31 DEC 2021

2021 Budget: USD1,812,672

2021 Expenditure and Commitment: USD 1,359,087 (75% of annual budget)

Cumulative Expenditure and Commitment : USD3,658,984 (57% of the total project budget)

	Budget	Expenditures	Commitment	Total Expenditures & Commitments	Balance	% Utilization
OUTPUT 1	232,000	321,697	(92,296)	229,401	2,599	99%
OUTPUT 2	309,900	75,856	206,467	282,323	27,577	91%
OUTPUT 3	195,000	103,397	(25,363)	78,033	116,967	40%
OUTPUT 4	249,400	225,678	(92,827)	132,850	116,550	53%
Project Coordination	692,100	500,330	36,359	536,689	155,411	78%
Programme Support Cost	134,272	99,790	-	99,790	19,985	
Total	1,812,672	1,326,748	32,340	1,359,087	439,088	75%

Budget

The first project budget revision for 2021 was approved on 15 June 2021. This budget revision aimed to reallocate funds to appropriate budget classes primarily to cover the Mid-Term Review consultancy contract, Marine Litter Specialist Individual Contractor contract and equipment.

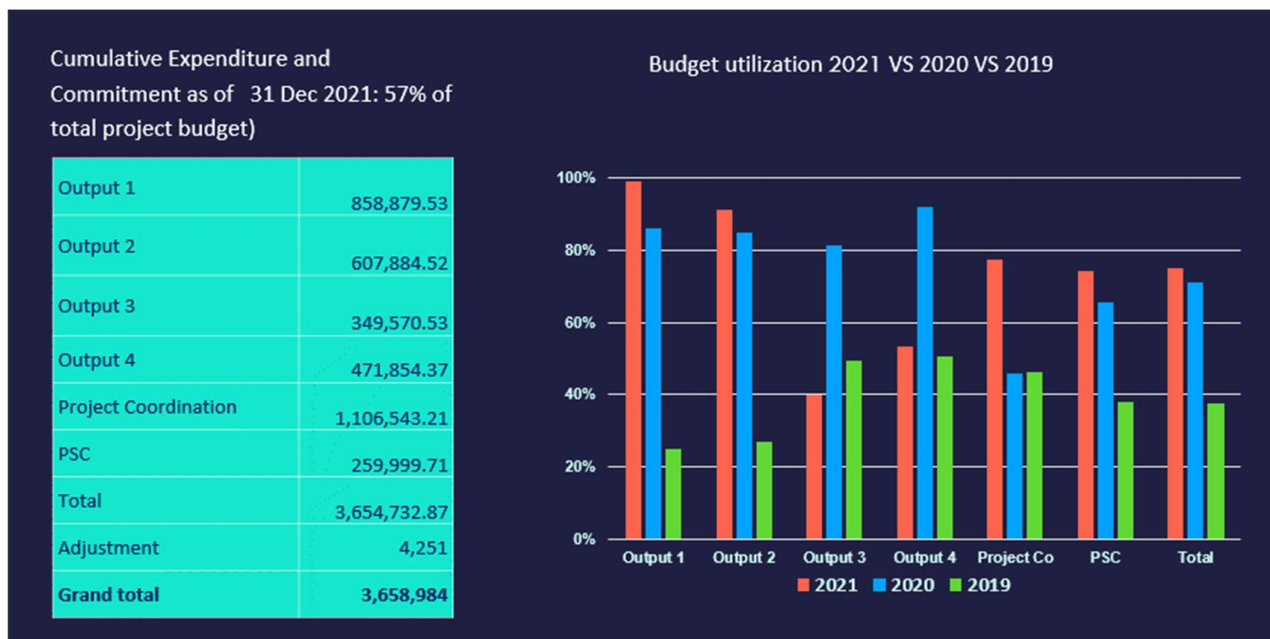


Subsequently a second project budget revision was approved on 28 October 2021. This budget revision (1) reallocated funds between budget classes due to changes in implementation modalities, arising from continued impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This included reallocating travel funding to grants and contribution; (2) reallocated funds from consultants to grants and contributions to strengthen in country technical assistance and strategic partnership for long

term sustainability; (3) changed contractual modalities for organizing SEA of Solutions 2021 by utilizing operational budget class instead of contractual service budget class.

Fund utilization

The approved annual budget for 2021 was USD 1,812,672 (28% of the total project budget). Total expenditure and commitment (funding obligated in implementation agreements and other legal instruments) from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021 amounts to USD 1,359,087 (75% of annual budget). Actual expenditure from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021 amounts to USD 1,326,748 (73% of annual budget). The cash balance as of 31 December 2021 is USD 1,612,465, this includes 4th Instalment balance and 5th Instalment (partial) amount of USD 1,322,875.27 received on 16 December 2021.



