



SEA
circular
solving plastic pollution at source

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT 2023



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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------------|--|
| ADB | Asian Development Bank |
| ASEAN | Association of Southeast Asian Nations |
| CCA | Common Country Analysis |
| CF | United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework |
| COBSEA | Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia |
| COP | Conference of the Parties |
| CSIRO | Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| EPR | Extended Producer Responsibility |
| FMCG | Fast-Moving Consumer Good |
| GIZ | Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit |
| GAP | Global Action Partnership |
| GPML | Global Partnership on Marine Litter |
| HRBA | Human Rights-based Approach |
| IGM | Intergovernmental Meeting |
| INC | Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee |
| ISWA | International Solid Waste Association |
| MAREA | Malaysian Recycling Association |
| MTR | Mid-Term Review |
| NAP | National Action Plan |
| NGO | Non-governmental Organization |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| PRO | Producer Responsibility Organization |
| PSC | Project Steering Committee |
| RAP MALI | Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| Sida | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency |
| SME | Small and Medium-sized Enterprise |
| SoS | SEA of Solutions |
| SSFA | Small-scale Funding Agreement |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNCT | United Nations Country Team |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNEA | United Nations Environment Assembly |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| UN-Habitat | United Nations Human Settlements Programme |
| UNPDF | United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund |
| UNRC | United Nations Resident Coordinator |
| WGML | Working Group on Marine Litter |
| WWF | World Wide Fund for Nature |

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 2024 (including inception phase) |
| Reporting period | 1 January – 31 December 2023 |
| 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 | SEK 68 Million |
| Project impact | Less plastic is wasted, with reduced input to and impact on the marine environment as well as dependent people. |
| Project outcome | National actors adopt and implement policy measures, and consumer and private sector increase efforts to enhance the reduction in the most harmful and difficult to recycle plastics, as well as plastic reused and recycled. |
| Project outputs and results | <p>Output 1: Market-based solutions towards 'less plastic wasted'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Extension Result 1:</u> A regional Plastics Circularity guidance framework developed by bringing the learnings from the 6 countries in South-East Asia that integrate a human rights-based approach for market-based solutions, which will support stakeholders in the plastic value chain to improve the rate of collecting, sorting, and recycling as part of the EPR scheme. ○ <u>Extension Result 2:</u> Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in 4 countries (Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Viet Nam) are more knowledgeable on how to increase plastic waste collection and recycling through engagement with Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs). <p>Output 2: Strengthening the scientific basis for decision-making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Extension Result 3:</u> Implementation of the national marine litter plans and national marine litter policies of 5 countries (Cambodia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam) accelerated by training and capacity building for relevant stakeholders, informed by the guidance and knowledge products from SEA circular. <p>Output 3: Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Extension Result 4:</u> Best practices of plastics circularity inform national accelerated solutions and the International Negotiating Committee (INC) for an International Agreement to End Plastic Pollution through Southeast Asia regional dialogues and knowledge exchange platforms. ○ <u>Extension Result 5:</u> Consumer awareness of solutions to marine litter and plastic pollution is increased to inform decision making and behaviour change. <p>Output 4: Regional networking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Extension Result 6:</u> Guidelines developed for managing the plastic value chain, building upon SEA circular's solutions and recommendations for the implementation of national marine litter plans, policies, regulations, and standards in South-East Asia and the harmonization of standards and practices through ASEAN and COBSEA. ○ <u>Extension Result 7:</u> The implementation of UN Country Framework of at least 3 SEA countries (Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines) incorporates joint UN initiatives to support respective countries to accelerate solutions to end plastic waste. ○ <u>Extension Result 8:</u> The fifth SEA circular SEA of Solutions on Circularity for Ending Plastic Pollution Forum showcases innovative solutions and |

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| | strengthened strategic partnerships that have accelerated progress to end plastic pollution in South-East Asian region. |
| Synopsis | <p><i>SEA circular - solving plastic pollution at source</i></p> <p>SEA circular project aims to reduce the adverse impact of land-based plastic leakage into the marine environment by ensuring that less plastic is wasted at source and the 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 life cycle 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 governments, the private sector (e.g., producers, retailers, associations in the packaging industry, consumers, 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> |

FOREWORD

Marine plastic litter has significant and wide-ranging impacts on the environment, marine life, and human activities. The amount of plastic waste that enter the oceans every year is expected to reach 29 million metric tons by 2040¹. 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 system is weak. Following the original period 2018-2022, SEA circular has transitioned into an extension phase and significantly **contributed to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) process toward establishing an international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution.**

In 2023, the SEA circular project was implemented within the UNEP Plastic Initiative – a new delivery model of UNEP, which orchestrates all plastic-related projects under a cohesive programmatic framework. The project created synergies and leveraged resources from key partners and stakeholders of the plastic value chain to facilitate the implementation of [10 Accelerating Solutions](#) to end plastic waste. It furthered the work on enabling Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) through supporting Producer Responsibility Organizations (PRO) to engage with stakeholders in the plastic value chain to scale up collection, recycling, and reducing plastic waste. Various outreach and networking events were organized at the regional level, strengthening the scientific basis for decision making and **fostering active participation of governmental stakeholders in the INC process.**

This Annual Report presents key achievements in 2023 and the strategic leveraging of resources to scale up the project impact. It highlights the project's pivotal leadership in shaping the regional discourse on combatting plastic pollution. Additionally, the report outlines contributions to developing knowledge products on plastic pollution for governmental stakeholders, the Global Action Partnership (GAP) for EPR, the development of reuse systems, and the incorporation of a human rights-based approach alongside gender equality.

¹ The Pew Charitable Trusts & Systemiq (2020). *Breaking the plastic wave: A comprehensive assessment of pathways toward stopping ocean plastic pollution*. Retrieved from: https://www.pewtrusts.org/-/media/assets/2020/10/breakingtheplasticwave_mainreport.pdf

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

Note: Key achievements are reported against the output indicators in the results framework, which contribute to the achievement of one unified outcome - **National actors adopt and implement policy measures, and consumer and private sector increase efforts to enhance the reduction in the most harmful and difficult to recycle plastics, as well as plastic reused and recycled in the Southeast Asia (SEA) region.**

Output 1: Market-based solutions towards 'less plastic wasted'

Output Indicator 1.2 - A regional Plastic Circularity guidance framework developed for the South-East Asia region to inform the INC process.

Output Indicator 1.3 - A set of evidence-based recommendations developed for PROs to increase plastic waste collection and recycling through engagements with SMEs for Southeast Asia region.

- **1 regional report on EPR and the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) being developed** for the informal waste and recycling sector in the Asia-Pacific region to inform the INC process.
- **1 EPR Helpdesk established** under the Global Action Partnership (GAP) for EPR, complementing and scaling up SEA circular's efforts in providing technical support on EPR design and implementation to requested governments and Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs) worldwide. **Recommendations provided to inform 29+ policy measures and initiatives** taken by governments towards less plastic wasted.
- **4 EPR enabling initiatives implemented** in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam in 2023, amplifying efforts in collection, recycling, and reducing plastic waste.

Output 2: Strengthening the scientific basis for decision making

Output Indicator 2.1 - Number of training and capacity building activities for the implementation of national marine litter plans and national marine litter policies in 5 countries (Cambodia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam).

- **3 training and capacity building activities implemented** to facilitate the implementation of national marine litter plans and policies.
- **60 national focal agencies and technical partners enhanced** skills in data analysis, harmonization, and sharing through the regional workshop "Advancing Data Analysis and Data Comparability in the East Asian Seas."

Output 3: Outreach

Output Indicator 3.1 - Number of stakeholders accessing SEA circular resources and information, including through mechanisms of the GPML and UNCT in Southeast Asia region.

Output Indicator 3.2 - Number of consumers reached through awareness raising campaigns.

- **179 new stakeholders in Asia-Pacific joined** the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML).
- **28,000+ stakeholders accessed** SEA circular's website.
- **90,000+ visits** to access SEA circular's knowledge products in UNEP Document Repository (wedocs).
- **1094 policy makers, business leaders, investors, and civil society actors engaged** in regional events and workshops.
- **632% increase (5,040 mentions)** compared to 2022 in total mentions of keywords "plastic pollution and "marine litter" by social network users in South-East Asia (mainly X or formerly "Twitter").
- **2,122% increase (28,000 engagements)** compared to 2022 in total engagements across news and social media (mainly X) in South-East Asia.
- **82 knowledge products developed and disseminated** through the project website and UNEP Document Repository.
- **269 resources geotagged** to the East Asian Seas (COBSEA) Regional Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML) digital platform.

Output 4: Regional networking

Output Indicator 4.1- A set of regional guidelines for the harmonization of standards and practices for managing the plastic value chain with reference to knowledge products of SEA circular.

Output Indicator 4.2-1 - Number of joint initiatives with other UN agencies to support respective countries to accelerate solutions to reduce plastic pollution.

Output Indicator 4.2-2 - Number of stakeholders participating in Southeast Asia regional dialogues for knowledge exchange on best practices for plastics circularity.

- **1 regional study on plastic reuse schemes being conducted** to develop guidelines for establishing and implementing re-use systems for businesses in the region.
- **5 regional events and workshops** organized to build the technical and scientific capacity and enable peer-to-peer learning of stakeholders to reduce plastic pollution in the region, including towards the INC process.

