

REGIONAL CONSULTATION ON MARINE PLASTIC RESEARCH INVENTORY

20 April 2022

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific and the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), with funding support from the Government of Sweden, are jointly implementing the project '[Reducing marine litter by addressing the management of the plastic value chain in South-East Asia](#)' (SEA circular).

SEA circular project contributes directly to achieving the [COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter \(RAP MALI\)](#) and [COBSEA Strategic Directions 2018-2022](#). One of the targeted outputs of the project is to improve data collection, compilations of research and scientific work and dissemination to targeted stakeholders and beneficiaries in the East Asian Seas.

A [searchable online catalogue of marine litter frameworks and marine litter research inventory](#) was developed by National University of Singapore (NUS) and COBSEA with support from the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML) and [launched in 2020](#). This included the publication of [a report on marine litter bodies and initiatives in the region](#).

Building on this work, the SEA circular project is continuing technical assistance to COBSEA participating countries toward strengthening the science basis for informed decision making on marine litter. Under a new partnership agreement with NUS, the catalogue of marine litter research from the region was expanded and updated to include research in languages from the region and across disciplines. The aim is to (i) support robust monitoring and assessment toward identifying marine litter status and trends and its most critical impacts, and to (ii) support the development, tracking and evaluation of policy and management interventions.

The research catalogue has been developed into a web database designed for integration into the East Asian Seas Regional Node of the GPML, for launch in 2022.

Objective of the Regional Consultation

This consultation aims to introduce the web database to participating countries and regional stakeholder to gather comments and feedback on format, content, and accessibility. The consultation will inform further development of the database, integration into the COBSEA Regional Node, and the establishment of a regional research network to address research gaps and priorities. The consultation further aims to ensure that data management and its application are in line with the [COBSEA RAP MALI](#) and [UN Environment Assembly resolutions](#) on marine litter and microplastics.

The following steps are planned to engage COBSEA countries and stakeholders:

- Activity 1 – Release of the inventory (beta version);
- Activity 2 – Regional consultation to gather feedback and comments;
- Activity 3 – Further development and updating of the research database.

Targeted participants

COBSEA marine litter focal points and country representatives responsible for marine litter and plastic pollution management in all nine COBSEA countries, as well as technical partners and stakeholders, including from research and academia and non-government organizations addressing plastic pollution in the region.

Expected Outputs

1. Public release of the online visualisation platform of the research database for consultation and feedback;
2. Improve understanding about the importance of the online visualization platform for the research database;
3. The research inventory is accessible to/integrated with other data sources and data platforms;
4. Compile comments and feedback to inform further development of the research database and its web platform.

Agenda

Date: 20 April 2022

Venue: online, MS Teams

Time (ICT)	Topic	Presenter
13:00 – 13:10	Introduction and welcome remarks	Ms. Kamala Ernest (UNEP)
13:10 – 14:00	Regional Research Inventory 2.0 of marine plastics research in the East Asian Seas	Dr. Youna Le Berre Lemaire-Lyons (NUS)
14:00 – 14:30	Inputs from COBSEA countries and stakeholders	Representatives of COBSEA countries and stakeholders
14:30 – 14:50	Discussion	Ms. Natalie Harms (COBSEA, UNEP)
14:50 – 15:00	Summary & closing	Ms. Natalie Harms (COBSEA, UNEP)