Annotations on the financial report

Staff and other personnel cost

The expenditure and commitment recorded under the budget class of Staff and other personnel accounted for USD 483,328 (91%) against the budget of USD 529,100. This includes the cost of Programme officer – Project Coordinator (P4: from May – December 2021), Programme officer – Markets and Plastic Value Chain (P3: from July – December 2021), Programme officer – Marine Litter (P3: from January – December 2021), the Administrative Assistant (G5: from January – December 2021) and Communications Officer (UNV from December 2021 – November 2022, under output 3)

Travel

The second project budget revision reallocated most travel funding to Grants & Contributions and Consultants budget classes. No expenditure and commitment under the travel budget class recorded at the end of 2021.

Consultants/Experts

Total expenditure and commitment recorded under the consultant budget line accounted for USD 99,922.74 (45%) against the budget of USD 220,000. Costs for long term consultants under this budget class include SEA of Solution 2021 Coordinator consultant, national consultants in Malaysia, private sector business analyst and short-term consultants were hired, inter alia, to support the development of the project and SEA of Solutions websites; to contribute towards organizing the SEA of Solutions event including facilitators, outreach material development.

Contractual services

Total expenditure and commitment recorded under the contractual services budget class accounted for USD 56,880 (61%) of the approved budget USD 93,130. These costs include production of outreach material for SEA of Solutions 2021 and Individual Contractor contract for Marine Litter Specialist.

Grants and contributions

Total expenditure and commitment recorded under the grants and contributions class including indirect support costs for implementing partners accounted for USD 557,655 (77%) of the approved budget USD 721,670. Six SSFAs have been signed in 2021 (Refer to Annex 3).

Operational costs

Total expenditure and commitment recorded under the operational cost class accounted for USD 59,980.79 (63%) of the approved budget USD 95,000.

Financial Report 2021: Output Based Provisional Financial Report

Reducing marine litter by addressing the management of the plastic value chain in Southeast Asia

Output based Provisional Financial report (period of 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021)

(Expressed in US dollars)

	Approved Budget	Expenditures	Commitment	Total Expenditures & Commitments	Balance	% Utilization
OUTPUT 1 - Market-based solutions towards 'less plastic wasted'						
Staff and other personnel costs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Consultants/ Experts	30,000	15,000	15,000	30,000	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contractual Services	-	30	-	30	(30)	-
Grants & Contributions (including IP indirect)	202,000	306,667	(107,296)	199,371	2,629	-
Operational Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sub-total	232,000	321,697	(92,296)	229,401	2,599	98%
OUTPUT 2 - Strengthening the scientific basis for decision-making						
Staff and other personnel costs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Consultants/ Experts	6,000	13,000	(4,000)	6,000	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contractual Services	130	130	-	130	-	-
Grants & Contributions (including IP indirect)	306,770	62,606	210,467	273,163	27,607	-
Operational Costs	-	30	-	30	(30)	-
Sub-total	309,900	75,856	206,467	282,323	27,577	91%
OUTPUT 3 - Outreach on marine litter and plastic pollution						
Staff and other personnel costs	-	2,000	53,677	55,677	(55,677)	-
Consultants/ Experts	78,000	47,000	(41,000)	6,000	72,000	-
Travel	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contractual Services	28,000	4,307	-	4,307	23,693	-
Grants & Contributions (including IP indirect)	87,000	50,000	(40,000)	9,000	77,000	-
Operational Costs	-	-	250	250	(250)	-
Equipment Vehicles and Furniture	2,000	-	1,530	1,530	470	-
Sub-total	195,000	103,307	(25,363)	78,033	116,967	40%
OUTPUT 4 - Regional networking						
Staff and other personnel costs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Consultants/ Experts	90,000	134,550	(75,000)	60,550	30,450	-
Travel	1,500	-	-	-	1,500	-
Contractual Services	30,000	18,021	1,905	20,916	9,084	-
Grants & Contributions (including IP indirect)	92,900	44,721	(19,822)	24,899	68,001	-
Operational Costs	35,000	27,466	-	27,466	7,534	-
Sub-total	249,400	225,678	(92,827)	132,850	116,530	53%
Project Coordination						
Staff and other personnel costs	529,100	427,452	-	427,452	101,648	-
Consultants/ Experts	13,000	2,008	(6,835)	(4,827)	17,827	-
Travel	16,000	-	-	-	16,000	-
Contractual Services	35,000	13,172	18,236	31,408	3,592	-
Grants & Contributions (including IP indirect)	39,000	23,827	26,307	50,224	(11,224)	-
Operational Costs	60,000	32,429	(197)	32,232	27,768	-
Supplies/Commodities/Materials	-	-	-	-	-	-
Equipment Vehicles and Furniture	-	1,442	(1,442)	-	-	-
Sub-total	692,100	500,330	36,356	536,680	155,411	78%
Programme Support Cost	134,272	90,790	-	90,790	10,985	-
Total	1,812,872	1,328,746	32,346	1,361,092	430,000	73%

Cash Status	Amount in USD
Funds Received	5,271,306
2018 Expenditure	10,000
2019 Expenditure	669,900
2020 Expenditure	1,815,736
Prior Year Adjustment	4,251
1 January - 31 December 2021	1,358,087
Cumulative Expenditure as of 31 December 2021	3,859,984
Exchange rate (USD/GBP)	141
Cash Balance	1,412,498