SCALING UP IMPACT

UNEP Plastic Initiative

In 2023, the SEA circular project was implemented under the UNEP Plastic Initiative, which consolidates all UNEP’s plastic-related projects, activities, actions, and results into a unified programme, aiming to lead and implement a system-wide transformation towards a circular economy of plastics, with a vision to end plastic pollution by 2040. Figure 1 shows the links between SEA circular’s outputs to the outputs of UNEP Plastic Initiative. To achieve this, UNEP Plastic Initiative inspires and enables concerted actions by key stakeholders across the plastic life cycle towards four strategic goals:

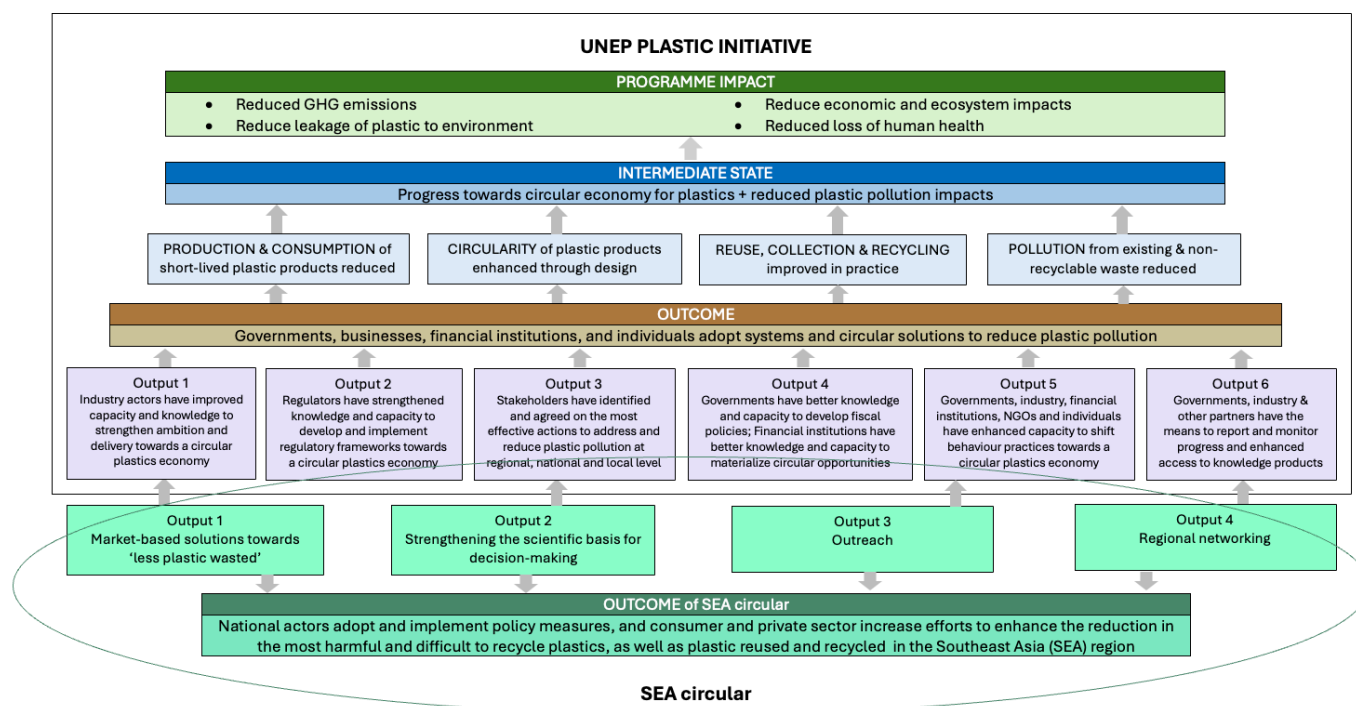


Figure 1. Alignment of SEA circular to the UNEP Plastic Initiative.

The UNEP Plastic Initiative draws expertise and executive capacity from across UNEP and external partners. The Initiative serves as a single overall point of accountability to report on progress and to mobilize additional and dedicated resources to bridge the funding gap. It coordinates the delivery of results across UNEP and enables different funding sources to co-finance each other. **Through the UNEP Plastic Initiative, SEA circular has fostered synergies and leveraged resources from global initiatives and partners**, including OECD, GIZ, ADB, World Bank, the PREVENT Waste Alliance, WWF, sectoral associations, UNDP, and the Circulate Initiative, among others.

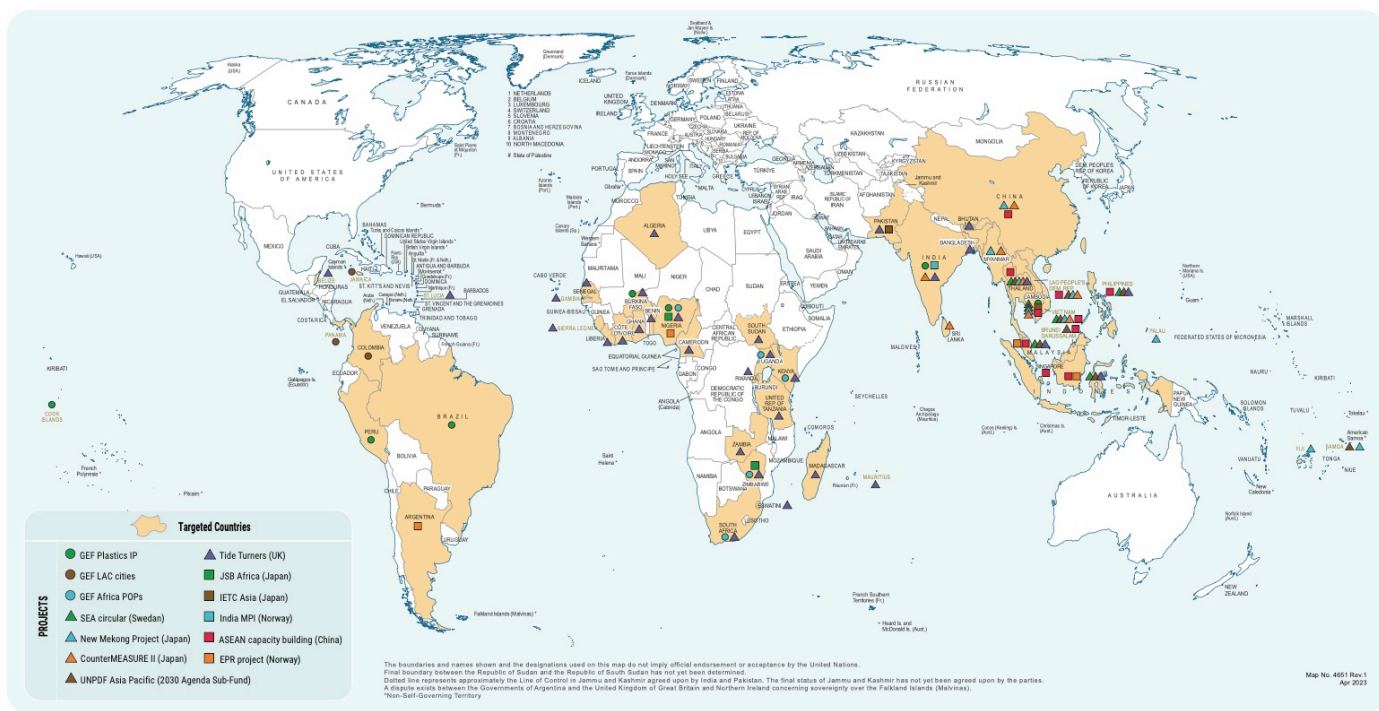


Figure 2. Mapping of plastic-related projects being implemented by UNEP (as of December 2023).

The UNEP Plastic Initiative has mobilized funding from a wide array of sources and donors, with 11 active projects being implemented by UNEP in over 24 countries, including seven projects in the Asia-Pacific region. This cohesive programmatic framework facilitates the implementation of SEA circular and ensures its sustainability. On the other hand, SEA circular has contributed, to different extents, to achieving four goals of the UNEP Plastic Initiative through providing technical support and raising awareness of stakeholders about the INC process, in collaboration with other plastic-related projects in the region. To date, SEA circular has contributed to direct and indirect co-financing and raised UNEP’s portfolio of projects on plastic pollution amounting to USD 43.2 million.

Table 1. UNEP’s plastic-related projects and target countries in Asia-Pacific.

| | SEA circular | UNPDF Asia-Pacific | Mekong River | CounterMEASURE II | MA-RE-DESIGN | GAP for EPR | GEF Integrated Program |
|-----------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Donor | Sweden | 2030 Agenda Sub-Fund | Japan | Japan | Germany | Norway, Germany | GEF |
| Brunei | | | | | | | |
| Cambodia | | | | | | | |
| India | | | | | | | |
| Indonesia | | | | | | | |
| Jordan | | | | | | | |
| Lao PDR | | | | | | | |
| Malaysia | | | | | | | |
| Pakistan | | | | | | | |
| Samoa | | | | | | | |
| Sri Lanka | | | | | | | |
| Thailand | | | | | | | |
| Pacific Islands | | | | | | | |
| Philippines | | | | | | | |
| Viet Nam | | | | | | | |

Examples of our scaling-up efforts

- GAP for EPR:** SEA circular has collaborated with GIZ, WWF, and OECD to establish the GAP for EPR under the PREVENT Waste Alliance, particularly an EPR Helpdesk which provides technical support, in the form of peer-exchanges or advisory services, to requesting governments and PROs. The project has allocated USD 25,000

through the EPR partnership between UNEP and the Norwegian Retailers' Environment Fund to support the MAREA through the EPR Helpdesk. This global initiative is poised to maintain the achieved results and magnify the project's impact over the long term.

- **Circular Solutions to Plastic Pollution Integrated Program** (i.e., GEF Integrated Program): This project was approved by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in June 2023 with a total funding of USD 107 million to tackle plastic pollution using a circular economy approach. Co-led by UNEP and WWF US, it is the largest global investment by the GEF in tackling plastic pollution to date. Fifteen countries have united behind the GEF Integrated Program to transition to a circular economy in the food and beverage sector and combat plastic pollution from single-use plastic packaging. In Asia-Pacific, the GEF Integrated Program covers Cambodia (UNEP), Cook Island (UNEP), Jordan (UNDP), Laos (WWF), and the Philippines (UNIDO). As part of the GEF Integrated Program, a national project under the SEA circular's partnership between UNEP and UNDP in Cambodia on EPR has been approved, and it is expected to start in 2025. Preparations for this project are ongoing, with technical assistance being delivered to the Ministry of Environment.
- **UNPDF Asia-Pacific:** The project "Strengthening national capacities of nine Asia-Pacific countries to address plastic pollution by developing, updating, monitoring and reporting on National Action Plans, in the context of the negotiation for a global agreement", which is funded by the United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund (UNPDF) for the period 2023-2026, is scaling up SEA circular's interventions to support ASEAN countries and Samoa in overlapping areas such as data collection and EPR. Capacity building sessions on statistical guideline on plastics will be organized for government officials, including those from National Statistics Offices. The project is currently exploring options to enhance the functionality of the Indonesia Packaging Recovery Organization (IPRO).
- **Regional knowledge sharing on plastic pollution:** Concerted efforts have been made across three projects, SEA circular, Mekong River, and CounterMEASURE II, to enhance knowledge sharing and facilitate an effective participation of governmental stakeholders in the INC process.
- **Marine Litter Prevention through Reduction, Sustainable Design and Recycling of Plastic Packaging (MA-RE-DESIGN):** Implemented by GIZ, WWF, and COBSEA, the MA-RE-DESIGN project aims at preventing plastic waste leakage through better waste management and strategies to reduce single-use plastic packaging and promote EPR in Thailand. It also facilitates knowledge exchange with other Asian countries through the UNEP's COBSEA for cohesive prevention actions. In 2023, SEA circular mobilized additional funding from MA-RE-DESIGN and a partnership with the ADB to organize a regional workshop on marine litter monitoring and data analysis during the Bangkok Plastics Week from October 9th to 12th. This also allowed participants from COBSEA countries to participate in the Global Plastics Summit organized by the Economist Impact. The Summit offered an independent, global, and progressive platform at a critical juncture in the negotiations – just before INC-3 and the first draft of the legally binding instrument.
- **Collaboration between COBSEA and CSIRO:** Through this ongoing collaboration, SEA circular has tapped further into additional resources and expertise provided by CSIRO. This includes access to survey data collected by CSIRO and COBSEA, accompanied by in-kind support that complements the funding allocated under Output 2, including in non-SEA circular countries of COBSEA.