Certified by



Ahmed Iftikhar Khan
Administrative Officer
Asia & Pacific Office

Certified Financial Statement



1000/32CPL - TF Ctrpart Ctrs Supp Envrmt Activities
M1-32CPL-000404 - M1-32CPL-000404 Marine Litter

Donor: Group of Sponsors

Interim Certified Financial Statements for the period ending 31st December 2021

(Expressed in US dollars)

Income	as at 31.12.2020	Jan-Dec 2021	Total
Contribution received	3,948,432.27	1,322,875.27	5,271,307.54
Total Income	3,948,432.27	1,322,875.27	5,271,307.54
Expenditures			
Staff and other personnel cost	779,721.58	583,251.54	1,362,973.12
Supplies, Commodities and Materials	1,164.00	0.00	1,164.00
Equipment, Vehicles and Furniture	4,266.00	1,530.00	5,796.00
Contractual Services	66,242.48	56,880.35	123,122.83
Travel	59,865.29	0.00	59,865.29
Transfers and Grants	1,131,398.65	556,608.00	1,688,006.65
General Operating and Other Direct Costs	87,039.20	59,980.79	147,019.99
Total direct expenditures	2,129,697.20	1,258,250.68	3,387,947.88
Indirect Support Costs (United Nations) ^a	160,032.83	99,789.93	259,822.76
Indirect Support Costs (Implementing Partners)	10,166.36	1,046.71	11,213.07
Total indirect support costs	170,199.19	100,836.64	271,035.83
Total expenditures	2,299,896.39	1,359,087.32	3,658,983.71
Net excess/(shortfall) income over expenditure	1,648,535.88	(36,212.05)	1,612,323.83
Exchange rate (loss)/gain	140.69	0.01	140.70
Available Balance	1,648,676.57	(36,212.04)	1,612,464.53

^aIndirect support costs pending full batch run

Certified by:  Date: 28.02.2022
 Ahmed Khan
 Fund Management Officer
 UN Environment

Cleared by:  Date: 21.02.2022
 Yanda Andromeda
 Chief, Accounts Section, BFMS
 UNON

United Nations Office at Nairobi
 ACCOUNTS SECTION
 Budget and Financial
 Management Service

Approved by:  Date: 28.02.2022
 Kathleen Creavalle
 Head Finance Unit
 UN Environment

ANNEX 1: Project Result Framework (as of 30 April 2020)

<https://unitednations.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/UNEP-ROAP-SEA-CP/Shared%20Documents/General/Result%20Framework/Annex%202%20-%20Updated%20Results%20Framework.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=pVuurf>

ANNEX 2: Members of the Project Steering Committee (PSC)

Project Steering Committee Members			
No.	First and Last Name	Position and Organization	E-mail
1.	Isabelle Louis (Chair)	Deputy Regional Director, UN Environment Programme Asia and the Pacific, Thailand	louisi@un.org
2.	Eddy Mazuaansyah Bin Mohd Ali Murad	Under-Secretary Pollution Control Division, Ministry of Environment and Water, Malaysia	eddyms@kasa.gov.my
3.	Suwan Nanthasarut	Environmental Expert, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Thailand	snanthasarut@yahoo.com
4.	Heidi Savelli-Soderberg	Programme Officer, Marine Litter, Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML), UN Environment Programme	heidi.savelli@un.org
5.	Åsa Stenmarck	Material Flow Expert - sustainable consumption Swedish Environmental Protection Agency	asa.stenmarck@naturvardsverket.se
6.	Betty Yolanda	Asia Regional Manager Business & Human Rights Resource Centre	yolanda@business-humanrights.org
7.	Mr. Anh-Duc LUU (participating from the 4 th PSC meeting - 10 th Nov'2021)	Deputy Director - Department of Science, Technology, and International Cooperation (DSTIC), Viet Nam Administration of Seas and Islands (VASI), Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) 2021-22 Chair of the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter	luuanhduc@gmail.com, laduc2@monre.gov.vn
Observers			
No.	First and Last Name	Position and Organization	E-mail
1.	Sara Öberg Höper	First Secretary Programme specialist Environment – Human Rights Development Cooperation- Regional Asia and the Pacific Embassy of Sweden in Thailand	Sara.oberg.hoper@sida.se
2.	Vong Sok	Head, Environment Division, ASEAN Secretariat	vong.sok@asean.org
3	Mahesh Pradhan (participating from the 4 th PSC meeting - 10 th Nov'2021)	COBSEA Coordinator a.i. United Nations Environment Programme	mahesh.prahan@un.org