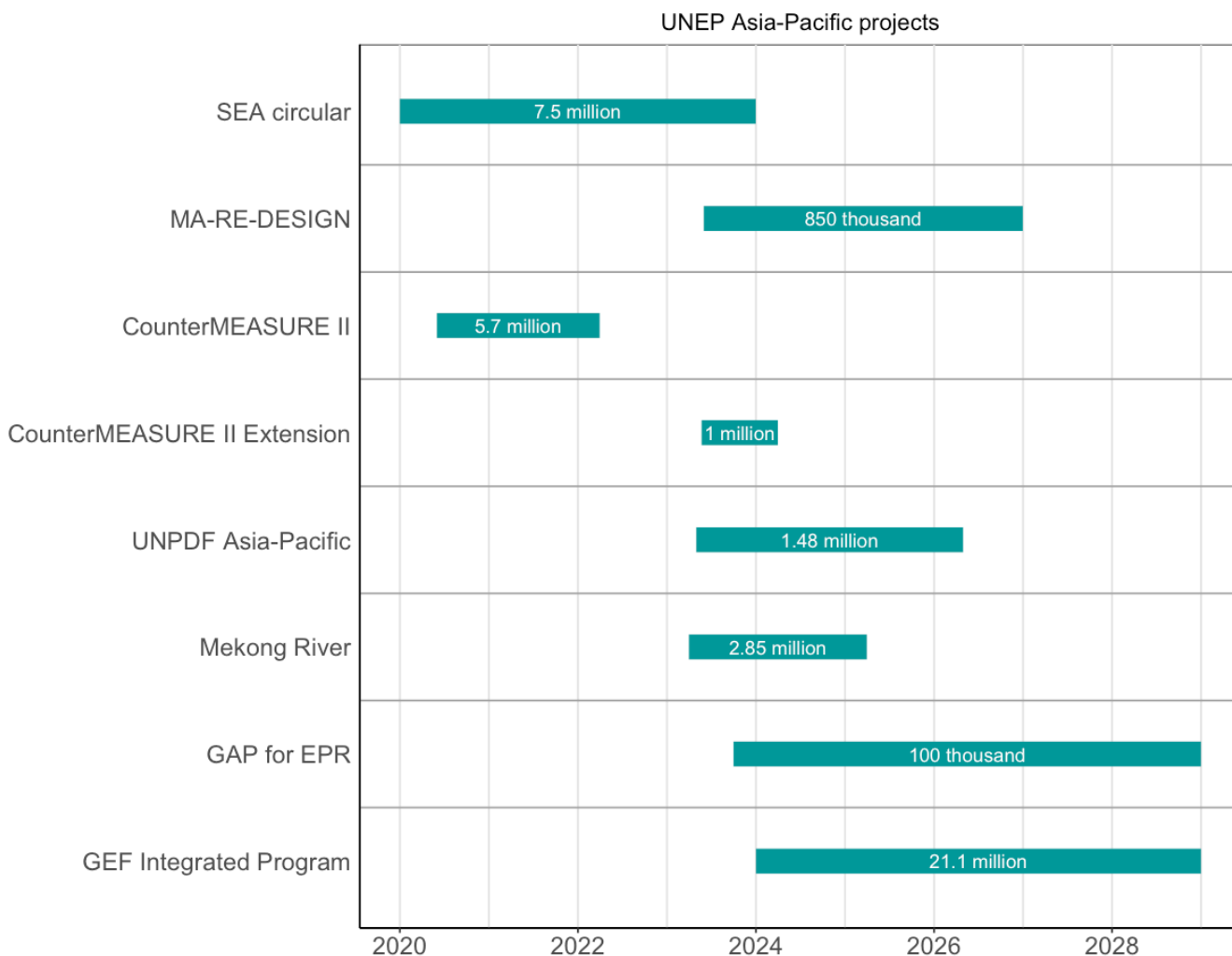


Figure 3. Timeline and budget (in US dollars) of plastic-related projects in the Asia-Pacific region.

HRBA AND GENDER EQUALITY

The SEA circular project has **integrated human rights and gender equality into its design and implementation**, making them fundamental components throughout its execution. In many South-East Asian countries, the plastic management system relies on a combination of formal and informal stakeholders. Notably, the informal sector plays a substantial role in the collection and recycling of plastic waste. Yet, this informal sector primarily comprises vulnerable groups, intensifying the human rights concerns associated with plastic pollution, especially the right to health, the right to science and information, and the rights of our future generations. **SEA circular promotes gender equality and the HRBA 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. In 2023, the project continued to mainstream the HRBA and gender equality into its activities to achieve extension results across four outputs.

Human rights were the focus of the regional report on EPR and the HRBA for the informal waste and recycling sector in the Asia-Pacific region. The inclusion and integration of the informal waste sector under EPR is a challenge, in particular for the South-East Asian region, where EPR has been under development in several countries and a just transition for the informal sector under EPR needs to be ensured. The report will facilitate the implementation of EPR through the HRBA in the region and inform the INC process. National consultations and workshops, along with a regional dialogue, have been scheduled for 2024. These initiatives aim to enhance the capacity of SEA circular countries on this topic.

SEA circular, furthermore, promotes inclusive policies, action plans, and initiatives empowering women and remote communities, based on gender-disaggregated data. This includes support for the development and implementation of national marine litter plans. Active involvement of both genders is encouraged to enhance capacity and proficiency in monitoring and data analysis, and the utilization of gender-disaggregated data and citizen science initiatives. This encouragement extends to the regional workshop held in October.

The conference "**Corporate Sustainability and Environmental Rights in Asia**," a joint initiative of UNDP and UNEP, has successfully enhanced awareness among business leaders, investors, policymakers, and civil society stakeholders about the HRBA to mitigating plastic pollution. A pivotal component of this event was the panel discussion titled "Plastic Pollution in Asia: Business models integrating a rights-based approach across the plastic value chain," facilitated by SEA circular. This session advocated for sustainable business models that integrate environmental responsibility and human rights considerations across the entire life cycle of plastics.

The training workshop "**Improving awareness about the role of women in the informal sector in the urban centers in the prevention of marine pollution from plastics**," which was held in Hanoi from October 25th to 27th, has enhanced awareness of policy makers, researchers, and private sector stakeholders about human rights and gender equality, particularly the role of women in the informal sector in the fight against plastic waste.

A series of regional networking events were conducted, emphasizing the application of the HRBA and gender equality in reducing plastic pollution, including through national action plans, policies, and regulations. Stakeholders were sensitized on human rights and gender issues along the plastic value chain, and inclusive actions were advocated.

Notably, **the implementation of UNCFs in Cambodia, Indonesia, and the Philippines incorporated joint UN initiatives that promote human rights and gender equality in combating plastic pollution**. Support is being extended to all UNRCs and UNCTs in the Asia-Pacific region to facilitate effective UN actions in addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. These initiatives will be prominent highlights at the forthcoming 5th SoS, the largest networking event in the Asia-Pacific region for the plastic value chain. Preparations for this event have already commenced.

DELIVERABLES OF 2023 WORKPLAN

In 2023, the SEA circular project was implemented across all four outputs, focusing on eight extension results which contribute to the achievement of an overall outcome – **National actors adopt and implement policy measures, and consumer and private sector increase efforts to enhance the reduction in the most harmful and difficult to recycle plastics, as well as plastic reused and recycled**. Key deliverables are summarized below.

Table 2. Key deliverables by output in 2023.

| Key deliverables in 2023 | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Output 1 | Output 2 | Output 3 | Output 4 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EPR enabling initiatives continued and expanded ▪ A regional report on EPR through the HRBA (draft) ▪ Establishment of the GAP for EPR ▪ EPR Helpdesk providing support to governments and PROs ▪ MAREA supported through the EPR Helpdesk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A regional training workshop "Advancing Data Analysis and Data Comparability in the East Asian Seas" ▪ Marine litter survey data being collected ▪ A regional assessment of marine litter status and trends being initiated | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A Resource Deck (82 knowledge products) ▪ Updates of the project website ▪ The web platform of the East Asian Seas Regional Node of the GPML ▪ 5 regional events and workshops ▪ A regional campaign to raise consumer awareness being prepared | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A study on the present landscape of plastic reuse scheme being conducted to develop guidelines for re-use schemes in Southeast Asia ▪ Preparations for a workshop to engage with UNRCs in the Asia-Pacific region ▪ A concept note for the fifth SEA of Solutions |

Note: A detailed description of the implementation against the 2023 workplan can be found in Annex 4.

REFLECTION

Opportunities and Challenges

The shift to a new delivery model in UNEP at the end of 2022, which aligns with the UNEP Plastic Initiative and under a cohesive programmatic framework, has **provided opportunities to foster synergies and leverage resources with better integration of all plastic-related projects in UNEP**, but it **also brought forth certain challenges** for the Project Implementation Group. The project's implementation faced slowdowns during the first half of 2023 due to the transition process, staff adjustments, and reorganizations.

Identifying suitable technically qualified regional partners represents another challenge, particularly for activities related to EPR through HRBA under Output 1. The originally selected partner to undertake the work on EPR and the informal sector, WWF the Philippines, was not available anymore due to staff change, which required the subsequent selection of another partner.

External factors like **elections and governmental changes across several countries posed further challenges**. Notably, the changes in some focal points of the project necessitated rebuilding relationships and trust, contributing to the project's hurdles.

Furthermore, **the sharing of plastic-related data requires improved harmonization across the region and secure platforms**. Otherwise, the utilization of regional data would be less effective.

Lessons learned

An important lesson learned from the project implementation in 2023 is to **plan for organizational and staff changes**. It also requires further outreach efforts to foster synergies and leverage resources across partners and projects.

Working with government agencies also requires **building good relationships with a range of stakeholders and different line ministries and departments** and going beyond the focal persons of COBSEA. Especially, the work on market-based solutions under Output 1 requires a deeper collaboration with the private sector – recyclers, PROs, government departments mandated for EPR, and informal sector and civil society organizations. National level coordination with a range of ministries would be key in addressing the full lifecycle of plastics. The project has enabled multi-stakeholders engagements between state and non-state actors to bridge the gap in initiating and/or implementing EPR in Indonesia, the Philippines, Cambodia and Viet Nam.