ANNEX 3: Implementation Agreements

No.	Partner	Status*	Agreement amount (USD)	Contribution to the project outputs
1a	National University of Singapore (NUS)	Task completed	\$42,000	Output 2, 4: Mapping of research and development of a Regional Node (non-SEA circular funding, activity co-financed)
1b	National University of Singapore (NUS)	Task completed	\$68,600	Result 1.1: Stakeholders in South-East Asia measure and report their plastic footprint Result 2.2: Decision makers and academic community in the region have access to marine litter research and data on marine litter Result 4.3: An East Asian Seas Regional Node of the GPML improves knowledge management on marine litter
2	Food Industry Asia (FIA)	1 st Survey completed	\$160,000	Output 1, 3: Business incentive and consumer awareness surveys
3	Ocean Recovery Alliance (ORA)	Task completed	\$90,000	Output 1: Plastic Disclosure Project training, Solutions Analysis on plastic avoidance and upcycling
4	Solid Waste Management Association of Thailand (SWAT)	Task completed	\$110,000	Output 1, 4: Plastic footprint reporting of 10 private companies (and 2 local governments), Solutions Analysis on improved collection, treatment and disposal of plastic waste, industry roundtables
5	Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI)	Task completed	\$43,750	Output 3: Report on gender, human rights, and economic dimensions of marine litter in the East Asian Seas
6	VNU University of Science (VNU-HUS)	Task completed	\$10,000	Output 3: 2: Consumer awareness of solutions to marine litter and plastic pollution is increased to inform decision making and behaviour change
7	Center of Excellence on Hazardous Substance Management (HSM)	Task completed	\$10,000	Output 3: 2: Consumer awareness of solutions to marine litter and plastic pollution is increased to inform decision making and behaviour change
8	Center of Excellence on Hazardous Substance Management (HSM)	Task completed	\$62,070	Result 1.1: Stakeholders in South-East Asia measure and report their plastic footprint.
9a	Fauna & Flora International (FFI)	Task completed	\$50,000	Result 2.1: Marine litter status and trends are monitored, assessed, and reported at national and regional level Result 4.1: Regionally coherent national marine litter plans, policies, regulations and/or standards to prevent and reduce plastic pollution
9b	Fauna & Flora International (FFI)	Agreement signed	\$62,060	Result 2.1: Marine litter status and trends are monitored, assessed, and reported at national and regional level

No.	Partner	Status*	Agreement amount (USD)	Contribution to the project outputs
				(technical assistance and capacity building for national monitoring) Result 4.1: Regionally coherent national marine litter plans, policies, regulations and/or standards to prevent and reduce plastic pollution (technical assistance for national marine litter planning)
10	Malaysian Green Technology and Climate Change Centre (MGTC)	Task completed	\$154,500	Result 1.3: Business incentives for plastic reduction and recycling identified and applied Result 2.1: Marine litter status and trends are monitored, assessed, and reported at national and regional level Result 3.2: Consumer awareness of solutions to marine litter and plastic pollution is increased to inform decision making and behaviour change Result 4.1: Regionally coherent national marine litter plans, policies, regulations and/or standards to prevent and reduce plastic pollution
11a	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)	Task completed	\$86,000	Result 2.1: Marine litter status and trends are monitored, assessed, and reported at national and regional level (development of Regional Guidance, capacity building on monitoring)
11b	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)	Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) signed	\$230,000	Result 2.1: Marine litter status and trends are monitored, assessed, and reported at national and regional level (technical assistance for monitoring programmes, capacity building on monitoring, national baseline assessments)
12	UN-Habitat	Agreement extended to January 2022, tasks nearing completion	\$155,000 + \$16,000	Result 1.2: Stakeholders in South-East Asia demonstrate ability to manage the plastic value chain better Result 2.1: Marine litter status and trends are monitored, assessed, and reported at national and regional level Result 4.1: Regionally coherent national marine litter plans, policies, regulations and/or standards to prevent and reduce plastic pollution (+significant additional co-financing)
13	Dalhousie University	Agreement signed	\$20,000	Result 1.1: Details of the content and deliverables of the Human Rights based training has been completed. The SSFA is expected to be signed off by end of October.
14	International Solid Waste Association (& alternative partner)	Agreement signed	\$29,580	Result 1.1: To conduct a study that will on the current development of plastic credits and neutrality accounting. In support of future harmonized standard.

No.	Partner	Status*	Agreement amount (USD)	Contribution to the project outputs
15	WWF Philippines	Agreement signed	\$75,000	Result 1.1: Cross-cutting project, with actors in the plastic value chain, to focus on activities and deliverables supporting enablement of EPR and PROs in the Philippines.
16	Indonesia Business Council for Sustainable Development	Agreement signed	\$74,791	Result 1.1: Cross-cutting project, with actors in the plastic value chain, to focus on activities and deliverables supporting enablement of EPR and PROs in Indonesia.

* As of 31 December 2021

- Task completed
- SSFA finalised / pending signature
- Agreement signed
- Partner identified

List of Partners with which the project collaborates outside formal implementation agreements

Partner	Contribution to project outputs
Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat	Output 4
COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter (WGML)	Output 2, 4
Coca Cola Foundation	Output 1
Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Philippines	Output 2, 4
East China Normal University (ECNU)	Output 2, 4
Economic Research Institute of ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA)	Output 2, 4
EPIC	Output 1
Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML)	Output 2, 3, 4
Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA)	Output 2, 4
Ministry of Environment (MOE), Indonesia	Output 2, 4
Ministry of Environment and Water (MEWA), Malaysia	Output 2, 4
National University of Singapore (NUS)	Output 2, 4
Open Universiteit	Output 3
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)	Output 1, 4
Penang Green Council	Output 1
Petaling Jaya City Council	Output 1
Phuket Hotels Association	Output 1
Pollution Control Department (PCD) - Thailand	Output 2
Public-Private Partnerships Plastics (PPP Plastics),	Output 1
Regional Capacity Center on Clean Seas (RC3S)	Output 4
Suez	Output 1
Sustainable Development Foundation (Thailand)	Output 1
Terracycle Thai Foundation	Output 1
Thai-Swedish Chamber of Commerce	Output 1
the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) – Thailand	Output 2
The Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MOEF), Indonesia	Output 2, 4
The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)	HRBA and gender equality

Partner	Contribution to project outputs
UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)	Output 3
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	HRBA and gender equality
Vietnam Administration of Seas and Islands (VASI)	Output 2, 4

ANNEX 4. SEA of Solutions 2021

Concept Note

Event Title	SEA of Solutions 2021 Hashtags: #SoS2021 #BeatPlasticPollution
Date and Format	16-18 November 2021 Virtual Event Three days of immersive sessions featuring 3 hours of plenary sessions with 5 hours of online exhibition and side-events per day
Host Government	Government of Malaysia Ministry of Environment and Water Kementerian Alam Sekitar dan Air (KASA)
Theme	<p>“Accelerating solutions to reduce plastic waste”</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic has had an immense impact on public, economic and environmental health. As the world continues to battle against it, a less visible and potentially longer-lasting threat emerges with the surge of single-use plastic across industries in response to the impacts of the pandemic.</p> <p>This year’s event will therefore focus on revitalizing action to reduce plastic waste by exploring policies, partnerships, innovative technologies, and financing that address present challenges and mitigate the potential impacts of future disruptive global events like the pandemic.</p>
Key Messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The responses to COVID-19 have resulted in increased consumption of single-use plastic products, which further burdens waste management systems and threatens life on land and life below water. The plastic waste situation is also a pandemic. · COVID-19 has far-reaching and long-lasting impacts attributed to increased production, consumption, and disposal of plastic, intensifying environmental crises such as pollution, biodiversity loss and climate change. · Innovative solutions and urgent action will be critical to enhance public and industry response to present and future pandemics and disruptive events through a sustainable and inclusive plastics economy. · Every stakeholder has a role to play – jumping in with renewed vigor and even more action on activities which were well on track before the pandemic, but which now need to be boosted even more to catch up and put a dent on the plastic waste problem.
Objectives	<p>Provide a platform for dialogue among plastic value chain stakeholders to identify best practices and local actions that inspire policymaking, markets, and consumers to enhance plastic production techniques and consumption behaviours.</p> <p>Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Discuss challenges and opportunities in implementing regional, national, and local strategies on plastic waste prevention and disposal; · Explore innovative financing mechanisms that could help accelerate a transition towards a less plastic waste future; · Feature latest digital technologies to support evidence-based decision-making approaches to combat plastic pollution; · Present tools and incentive models to support businesses and social enterprises in measuring, reporting, and reducing their plastic footprint; and · Promote consumer advocacy and outreach to beat plastic pollution.
Expected Participants	SEA of Solutions 2021 is expected to bring together over 1,000 participants representing local and national government, industry, investors, civil societies, youth, thought leaders, academia, and international organizations. The event aims to be gender balanced and inclusive, seeking involvement of youth, disadvantaged groups, and the informal sector.
Requested UNEP Participation	SEA of Solutions 2021 team would like to request for the consideration of ED/DED/RD participation during the Opening and High-Level Plenary Sessions on Day 1.

SEA of Solutions 2021

In 2021, SEA of Solutions will explore themes that address priorities in the region, highlighting the actions and innovations that are transforming the way we produce, consume, and dispose of plastic during the pandemic. Echoing the urgent call of the UN Environment Assembly, “more action, more cooperation, more finance, more ambition and more sustained commitment” is needed to tackle plastic pollution and rebuild the sectors that have been heavily impacted by COVID-19. Such outcomes which the event will target to have – specifically, the renewed commitments and solutions with clear directions on the way forward – is envisaged to contribute to addressing the triple planetary crises of pollution, nature loss and even climate change.

Objectives

With the previous SoS events having covered issues and solutions related to less plastic waste and marine litter, the 2021 event will undertake to take stock and share updates from government, business, youth, and consumers on the actions taken related to enabling policies and financing, science and market solutions and advocacy and consumer outreach for improved plastic production, consumption, and disposal practices.

SoS2021 will confirm directions as to how these responses which have been and continue to be impacted by COVID-19, can be leveraged to build back better, catalyzing a transformation towards more circular production models.

More specifically, the event will:

- Discuss challenges and opportunities in implementing regional, national, and local strategies on plastic waste prevention and disposal;
- Explore innovative financing mechanisms that could help accelerate a transition towards a less plastic waste future;
- Feature latest digital technologies to support evidence-based decision-making approaches to combat plastic pollution;
- Present tools and incentive models to support businesses and social enterprises in measuring, reporting, and reducing their plastic footprint; and
- Promote consumer advocacy and outreach to beat plastic pollution.