The identification of regional partners for collaborations on EPR through HRBA could be facilitated by establishing a set of clear criteria, including but not limited to expertise, regional experience, capacities to conduct regional activities, financial and human resources. Moreover, **organizational level discussions could help leverage the whole network of certain partners in the region**, compared with bilateral discussions with the partners' individual branches in the region.

The project has contributed to strengthening the COBSEA regional mechanism, including establishing the Regional Node web platform and facilitating Regional Guidance on Harmonized National Marine Litter Monitoring Programmes, harmonized data collection, and capacity building. This lays the **foundation for evidence-based decision making and progress tracking at national, regional and global level** for long term sustainability and to promote data sharing and transparency.

Strategic partnerships are crucial for coordinating collective efforts, ensuring complementarity, and avoiding duplications. By supporting countries in a harmonized manner, such partnerships can create a more significant impact.

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 this section.

Table 3. A summary of financial updates.

| FINANCIAL REPORT AS OF 31 December 2023 | | | | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| 2023 Budget: USD 1,441,800 | | | | | | |
| 2023 Expenditure and Commitment: USD 706,781 | | | | | | |
| 2023 Budget Utilization: 49% | | | | | | |
| | Budget | Expenditures | Commitment | Total Expenditures & Commitment | Balance | % Utilization |
| Output 1 | 249,000 | 351,074 | (215,220) | 135,854 | 113,146 | 55% |
| Output 2 | 111,000 | 331,532 | (306,394) | 25,139 | 85,861 | 23% |
| Output 3 | 197,661 | 92,267 | 2,487 | 94,754 | 102,907 | 48% |
| Output 4 | 172,500 | 89,419 | (51,749) | 37,669 | 134,831 | 22% |
| Project coordination | 604,839 | 362,303 | (1,789) | 360,514 | 244,325 | 60% |
| Programme Support Cost (PSC) | 106,800 | 52,851 | | 52,851 | 53,949 | |
| Total | 1,441,800 | 1,279,446 | 572,665 | 706,781 | 735,019 | 49% |

Figure 4 provides a graphic presentation of the project budget and expenditures from 2018 to 2023.

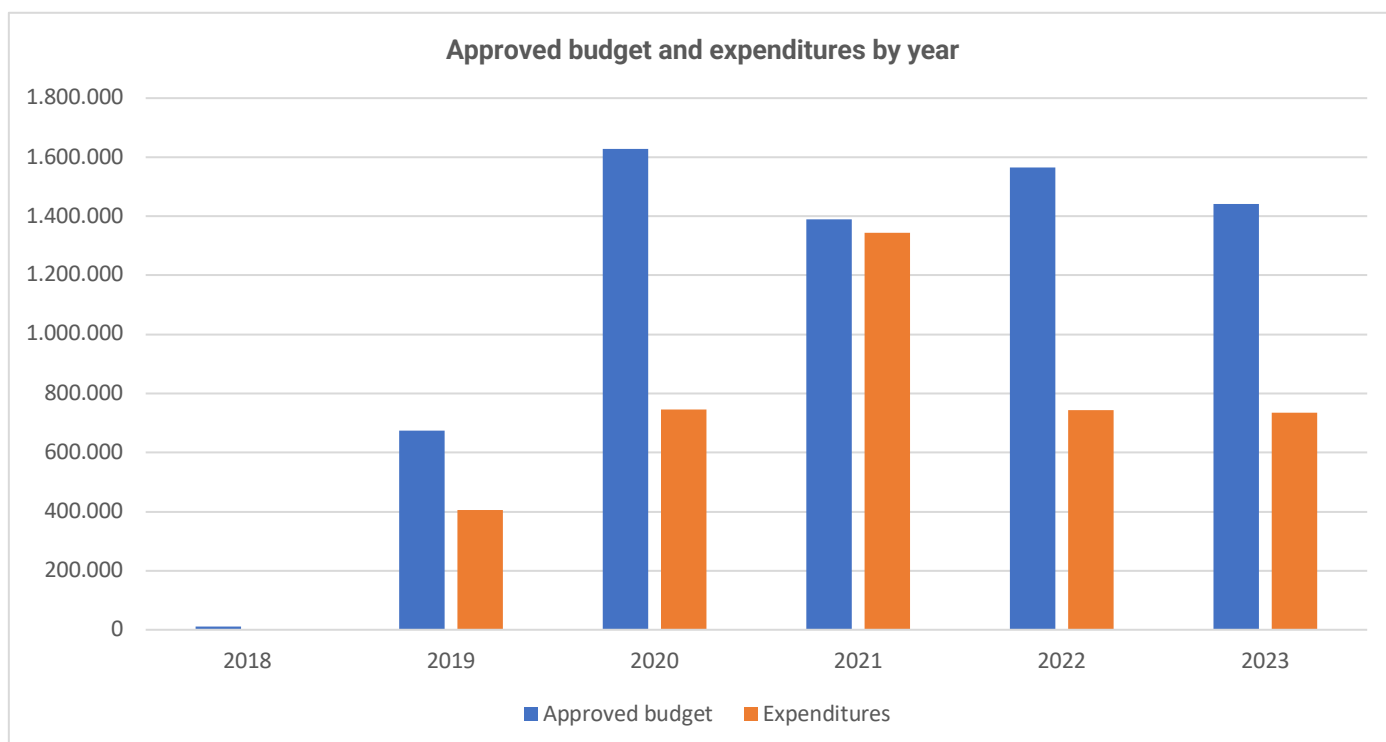


Figure 4. Project budget and expenditures over the years.

2023 Budget

The total approved budget for the extension of SEA circular from 2023 to 2024 is USD 2,346,141, including USD 1,441,800 for 2023 and USD 904,342 for 2024. The 2023 budget is composed of the project implementation (USD 730,161), project coordination (USD 604,839), and UN Programme Support (PSC) at 8% (USD 106,800).

Fund utilization

In 2023, the approved budget was USD 1,441,800. Total expenditure and commitments, covering funds obligated for partnership agreements and other legal instruments, reached USD 706,781, which represents 49% of the approved budget. As of December 31, 2023, the cash balance stood at USD 1,174,664.

The project implementation and coordination costs were underspent because many activities were planned for a two-year period 2023-2024, with 2023 focusing on preparatory work, and engagement with relevant partners for scaling up the work extension phase results, especially for output 1. Furthermore, the project underwent a transition to the new delivery model which also required some staff adjustments, and reorganizations.

Annotations on the financial report

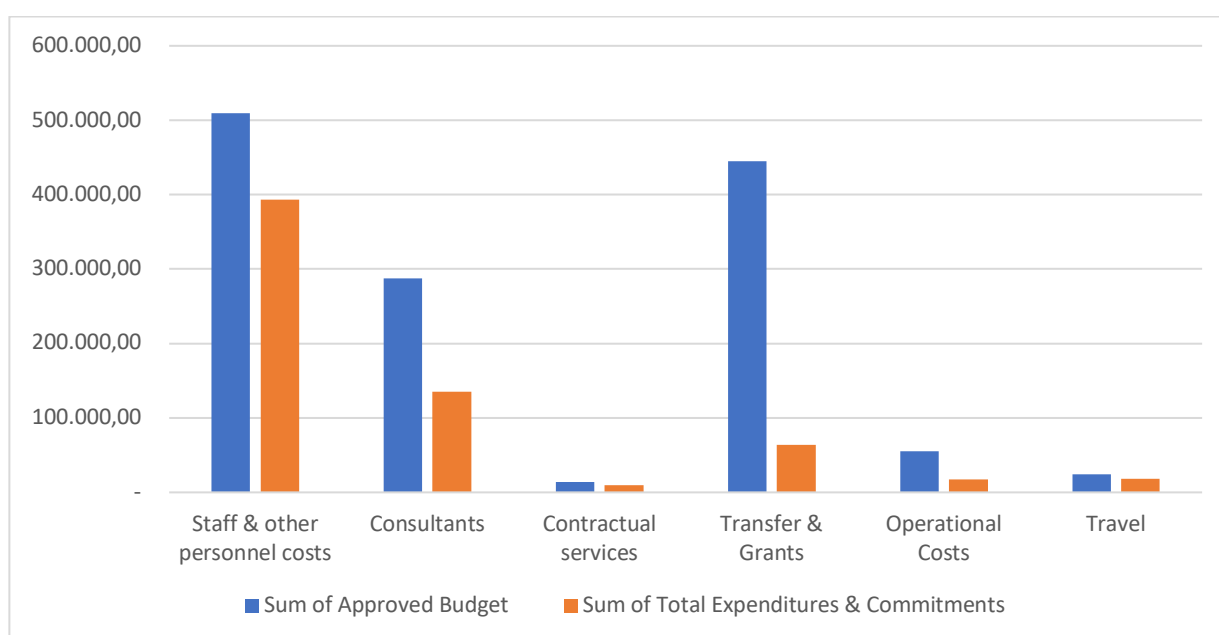


Figure 5. Sum of approved budget and sum of total expenditures and commitments for each budget heading.

Staff and other personnel cost

Expenditures and commitments under "Staff and other personnel costs" amounted to USD 393,414, representing 77% of the budget of USD 509,653. This encompasses the expenses related to one Project Coordinator at the P4 level (full time), two Programme Management Officers at the P3 level (part-time technical support), one Programme Officer at the P2 level (part-time technical support) and one Communications Specialist at UN Volunteer level.

Consultants/Experts

Expenditures and commitments under "Consultants and experts" accounted for USD 152,352, representing 53% of the approved budget of USD 287,500. This is because the project leveraged existing expertise within UNEP, such as a graphic designer and EPR expert, without needing to commit funds for most of 2023. As a result, the utilization of the approved budget for consultancy was reduced. Short-term consultants were hired as follows:

- Expert in EPR and plastic project development to support EPR work and conduct an assessment on reuse schemes.
- Data Analyst Consultant to produce technical deliverables (annual report, synthesis report for scaling up SEA circular in the region) and results-based monitoring for the project.
- Website Manager Consultant to manage the SEA circular website.

Contractual services

Expenditures and commitments under contractual services used as (i) modality for hiring an individual contractor for administrative support, (ii) translation services for marine litter handbook, (iii) procurement of meeting venue for Bangkok Plastic Summit, and (iv) webhosting services amounted to USD 9,347. This represents 67% of the approved budget of USD 13,960.

Grants and contributions²

Expenditures and commitments under "Grants and contributions," inclusive of indirect support costs for implementing partners, totalled USD 63,520, being 14% of the approved budget of USD 444,701. These funds were allocated for the Small-Scale Funding Agreement (SSFA) with the University of Law at Viet Nam's National University in 2023.