Theme

“Accelerating solutions to reduce plastic waste”

The event will address the impacts of responses to the pandemic on the plastic value chain’s practices. Current actions and effective solutions that already exist, however, were derailed and/or adapted due to COVID-19.

Inevitably, the pandemic has had an immense impact on public, economic and environmental health. As the world continues to battle against it, a less visible and potentially longer-lasting threat emerges with the surge of single-use plastic across industries in response to the impacts of the pandemic.

This year’s event will therefore focus on revitalizing action to reduce plastic waste by exploring policies, partnerships, innovative technologies, and financing to address present challenges and potential impacts of future disruptive global events like the pandemic.

Participation

SEA of Solutions 2021 is expected to bring together over 1,000 participants representing local and national government, industry, investors, civil societies, youth, thought leaders, academia, and international organizations. The event aims to be gender balanced and inclusive, seeking involvement of youth, disadvantaged groups, and the informal sector.

Event Design

The positive experience provided by a digital event, including lower carbon footprint, opportunity to engage a wider range of participants and speakers and flexibility for attendees in terms of time availability in attending a session can only be improved with better technology and the team's experience in using a virtual format. As some form of the prevailing measures to mitigate COVID-19 risks is likely to remain in place throughout the year, SoS2021 is best delivered as a hybrid event: virtual but planned to take advantage of any opportunities for live, in-person gatherings in the co-host country.

The underlying objective to elevate and escalate action towards less plastic wasted will be reflected in how the event is structured. To this end, there will be less thematic silos, sessions will be more cross-sectoral, with more opportunities to express and share lessons learned and ways forward. Conscious of limiting on-screen time for participants to a maximum of 3 hours per day, there will be one session in the morning, and one or two slots in the afternoon. Participant engagement and networking opportunities will be provided before, during, and after the event. This will be done through outreach using a virtual event platform that will provide access to meeting lounges and exhibition spaces.

Excellent moderation and facilitation will be a requisite so scientists, local leaders, plastic reduction and recycling experts who can be engaging and interesting will be prioritized. Other key stakeholders such as Government officials can be actively encouraged to participate and even facilitate sessions.

Sessions: A high-level opening and closing session, together with seven interlinked sessions, will form the formal programme for SoS2021. Format options will favour dialogues (moderator interviewing an expert or persons of interest), and moderated panel-audience discussions rather than traditional panel discussions and/or their webinar equivalents. Sessions will be in 60-minute time blocks, with interaction time of at least 30 where discussion options would include Q&A, polls, and other creative tools to encourage participation. A maximum total of 3 hours of virtual connection per day is targeted for the 'formal' sessions.

Lightning Talks and Technical Demos: With the main sessions deliberately designed to feature exchanges on the areas of action rather than be platform for one-way presentations, SoS2021 will have lightning talks and tech demos, or short, pre-recorded video presentations will be available on demand. These briefs/intro to key concepts, or 'pulse-checks' etc. will be useful background and supplementary materials linked to the sessions, and will be shared to help set the scene for the discussion sessions.

Exhibition Pavilion: A virtual array of curated exhibition booths from selected contributors will provide opportunities for bilateral discussions, networking and displaying of innovations and solutions that are already contributing to less plastic wasted. These online spaces will feature exhibition hosts, short films or recordings and other interactive exhibition formats.

Side Events: Events relevant to the SoS2021 theme and objectives, organized by external partners will be held at a dedicated virtual side event stage.

Meeting Lounges: Digital meeting spaces for participants and break-out discussions will be available during designated networking time slots, outside of the organized session schedules.

Programme Design

The event will highlight three days of immersive sessions together with online exhibition and side-events in-between core sessions each day. Daily themes will guide key session topics, ensuring a cohesive event narrative.

Day 1: Sustainable production and consumption

The event will commence with a High-Level Opening Session with key representatives of lead organizations (UNEP, KASA, SIDA). Deviating from conventional speech delivery, a Storyteller keynote speaker will be invited to promote a more dynamic approach to the opening ceremony and set the scene for the ensuing programme. Following the high-level keynote interventions, Malaysia's National Marine Litter Policy and Circular Economy Roadmap will be launched to underscore Co-Host Government leadership and commitment.

Proposed session topics for the first day will be as follows:

- Session 1: A new wave of eco-friendly consumer society
- Session 2: Innovations in sustainable packaging

Day 2: Enabling policies and market transformation

The second day of the event will highlight the policy implementation, business models and latest market trends that drive sector transformation through circular economy. Specifically, sessions for the second day will include:

- Session 3: Cities and urbanization towards less plastic wasted
- Session 4: Plugging plastic leakage: Enabling extended producer responsibility through Producer Responsibility Organizations
- Session 5: Business unusual for a circular plastic economy

Day 3: Financing and multilateral actions

On the third and last day, leveraging resources and partnerships will be emphasized through the following sessions:

- Session 6: Sustainable financing for a plastic-free future
- High-level dialogue: Accelerating solutions to reduce plastic waste in the region

The event will conclude with a High-Level Closing Session, which will be designed to feature engaging speakers and campaign launch to attract participant interest and involvement.

Logistics and Technical Preparation

The event will be organized from a base hub in Bangkok, where the SEA circular team will manage the virtual event. A satellite virtual venue for the host government is expected, with a physical venue for potential in-person sessions (e.g. in KL or Putrajaya, Malaysia).

A suitable virtual conferencing software package will be used, with an online event consultant/team for technical management of the platform and production support.

Content should strive towards broadcasting quality both in terms of audio-visual quality and in terms of production values: camera angles, b-roll footage, green screens, quality audio, and video etc. for example, will be aspired to, where possible. Online sessions will be streamed via HOPIN with event details also available from UNEP and SEA circular websites. All activities will be recorded, allowing for full on-demand access to event content and for broadening the reach of SoS2021.

Event Programme

Time (ICT)	Time (MYT)	16 November Tuesday	17 November Wednesday	18 November Thursday
09:30-10:00	10:30-11:00	Opening Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Opening Remarks 		
10:00-10:30	11:00-11:30	Keynote Address	Session 3 Cities and urbanization towards less plastic leakage	Session 6 Sustainable financing for a waste-free future
10:30-11:30	11:30-12:30	Launch National Marine Litter Policy and Circular Economy Roadmap of Malaysia		
11:30-13:00	12:30-14:00	<i>Break/transition to next session</i>		
13:00-14:30	14:00-15:30	Session 1 A new wave of eco-friendly consumer society	Session 4 Plugging plastic leakage: Enabling extended producer responsibility through Plastic Recycling Organizations	Distinguished Panel Dialogue Accelerating solutions to reduce plastic waste in the region
14:30-15:00	15:30-16:00	<i>Break/transition to next session</i>		
15:00-16:30	16:00-17:30	Session 2 Innovations in sustainable packaging value chain	Session 5 Circular economy for less plastic wasted	Closing Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary SoS2021 Key Message Closing Remarks

Event Flyer

Save-the-date

SEA of Solutions

"Accelerating solutions to reduce plastic waste"
16-18 November 2021
Virtual Event

For more information, contact: sea-of-solutions@un.org

Visit www.sea-circular.org for event updates

Join us as we reignite and scale actions to reduce plastic waste by exploring policies, partnerships, innovative technologies and financing that address present challenges and potential impacts of future disruptive global events

coordinated by

UN environment programme | 50 1972-2022 | COBSEA COORDINATING BODY ON THE SEAS OF EAST ASIA | SEA circular saving plastic pollution on source

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KEMENTERIAN ALAM SEKITAR DAN AIR
Ministry of Environment and Water

ANNEX 5. Key Deliverables

Publications, knowledge products (in alphabetical order)

Good practice in plastic value chain, example 1: [Education to empower](#)

Good practice in plastic value chain, example 2: [Giving Old Clothes New Life](#)

Good practice in plastic value chain, example 3: [Nature-based food packaging](#)

Good practice in plastic value chain, example 4: [Promoting sustainability throughout the food delivery value chain](#)

Pilot demonstration 1: 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) Initiatives: Solving Plastic Solution at Source in Petaling Jaya

Pilot demonstration 2: Waste Segregation at Source: Solving Plastic Pollution in Penang

[Plastics toolbox: Business, human rights, and the environment](#)

Press release and media coverage:

100 days to #BeatPlasticPollution in Media

[Thai Plastic Footprint Reduction Project identifies changes for reducing marine plastic pollution](#)

Workshops, Seminars, Roundtables, and other events (by date)

[Final Close-out meeting with Ministry of Environment and Water \(KASA\) and project partners organizations \(19 August\)](#)

A close-out meeting was held, highlighting all the project activities and success against the deliverables. The outcomes and success of demonstration sites on Penang and Petaling Jaya was captured in two detailed case studies.

[Regional webinar on inventorizing marine litter monitoring efforts \(7 October\)](#)

The webinar with CSIRO shared information on process and timelines to map existing monitoring efforts toward harmonized monitoring with contact persons in COBSEA countries.

[SWAT Roundtable on Plastic Footprint Reduction - Lessons Learned and the Way Forward \(9th September 2021\)](#)

The event was a virtual roundtable discussion, highlighting the exemplary practices, collaborations, and initiatives of organizations participating in the plastic disclosure program, led by the Solid Waste Association of Thailand, SSFA partner organization.

[SEA of Solutions partnership week on plastic pollution prevention 2020 \(24-26 November\)](#)

SOS2020 brings together governments, businesses, academia, civil society, and development partners to exchange solutions along the value chain and enabling networking, collaboration, and partnerships.