In addition, the project team undertook preparatory work for new partnerships on EPR under output 1 and Re-use schemes under output 4. Most of the work in 2023 focused on partnership building and scoping studies which was covered using resources of the UNEP Plastic Initiative. Under output 2, partnership agreement was meant to be continued with CSIRO as the implementing partner for COBSEA to develop a regional assessment and conduct training on marine litter monitoring. The partnership agreement was formalized in February 2024 after fulfilling the closure obligations of the previous agreement between CSIRO and UNEP.

Under Output 3, the management and coordination for developing a campaign (Public Service Announcement) for behavioural change and mobilizing public support of policies in addressing plastic pollution are being handled by the corporate communication team at UNEP Headquarters. This ensures consistency in key messaging on plastics. This is an internal cooperation between UNEP divisions. SEA circular funds for the campaign were mobilized in January 2024.

Operational costs

Expenditures and commitments under "Operational costs" totalled USD 17,023, comprising 31% of the approved budget of USD 55,186.

Travel

Expenditures and commitments under "Travel" totalled USD 18,271, representing 76% of the approved budget of USD 24,000. The travel budget was used for staff travel to beneficiary countries, particularly Viet Nam, as well as for travels related to strategic meetings of UNEP Plastic Initiative and Corporate Communications discussions on addressing plastic pollution and to the INC-3. Additionally, it covered travel expenses and daily subsistence allowances for project beneficiaries from selected Southeast Asia countries to Bangkok to attend the Bangkok Plastic Summit and the training session on data comparability and assessments.

Progress in the first quarter of 2024 against the 2023 workplan

Based on the groundwork laid in 2023, the project was able to further programme up to USD 307,760 by February 2024 increasing the 2023 budget utilization to 70%. Details of these pipeline activities are shown in the table below, while progress on expenditures and planned commitments for 2024 will be presented in detail during the annual donor review meeting with Sida.

Table 4. A summary of financial updates.

| No | Commitments as of March 2024 | USD | Corresponding Outputs |
|--------------|---|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | SSFA with WWF Germany - Regional Guidance on EPR and Informal sector (<i>using grants and contributions budget line</i>) | 99,860 | Output 1 |
| 2 | SSFA with CSIRO - COBSEA Regional Assessment on Marine Litter Monitoring (<i>using grants and contributions budget line</i>) | 99,900 | Output 2 |
| 3 | Campaign to promote consumer support to plastic pollution policies. (<i>using contract services, consultancy and travel budget lines</i>) | 108,000 | Output 3 |
| TOTAL | | 307,760 | |

Financial Report 2023: Output-based Provisional Financial Report

² See section table on expenditure and commitments on Grants and Contributions in the first quarter of 2024.

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

Output based Provisional Financial report (period of 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023)

(Expressed in US dollars)

| | Approved Budget | Actual Expenditures | Commitment | Total Expenditures & Commitments | Balance | % Utilization |
|--|------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| OUTPUT 1 : Market-based solutions towards "less plastic wasted" | | | | | | |
| Staff and other personnel costs | | | | | | |
| Consultants/ Experts | 80,000 | | 65,000 | 65,000 | 15,000 | |
| Travel | 9,000 | 6,695 | | 6,695 | 2,305 | |
| Contractual Services | | 3,500 | | 3,500 | (3,500) | |
| Grants & Contributions (Including IP Indirect) | 160,000 | 340,880 | (280,220) | 60,660 | 99,340 | |
| Operational Costs | | | | - | - | |
| Sub-total | 249,000 | 351,074 | (215,220) | 135,854 | 113,146 | 55% |
| OUTPUT 2 - Strengthening the scientific basis for decision-making | | | | | | |
| Staff and other personnel costs | | 30,227 | | 30,227 | (30,227) | |
| Consultants/ Experts | | | | - | - | |
| Travel | | (2,400) | | (2,400) | 2,400 | |
| Contractual Services | | 7,349 | (7,197) | 153 | (153) | |
| Grants & Contributions (Including IP Indirect) | 111,000 | 296,311 | (299,197) | (2,886) | 113,886 | |
| Operational Costs | | 45 | | 45 | (45) | |
| Sub-total | 111,000 | 331,532 | (306,394) | 25,139 | 85,861 | 23% |
| OUTPUT 3 - Outreach on marine litter and plastic pollution | | | | | | |
| Staff and other personnel costs | | 24,109 | | 24,109 | (24,109) | |
| Consultants/ Experts | 95,000 | 31,610 | 32,597 | 64,207 | 30,793 | |
| Travel | | | | - | - | |
| Contractual Services | 3,960 | 6,229 | (6,229) | - | 3,960 | |
| Grants & Contributions (Including IP Indirect) | 98,701 | 30,319 | (23,881) | 6,438 | 92,263 | |
| Operational Costs | | | | - | - | |
| Equipment Vehicles and Furniture | | | | - | - | |
| Sub-total | 197,661 | 92,267 | 2,487 | 94,754 | 102,907 | 48% |
| OUTPUT 4 - Regional networking | | | | | | |
| Staff and other personnel costs | | | | | | |
| Consultants/ Experts | 77,500 | 18,443 | 4,546 | 22,990 | 54,510 | |
| Travel | 10,000 | 12,559 | | 12,559 | (2,559) | |
| Contractual Services | 10,000 | 1,521 | 74 | 1,595 | 8,405 | |
| Grants & Contributions (Including IP Indirect) | 75,000 | 56,494 | (57,185) | (691) | 75,691 | |
| Operational Costs | | 402 | 815 | 1,217 | (1,217) | |
| Sub-total | 172,500 | 89,419 | (51,749) | 37,669 | 134,831 | 22% |
| Project Coordination | | | | | | |
| Staff and other personnel costs | 509,653 | 335,867 | 3,211 | 339,078 | 170,575 | |
| Consultants/ Experts | 35,000 | 5,155 | (5,000) | 155 | 34,845 | |
| Travel | 5,000 | 1,418 | | 1,418 | 3,582 | |
| Contractual Services | | 4,100 | | 4,100 | (4,100) | |
| Grants & Contributions (Including IP Indirect) | | | | - | - | |
| Operational Costs | 55,186 | 15,762 | | 15,762 | 39,424 | |
| Supplies Commodities Materials | | | | - | - | |
| Equipment Vehicles and Furniture | | | | - | - | |
| Sub-total | 604,839 | 362,303 | (1,789) | 360,514 | 244,325 | 60% |
| Programme Support Cost | 106,800 | 52,851 | | 52,851 | 53,949 | |
| Total | 1,441,800 | 1,279,446 | (572,665) | 706,781 | 735,019 | 49% |

Certified by



Ahmed Iftikhar Khan

Administrative Officer

Industry and Economy Division

| Cash Status | Amount in USD |
|---|---------------|
| Funds Received | 6,819,088 |
| 2018 Expenditure | 10,000 |
| 2019 Expenditure | 869,908 |
| 2020 Expenditure | 1,815,738 |
| 2021 Expenditure | 1,389,687 |
| 2022 Expenditure | 1,077,210 |
| Prior Year Adjustment | (5,244) |
| 2023 1 Jan - 31 December Expenditure | 706,781 |
| Cumulative Expenditure as of 31 December 2023 | 5,443,480 |
| Exchange Rate (Base Value) | (944) |
| Cash Balance | 1,174,664 |



1000/32CPL - TF Ctrpart Ctrs Supp Envrmt Activities

M1-32CPL-000404 - M1-32CPL-000404 Marine Litter

Donor: 1111000157 - PM OF SWEDEN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Interim Certified Financial Statements for the period ended 31 December 2023

(Expressed in US dollars)

| Income | Cumulative to 31 December 2022 | For the period from 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023 | | | Cumulative to 31 December 2023 |
|---|---|--|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Contributions received | 5,982,695.63 | | | 636,392.69 | 6,619,088.32 |
| Total Income | 5,982,695.63 | | | 636,392.69 | 6,619,088.32 |
| Expenditures | Total Expenditures & Commitments | Expenditures | Outstanding Commitments | Total Expenditures & Commitments | Total Expenditures & Commitments |
| Staff and other personnel cost | 2,072,175.18 | 445,412.21 | 100,354.30 | 545,766.51 | 2,617,941.69 |
| Supplies, Commodities and Materials | 1,164.00 | - | - | - | 1,164.00 |
| Equipment, Vehicles and Furniture | 5,796.00 | - | - | - | 5,796.00 |
| Contractual Services | 187,941.40 | 22,699.28 | (13,351.47) | 9,347.81 | 197,289.21 |
| Travel | 111,878.52 | 18,271.90 | - | 18,271.90 | 130,150.42 |
| Transfers and Grants | 1,848,665.32 | 698,018.32 | (634,001.34) | 64,016.98 | 1,912,682.30 |
| General Operating and Other Direct Costs | 158,211.97 | 16,208.82 | 815.05 | 17,023.87 | 175,235.84 |
| Total direct expenditures | 4,385,832.39 | 1,200,610.53 | (546,183.46) | 654,427.07 | 5,040,259.46 |
| Indirect Support Costs (United Nations) ^{1/} | 332,387.24 | 84,215.08 | (31,364.04) | 52,851.04 | 385,238.28 |
| Indirect Support Costs (Implementing Partners) | 18,479.35 | 11,833.76 | (12,330.64) | (496.88) | 17,982.47 |
| Total indirect support costs | 350,866.59 | 96,048.84 | (43,694.68) | 52,354.16 | 403,220.75 |
| Total expenditures | 4,736,698.98 | 1,296,659.37 | (589,878.14) | 706,781.23 | 5,443,480.21 |
| Net excess/(shortfall) income over expenditure | 1,245,996.65 | - | - | (70,388.54) | 1,175,608.11 |
| Exchange rate (loss)/gain | (248.95) | - | - | (694.77) | (943.72) |
| Available Balance | 1,245,747.70 | - | - | (71,083.31) | 1,174,664.39 |

^{1/} Indirect Support Costs (United Nations) has been manually adjusted in lieu of pending full PSC batch run.