ANNEX 6: Campaign to Promote Behavioural Change Towards Single Use Plastic

"100 DAYS TO BEAT PLASTIC POLLUTION"

Concept Note for the campaign, "100 Days to #BeatPlasticPollution"

Plastic waste is choking our seas and coasts, threatening ecosystems, livelihoods, and lives in South-East Asia. Due to Covid-19, we are now fighting a plastic pandemic of new waste created from 'new norms' of plastic consumption, such as the use of single-use plastics including personal protective equipment (PPE).

South-East Asia is at the heart of this marine plastic pollution challenge. Six of the top 20 polluters of marine litter are in South-East Asia, making the region a major hotspot of plastic pollution. With single-use packaging, masks and gloves piling up on beaches and informal sector waste workers increasingly endangered, the direct impact that marine litter has on the livelihoods of disadvantaged local communities as well as the environment is clear.

Striving for cleaner seas, **less plastic wasted** and a circular economy requires fundamental change along the plastic value chain, from how we produce, to how we consume, dispose of, and recover plastic products. **Shifting from linear to circular systems** requires engagement with all parts of society – policy makers, businesses, investors, consumers, academics, **youth**, and rural communities. **Preventing plastic pollution is a human rights issue and is everyone's business.**

We hope to spark a movement led by **South-East Asian sustainability advocates** to combat the triple threat of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution that the region is facing. '**100 Days to #BeatPlasticPollution**' will mobilise **digitally-connected youth to adopt habits** that will help **turn the tide on the plastic pandemic**. [Research](#) shows that, on average, it takes 66 days for a new behaviour to become automatic. Through this campaign, people are challenged to **choose one simple habit that can be sustained for 100 days, and kept for life, to #BeatPlasticPollution.**

By raising awareness and building community around plastic marine litter across the focus countries, the intentions are:

1. To grow public and consumer demand for plastic pollution reduction;
2. To achieve mass public support for strengthening policy and fiscal incentives to reduce virgin plastic use and divert plastic from landfill; and
3. To promote a deep understanding of circular economy principles by encouraging recycling and plastic segregation at source.

Overall, the campaign will promote **behavioural change** among consumers and private sector corporations, thereby creating an enabling space for **policy development**. In particular, the campaign aims to contribute to SEA circular overall goals for less plastic wasted in South-East Asia. Through market-based solutions, focused on the plastics value chain, the campaign aims to garner support for national marine litter policies, action plans and their implementation.

Campaign Vision

The vision is for "**less plastic wasted**" to stop the flow of plastic into the ocean, which is projected to nearly triple by 2040.

Campaign Mission

The mission is to educate and build a strong community of sustainability advocates in South-East Asia who want to beat plastic pollution.

Campaign Target Audience

Digitally-connected youth who are 13-25 years old across South-East Asia – Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

Campaign Platform

In a recent study by SEA circular, [social media](#) was perceived by 88% of consumers as the most effective platform to learn more about and be encouraged to act on plastic waste issues. This is more than traditional media such as newspapers (45%) and radio (45%).

At the heart of the “**100 Days to #BeatPlasticPollution**” campaign, is a showcase on Instagram of a variety of sustainability advocates who share inspiring activities and calls to action for people in South-East Asia to join the #BeatPlasticPollution movement.

Campaign Toolkit

The sustainability advocates are supported by a digital toolkit containing four augmented reality (AR) Games, Face Effects and World Effects. These AR experiences harness the power of mobile gaming to engage the target audience and enable them to share interactive stories on social media that can be shared widely around the world.

Campaign Characters

There are seven “Polluting Plastics,” which represent seven common single-use plastics, and seven corresponding sustainable alternatives, known as “The Reusables.” The target audience is also guided through the campaign by educators known as “The Droplets”.

Campaign Home

1. The UN Environment Programme Instagram page: @unep
2. The UN Environment Programme Events page
3. The SEA circular website: <https://www.sea-circular.org/>
4. The MeshMinds Foundation Instagram page: @meshminds

Campaign Hashtag: #BeatPlasticPollution

Campaign Impact

The hope is to spark a self-sustaining viral sustainability movement led by youth and intergenerational communities online to beat plastic pollution.

Campaign Call-to-Action

Commit to adopt habits for 100 days to #BeatPlasticPollution and help turn the tide on the plastic pandemic. Join us and commit to replacing single-use plastics with reusable and sustainable alternatives. Together, we can #BeatPlasticPollution.

In addition, the target audience will also be invited to [take the Clean Seas Pledge](#) and post it on their Instagram Stories.

Campaign Timeline

The **100 Days to #BeatPlasticPollution** campaign kicks off on 1 September 2021.

Throughout the 100 days until 10 December 2021, UNEP will post twice a week on social media about the **100 Days to #BeatPlasticPollution** campaign.

For 100 days until 10 December 2021, The MeshMinds Foundation will have a “#BeatPlasticPollution blackout” and will post at least once per day on social media about the **100 Days to #BeatPlasticPollution** campaign.

Campaign Founders

“100 Days to #BeatPlasticPollution” is developed by the **SEA circular project** (an initiative of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia, (COBSEA)) and The MeshMinds Foundation, to create **region-wide awareness on plastic pollution** and **public support for policies to change plastic value chain management**.