Certified by: Ahmed Khan Date: 14 Feb 2024
 Ahmed Khan
 Fund Management Officer
 United Nations Environment Programme

Cleared by: Miriam Kizito Date: 13 Feb 2024
 Miriam Kizito
 Chief, Financial Reporting Unit
 BFMS, UNON
 United Nations Office at Nairobi
 ACCOUNTS SECTION
 Budget and Financial
 Management Service

Approved by: Onesmus Tuitong'O Date: 19.02.2024
 Onesmus Tuitong'O
 Chief, Financial Management Services
 United Nations Environment Programme

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Implementation of 2023 workplan and planning of 2024

Legend ■ Completed ■ Ongoing ■ Planned

| Activity | Gantt chart 2023-2024 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | 2023 | | | | | | | | | | | | 2024 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| Activity 1.2.1 Produce a report on EPR and human right-based approach for the informal waste sector in Southeast Asian Region | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 1.2.2 Conduct consultation meetings with representatives of ASEAN member states and relevant agencies to offer the draft regional plastic circularity guidance to be considered for adoption. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 1.3.1 Conduct situational analysis on the development of PROs in the SEA region to understand the current level of achievement of waste collection and recycling, including recommendations to engage with SMEs, to increase plastic waste collection and recycling. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 1.3.2 Conduct regional dialogues alongside capacity building activities to discuss the research findings (1.3.1) and recommendations to facilitate in the direction of increasing the success of PRO programs and encouraging SME participation. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 2.1.1 Conduct a regional training to further harmonize monitoring methods and strengthen capacity on monitoring and data analysis to inform decision making. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 2.1.2 Conduct and expand marine litter surveys to build harmonized national monitoring programmes. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 2.1.3 Conduct a regional assessment of marine litter status and trends, building on national monitoring data. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 3.1.1 Develop communications products for sharing knowledge and learnings from the project in meetings, events, and other communications channels. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 3.1.2 Engage relevant stakeholders from Southeast Asia, incl. government partners, private sector, CSOs, media, through regional dialogues and knowledge exchange platforms. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 3.2.1 Conduct a regional campaign to increase consumer awareness of solutions to marine litter and plastic pollution to inform decision-making and facilitate behaviour change. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 3.2.2 Conduct an online survey on the effectiveness of the campaign to measure changes in consumer intention and behaviour or appropriate modalities to measure impact. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 4.1.1 Conduct a study and gap analysis on areas that can be aligned for a regional harmonized approach and develop a set of guidelines for the harmonization of standards and practices for the managing the plastic value chain - with a focus on re-use schemes and regional capacity building on the findings. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 4.2.1 Engage with UNCTs and national partners to incorporate joint UN initiatives to accelerate solutions to reduce plastic pollution into UN Country Frameworks. Briefing sessions with RCs and Senior Economists. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Output 1: Market-based solutions towards 'less plastic wasted'

Besides activities to achieve the Extension Results in 2023, EPR enablement projects have been continued and expanded since 2022, further engaging with stakeholders in the plastic value chain, especially SMEs, in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam to scale up collection, recycling, and reducing plastic waste. This contributes to extending the accomplishments of the initial phase 2018-2022, particularly under Output 1.

Extension Result 1: A regional Plastics Circularity guidance framework developed by bringing the learnings from the 6 countries in South-East Asia that integrate a human rights-based approach for market-based solutions, which will support stakeholders in the plastic value chain to improve the rate of collecting, sorting, and recycling as part of the EPR scheme.

SEA circular has been working on developing a regional report on EPR and the HRBA for the informal waste and recycling sector in the Asia-Pacific region. Extensive consultations with key partners, including the International Alliance of Waste Pickers, UN-Habitat, and the PREVENT Waste Alliance, have been conducted to facilitate its development. The project also actively contributed to the establishment of the GAP for EPR, a collaborative effort launched under the umbrella of the PREVENT Waste Alliance by OECD, GIZ, and WWF. Looking ahead, the project aims to further collaborate with the GAP for EPR to support the development of EPR in countries across the region.

In the 2024 workplan, activities under Output 1 will be merged to more effectively tackle the inclusion and integration of the informal waste sector within EPR – an aspect deemed crucial in the discussion of the INC negotiation, especially in the South-East Asian region. Through this merger, the development of the regional report on EPR through HRBA will be succeeded by regional dialogues and consultations to disseminate the report’s findings and to enhance the capacity of relevant stakeholders.

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Activity 1.2.1: | Deliverables | Progress (December 2023) |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------------|

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Produce a draft regional Plastics Circularity guidance framework integrating the human rights-based approach for market-based solutions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A regional report on EPR through HRBA to inform the INC process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing |
| Narrative | | |
| The focus of this activity has been adjusted to better address the needs of the region. In lieu of a regional plastic circularity guidance framework, a regional report on EPR through HRBA is being crafted, building upon lessons learned from selected SEA circular countries and the region. The report integrates the HRBA to EPR, aiming to support stakeholders to ensure a just and inclusive transition for informal waste pickers. Key takeaways of the report will be presented in INC-5 to facilitate the INC process. | | |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Activity 1.2.2: | Deliverables | Progress (December 2023) |
| Conduct consultation meetings with representatives of ASEAN member states and relevant agencies to offer the draft regional plastic circularity guidance to be considered for adoption. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation meetings and regional capacity building | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiated |
| Narrative | | |
| The draft outline of the report has been shared with the International Alliance of Waste Pickers, UN-Habitat, and the PREVENT Waste Alliance for their insights and feedback. In 2024, SEA circular plans to convene national consultation sessions and workshops with relevant stakeholders from SEA circular countries to finalize the report and disseminate its key findings. | | |

Extension Result 2: Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in 4 countries (Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Viet Nam) are more knowledgeable on how to increase plastic waste collection and recycling through engagement with Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs).

SEA circular has contributed to the establishment of the GAP for EPR under the PREVENT Waste Alliance, particularly an EPR Helpdesk which delivers technical assistance on formulating and executing EPR frameworks to governments and PROs. The GAP for EPR provides a one-stop-shop for EPR, including a comprehensive library of internationally relevant knowledge on EPR, an international community to sharing knowledge and expertise, and an EPR Helpdesk. The EPR Helpdesk extended its initial support to MAREA, focusing on enhancing the knowledge of SMEs on how to increase plastic waste collection and recycling. SMEs and PROs are set to participate in the scheduled national consultations and regional capacity-building workshop. The discussions will focus on enhancing waste collection and recycling through EPR systems. By consistently offering long-term, customized technical assistant aligned with local needs, this initiative has surpassed the mere development of evidence-based recommendations for PROs in the South-East Asian region as set out in the 2023 workplan.

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Activity 1.3.1: | Deliverables | Progress (December 2023) |
| Conduct situational analysis on the development of PROs in the SEA region to understand the current level of achievement of waste collection and recycling, including recommendations to engage with SMEs, to increase plastic waste collection and recycling. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support provided to PROs in SEA circular countries through an EPR Helpdesk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing |
| Narrative | | |
| Following consultations with key partners about the situation of PROs in the South-East Asian region, an EPR Helpdesk was established under the GAP for EPR with SEA circular's contributions. The EPR Helpdesk aims to provide technical assistance to governments and PROs on the development and implementation of EPR schemes. MAREA is the first PRO in the region that has received support from the EPR Helpdesk. Through MAREA, SMEs will enhance knowledge about plastic waste collection and recycling. | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Activity 1.3.2: | Deliverables | Progress (December 2023) |
| Conduct regional dialogues alongside capacity building activities to discuss the research findings (1.3.1) and recommendations to facilitate in the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A regional dialogue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiated |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| direction of increasing the success of PRO programs and encouraging SME participation. | | |
| Narrative | | |
| A regional capacity-building activity involving SMEs and PROs is scheduled for 2024 to facilitate discussions on enhancing waste collection and recycling via EPR systems. Additionally, it will disseminate the key finding and recommendations from the regional report on EPR through HRBA. | | |

Output 2: Strengthening the scientific basis for decision making

Extension Result 3: Implementation of the national marine litter plans and national marine litter policies of 5 countries (Cambodia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam) accelerated by training and capacity building for relevant stakeholders, informed by the guidance and knowledge products from SEA circular.

In 2023, the SEA circular project continued its collaboration with technical partners, such as CSIRO, across the region. This collaboration aimed to bolster the capacity of government agencies and other relevant stakeholders in effectively monitoring and addressing marine litter based on robust and comparable evidence. An initial training was provided on analyzing survey data to inform and evaluate the effectiveness of national marine litter policies and interventions, and to identify more detailed capacity building needs. Data from harmonized surveys across COBSEA countries will provide the basis for the upcoming COBSEA regional assessment of mismanaged plastic planned for 2024. This collaboration and capacity building activities hold significant importance at the national level and toward implementation of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI), as well as the ongoing INC process for an international instrument on plastic pollution. The overall objective of activities under this Output is to enhance capacity and foster ownership at both national and regional levels for continuous harmonized monitoring through COBSEA mechanisms beyond the life of the project. In the extension phase, SEA circular aims to bring together target countries and other COBSEA countries with existing monitoring capacities to facilitate peer-to-peer learning and further harmonize efforts for comparable and transparent data at the regional level. This directly contributes to the output indicator: ‘Number of training and capacity building activities for the implementation of national marine litter plans and policies in 5 countries (Cambodia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam).’ Specific activities being implemented under Extension Result 3, their deliverables, and progress are described below.

| Activity 2.1.1: | Deliverables | Progress (December 2023) |
|--|--|---|
| Conduct a regional training to further harmonize monitoring methods and strengthen capacity on monitoring and data analysis to inform decision making. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 regional training workshop | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed |
| Narrative | | |
| <p>Aligned with the Regional Guidance, the COBSEA Secretariat continues its collaboration with CSIRO and national technical partners to build capacity on marine litter monitoring methods and approaches, bolstering efforts toward establishing robust monitoring programmes and conducting national baseline assessments. Following national training sessions and a regional training of trainers in 2022, a regional workshop on “Advancing Data Analysis and Data Comparability in the East Asian Seas” was convened on 9 October 2023, in Bangkok, Thailand, as part of Bangkok Plastics Week organized by COBSEA and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). With support from SEA circular and the MA-RE-DESIGN project, the workshop outlined steps for data analysis and strengthened understanding of harmonized monitoring methods. Participants expressed the need for an additional in-depth in-person regional training on data analysis in 2024 to enhance proficiency in applying data analysis techniques and assessing the effectiveness of marine litter policies and interventions. The workshop was attended actively by around 60 participants, including representatives from nine COBSEA participating countries, with Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, and Viet Nam joining in-person and China and Republic of Korea joining virtually. The summary of the regional workshop report and the key takeaways report of Bangkok Plastics Week are available online. An agreement with CSIRO is in progress to conduct this training, alongside provisions for refresher trainings on monitoring methods, as necessary. Furthermore, supplementary training materials on data analysis are in development to complement the handbook and videos created in 2022.</p> | | |



| Activity 2.1.2: | Deliverables | Progress (December 2023) |
|--|---|---|
| Conduct and expand marine litter surveys to build harmonized national monitoring programmes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Marine litter survey data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing |
| Narrative | | |
| <p>This activity builds on efforts in 2021 and 2022 and is planned as a continuous effort during 2023 and 2024 in the respective annual workplans. The first part of the Twenty-fifth Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM 25) of COBSEA in 2021 adopted the Regional Guidance on Harmonized National Marine Litter Monitoring Programmes to guide national efforts. Subsequently, in 2022, COBSEA collaborated with CSIRO to conduct preliminary national surveys in Cambodia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam. These surveys were conducted in cooperation with national technical partners and COBSEA focal agencies. Additional surveys will be conducted in 2024 where needed to build robust national baselines. COBSEA is coordinating with CSIRO beyond the SEA circular project to expand the harmonized dataset to all COBSEA countries, to inform the regional assessment in 2024 (see Activity 2.1.3). COBSEA is encouraging greater data transparency and confidence of countries to make survey findings, which are currently informing national decision making, available publicly. However, the organization acknowledges the sensitivity of national data and the importance of country ownership of data, which sets the monitoring efforts of COBSEA apart from other existing ad hoc data collection conducted by some development partners. Concerns of data sensitivity in the region are linked to the widely used narrative of international publications that identifies countries in the region as major contributors to plastic pollution based on limited scientific evidence. The planned regional assessment will ground truth these limited resources (see below).</p> | | |

| Activity 2.1.3: | Deliverables | Progress (December 2023) |
|---|--|---|
| Conduct a regional assessment of marine litter status and trends, building on national monitoring data. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regional assessment report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initiated |
| Narrative | | |
| <p>This activity was commenced in late 2022 and is planned for completion in 2024 in line with the respective annual workplans. A plan for developing a regional assessment was presented during the fourth meeting of the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter (WGML) in October 2022 in Hanoi, Viet Nam. This regional assessment was subsequently incorporated into the biennial workplan for executing the RAP MALI 2023-2024, formally adopted by IGM 25. COBSEA has sustained its collaboration with CSIRO to develop the regional assessment, building upon national survey data in all COBSEA countries. The assessment will be based on on-the-ground evidence of mismanaged plastic in the environment, to ground truth existing claims related to plastic pollution in the region and</p> | | |

to provide a comparable evidence base for coordinated action to prevent and address plastic pollution in the East Asian Seas. Countries may choose to conduct further regional assessments in future and this effort will lay the foundation for informed reporting against national targets, the RAP MALI, and an anticipated global agreement on plastic pollution. The assessment will be completed by 2024, as set out in the project workplan. It will be developed in collaboration with all COBSEA countries through the WGML and be presented to IGM 26 planned in October 2024 for intergovernmental endorsement.

Output 3: Outreach

Extension Result 4: Best practices of plastics circularity inform national accelerated solutions and the International Negotiations Committee (INC) for an International Agreement to End Plastic Pollution through Southeast Asia regional dialogues and knowledge exchange platforms.

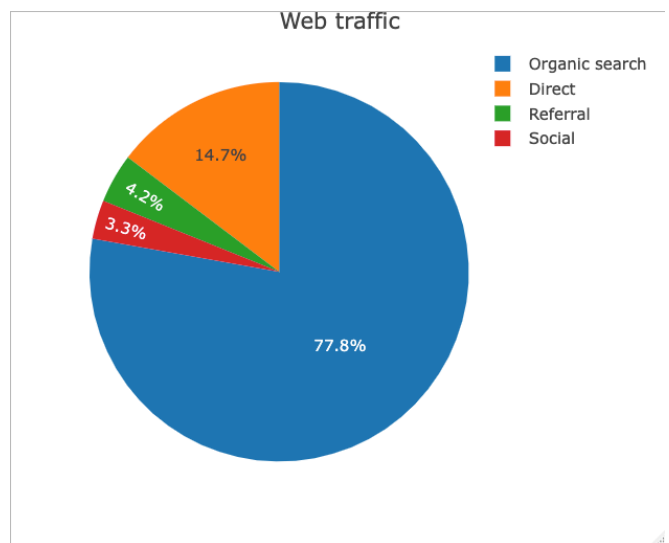
With various communications and knowledge products, SEA circular has disseminated best practices of plastics circularity among COBSEA countries through regional dialogues and knowledge exchange platforms to inform the implementation of 10 Accelerating Solutions to end plastic pollution and facilitate active participation in the INC process. Further details about the specific products developed and engagements with stakeholders are outlined below.

| Activity 3.1.1: | Deliverables | Progress (December 2023) |
|--|---|---|
| Develop communications products for sharing knowledge and learnings from the project in meetings, events, and other communications channels. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Resource Deck (incl. 18 research/assessment reports, 23 case studies, 21 tools/manuals, 6 project country profiles, 14 videos) Updates of the project website The web platform of the East Asian Seas Regional Node of the GPML | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed |

Narrative







A comprehensive [resource deck](#) has been curated, encompassing an array of knowledge products and solutions to combat plastic pollution in the region. To enhance the prominence of the resource deck products, SEA circular has featured them on the GPML platform for increased visibility.

The project website was frequently updated with web-stories, newsletters, videos, image galleries, publications, banners and links to social media channels. The 'resource' section was completely overhauled to act as a publication repository. In 2023, over 28,000 users visited the project website among which 77% found the website through organic searches. Over 61% of the total users are returning visitors, while more than 38% of visitors are new to the website. The demographic assessment shows that we have over 67% female visitors, while 32% are male among the total visitors, and most of the visitors are based in Asia (49%). Additionally, more than 52% of the total user are aged 18-24 years old. Compared to 2021 and 2022, there was a notable increase in website traffic by 10%, averaging around 2600 session per month, accompanied by a 15% surge in page views. The domain and hosting have been secured until September 2024, ensuring continued accessibility and functionality.



The project also provided support to the development of a [web platform](#) of the East Asian Seas Regional Node of the GPML. This knowledge platform was launched in November 2022 and is linked to the Global Digital Platform of GPML. The platform serves as a repository for data, including resources and knowledge products from SEA circular and other initiatives and partners. The Regional Node is currently managed by the COBSEA Secretariat, and longer-

term hosting arrangements will be considered by IGM 26 in October 2024. Discussions are ongoing between the COBSEA Secretariat and development partners such as the World Bank to coordinate existing web platforms to avoid duplication. Building on previous efforts under SEA circular, COBSEA is developing the Regional Node and its web platform further in a phased approach and exploring evolution of the Regional Research Database and Research Network in collaboration with knowledge partners in the region.

| MARINE LITTER POLICY AND MANAGEMENT | MARINE LITTER SCIENCE | MARINE LITTER CAPACITY-BUILDING |
|--|--|--|
|  <p>KNOWLEDGE LIBRARY National & regional policies and initiatives</p> <p>EXPLORE ></p> |  <p>RESEARCH DATABASE Data sets on plastic pollution and marine litter</p> <p>EXPLORE ></p> |  <p>LEARNING CENTRE Learning and capacity-building resources</p> <p>EXPLORE ></p> |
|  <p>CASE STUDIES A map of good practices</p> <p>EXPLORE ></p> |  <p>RESEARCH NETWORK Directory of organizations</p> <p>EXPLORE ></p> |  <p>EVENTS Upcoming sector events</p> <p>EXPLORE ></p> |

| Activity 3.1.2: | Deliverables | Progress (December 2023) |
|---|---|---|
| Engage relevant stakeholders from South-East Asia, including government partners, private sector, CSOs, media, through regional dialogues and knowledge exchange platforms. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 regional events and workshops | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed |

Narrative

Following the creation of communications and knowledge products, SEA circular has organized and contributed to a multitude of events and dialogues spanning the region. These gatherings convened experts, industry leaders, academics, advocates, and young individuals, all committed to exploring inventive solutions and championing a sustainable future.

One of the notable events was the training workshop **“Improving awareness about the role of women in the informal sector in the prevention of marine pollution from plastics,”** which took place in Hanoi from 25-27 October. The workshop enhanced knowledge of policy makers, researchers, PROs, and private sector stakeholders about the vital role that women assume in addressing marine pollution, especially through plastic waste management. The workshop was organized based on a Small-scale Funding Agreement (SSFA) signed between UNEP and the University of Law, Viet Nam National University with the goal of supporting the implementation of Viet Nam’s National Action Plan on Management of Plastic Waste in the Ocean until 2030.



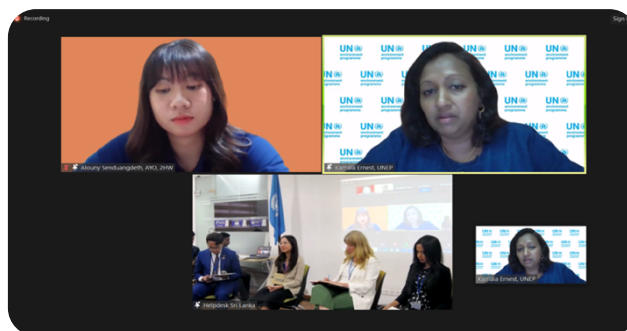
Another significant event was the Regional Workshop on Marine Litter Monitoring, themed **“Advancing Data Analysis and Data Comparability in the East Asian Seas,”** held on 9 October in Bangkok by UNEP and COBSEA, in partnership with CSIRO, and with support from the SEA circular and MA-RE-DESIGN projects. This workshop significantly contributed to advancing data analysis and data comparability in the East Asian Seas. Approximately 60 participants from nine COBSEA countries advanced their skills in data management, analysis, harmonization, and sharing, highlighting the region’s commitment to combating marine litter. (See Output 2)



The **“Corporate Sustainability and Environmental Rights in Asia”** conference convened on 5 October in Bangkok, which was jointly hosted by UNEP and UNDP. The conference featured an important panel discussion, titled **“Plastic Pollution in Asia: Business Models Integrating a Rights-Based Approach.”** The discussion brought together experts, industry leaders, scholars and advocated to address plastic pollution in the Asia-Pacific region. Participants emphasized the importance of sustainable business models that integrate environmental responsibility and human rights principles across the plastic value chain. The event aimed to promote dialogues, sharing best practices, and develop policy recommendations to combat plastic pollution while upholding human rights, contributing to the global conversation on environmental sustainability and human rights protection.



The **“Asia Pacific Youth Environment Forum 2023,”** conducted on 1 October, played a pivotal role in engaging the SEA circular project in the fight against plastic pollution. Held at the UN Compound in Sri Lanka and virtually, this event spotlighted the escalating global plastic waste crisis, with an emphasis on South Asia. It served as a platform for dialogues encompassing policy initiatives, youth viewpoints, and the urgent requirement for global cooperation to address plastic pollution. The forum resonated the essentiality of collective action as the cornerstone for shaping a sustainable future.

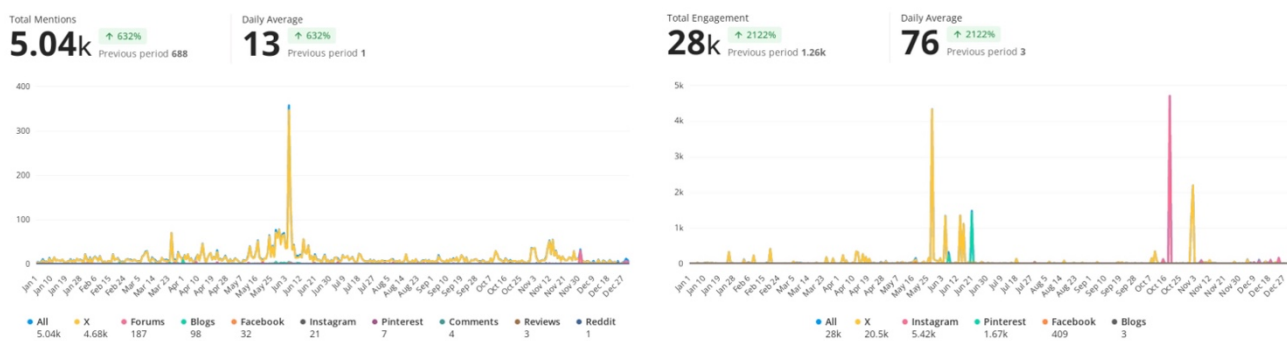


Furthermore, the **“Plastics Circularity Investment Webinar,”** held on 24 May, and organized by the SEA circular project in collaboration with the Circulate Initiative, delved into the investment landscape within Southeast Asia. The region had long confronted the challenges of plastic pollution due to rapid urbanization and under-resourced waste management infrastructure. The webinar showcased the proactive measures taken by countries like Indonesia, Thailand, and Viet Nam. These measures, encapsulated within national action plans and circular economy roadmaps, encompass initiatives such as EPR schemes, plastic bag taxes, and product restrictions, aiming to combat the pervasive issue of plastic pollution.



The series of events and workshops in 2023 collectively showcased the unwavering determination and collaborative synergy among diverse stakeholders in Asia to combat plastic pollution, protect the environment, and uphold human rights. All these endeavors are geared towards fostering a more sustainable future, one that is free from the detrimental impact of plastic waste.

Compared to 2022, there was a spike in the number of mentions of keywords “plastic pollution” and “marine litter” (5,040 mentions, or 632% increase) by social network users and the number of engagements (28,000 engagements, or 2,122% increase) in related content across news and social media (mainly X or formerly “Twitter”) in South-East Asia after INC-2 and INC-3 (Source: Meltwater).



Extension Result 5: Consumer awareness of solutions to marine litter and plastic pollution is increased to inform decision making and behaviour change.

Consumers and other stakeholders in the plastic value chain increased awareness about marine plastic litter through various outreach activities implemented by SEA circular.

| Activity 3.2.1: | Deliverables | Progress (December 2023) |
|--|---|---|
| Conduct a regional campaign to increase consumer awareness of solutions to marine litter and plastic pollution to inform decision-making and facilitate behaviour change. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A regional campaign | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiated |
| Narrative | | |
| A regional campaign building upon the campaign 100 days to #Beatplasticpollution will be implemented in 2024. Initial ideas have been discussed with the Communications Division of UNEP. | | |

| Activity 3.2.2: | Deliverables | Progress (December 2023) |
|--|---|---|
| Conduct an online survey on the effectiveness of the campaign to measure changes in consumer intention and behaviour. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A survey report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiated |
| Narrative | | |
| An online consumer survey will be implemented in 2024. Ongoing preparations for this initiative are in progress in collaboration with EB Impact. | | |

Output 4: Regional networking

Extension Result 6: Guidelines developed for managing the plastic value chain, building upon SEA circular's solutions and recommendations for the implementation of national marine litter plans, policies, regulations, and standards in South-East Asia and the harmonization of standards and practices through ASEAN and COBSEA.

| Activity 4.1.1: | Deliverables | Progress (December 2023) |
|---|---|---|
| Conduct a study and gap analysis on areas that can be aligned for a regional harmonized approach and develop a set of guidelines for the harmonization of standards and practices for managing the plastic value chain. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A set of guidelines | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing |
| Narrative | | |
| <p>The project is conducting a comprehensive study on the present landscape of plastic reuse schemes and gleaning insights into reuse systems globally. To facilitate this, a consultant has been engaged to review the literature and conduct interviews with startups, experts, FMCG (Fast-Moving Consumer Good) companies, and leading venture capital firms. The study aims to provide an overview of key stakeholders involved in reuse across geographical areas, highlighting challenges and opportunities in scaling up reuse solutions, as well as delineating key trends in reuse development. The study outcomes are intended to provide UNEP with critical insights into its reuse portfolio under the UNEP Plastic Initiative. Specifically, it aims to illuminate how UNEP can effectively address barriers hindering the scaling of reuse solutions and carve out a distinctive role of UNEP compared to other stakeholders. Additionally, the study will aid in shaping reuse strategies and solutions in countries within the Mekong River basin. The study is slated to yield a set of guidelines designed to assist businesses in establishing and implementing reuse schemes. These guidelines are expected to be developed and disseminated in 2024.</p> | | |

Extension Result 7: The implementation of UN Country Framework of at least 3 SEA countries (Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines) incorporates joint UN initiatives to support respective countries to accelerate solutions to end plastic waste.

| Activity 4.2.1: | Deliverables | Progress (December 2023) |
|--|---|---|
| Engage with UNCTs and national partners to incorporate joint UN initiatives to accelerate solutions to reduce plastic pollution into UN Country Frameworks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A joint initiative with UNDP in Cambodia A workshop engaging UNRCs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing |
| Narrative | | |
| <p>Under the GEF Integrated Program, a joint initiative between UNEP and UNDP in Cambodia has been approved, and technical assistance is being delivered to the Ministry of Environment, including background analyses, identifying existing barriers, proposing activities, and preparing annexes. The project is expected to start in 2025.</p> <p>In collaboration with the Development Coordination Office, UNEP is organizing the workshop “Plastic Pollution in Asia Pacific: Engaging the RC System for Effective UN Action,” on February 15, 2024. The workshop aims to raise the awareness of RCs about the global fight against plastic pollution, particularly the INC process. It provides a platform for sharing and discussing global and regional outlooks, exchanging experiences at the country level and identifying good practices in addressing plastic pollution that can guide the planning for future UN actions.</p> | | |

Extension Result 8: The 5th SEA circular SEA of Solutions on Circularity for Ending Plastic Pollution Forum showcases innovative solutions and strengthened strategic partnerships that have accelerated progress to end plastic pollution in South-East Asian region.

| Activity 4.2.2 | Deliverables | Progress (December 2023) |
|---|--|---|
| Organize the fifth regional SoS forum in line with the international negotiations for a global plastic agreement, in coordination with regional partners as relevant. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A concept note for the event | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiated |
| Narrative | | |
| <p>The fifth SoS will tentatively be organized in Bangkok, Thailand, from 18-19 September, 2024. Preparations for this event have been initiated.</p> | | |

Annex 2: Project governance

Project Steering Committee

As of September 2023, the composition of the PSC is as follows:

- i. Marlene Nilsson (Chair), Deputy Regional Director at UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.
- ii. AnnaMaria Oltrop, Head of Development Cooperation – Asia and the Pacific, Embassy of Sweden in Thailand
- iii. Djaheezah Subratty, Head of the Consumption and Production Unit, Industry and Economy Division, UNEP.
- iv. Heidi Savelli-Soderberg, Chief of the Source to Sea Pollution Unit, Marine and Freshwater Branch, UNEP.
- v. Mahesh Pradhan, COBSEA Coordinator.
- vi. Åsa Stenmarck, Material Flow Expert - sustainable consumption, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency.
- vii. Eddy Mazuaansyah Mohd Ali Murad, Under Secretary, Pollution Control Division of the Ministry of Environment and Water, Malaysia.
- viii. Suwan Nanthasarut, Advisor to the Director General of the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR), Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Thailand.
- ix. Mr. Anh-Duc LUU, Deputy Director of the Department of Science, Technology and International Cooperation, Viet Nam Administration of Seas and Islands (VASI), Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE), Viet Nam.
- x. Betty Yolanda, Asia Regional Manager, Business and Human Rights Resource Centre.
- xi. Sara Öberg Höper (Observer), First Secretary, Programme specialist Environment and Climate Change, Development Cooperation – Regional Asia and the Pacific, Embassy of Sweden in Thailand.
- xii. Vong Sok (Observer), Head, Environment Division, ASEAN Secretariat.

Project Implementation Group

In the extension phase, the Project Implementation Group comprises nine members, including one Project Coordinator at P4 level, two Programme Management Officers at P3 level, one Programme Officer at P2 level, one Administrative Assistant at G6 level, one EPR expert, one Communications Specialist, one Website Manager, and one Data Analyst.

The Project Coordinator, Ms. Kamala Ernest, leads the project implementation, taking responsibilities spanning project management, overseeing the delivery of project results and outputs by the respective Designated Responsible Individuals (DRIs), financial and human resource oversight, activity implementation, monitoring, reporting, forging strategic partnerships, and donor liaison. Ms. Ernest reports to Ms. Djaheezah Subratty, Head of Consumption and Production Unit, Industry and Economy Division. Ms. Ernest collaborates with Mr. Mahesh Pradhan, Coordinator of the COBSEA Secretariat, and Mr. Mushtaq Memon, UNEP's Regional Coordinator on Chemicals and Pollution Action, to ensure comprehensive oversight of the project's execution under the UNEP Plastic Initiative of UNEP.

The Programme Management Officer, Ms. Claudia Giacobelli, provides support with multistakeholder engagement and liaison with the Communications Division of UNEP.

The Associate Programme Management Officer, Ms. Ran Xie, leads the implementation of activities under Output 1. Ms. Xie is supported by Ms. Francesca Montevicchi, consultant, an expert in EPR and plastic project development.

The Programme Lead, Plastic Pollution and Marine Litter, in the COBSEA Secretariat, Ms. Natalie Harms, is responsible for the implementation of project activities under Output 2, which are related to the scientific basis for decision making and regionally coherent marine litter planning. Ms. Harms oversees initiatives contributing to the achievement of the biennial workplan for implementation of the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI). She coordinates organization of the COBSEA Working Group on Marine Litter and oversees development of the East Asian Seas Regional Node of the GPML.

Human resources and administrative support functions were managed by Ms. Chisa Padungpornworakul, Administrative Assistant, until May 2023, when she transitioned her responsibilities to Ms. Patcharin Supitchakul.

Additionally, Mr. Kamal Najmus Salehin joined the team as a dedicated Communications Specialist in September 2023, focusing on enhancing communication strategies and outreach efforts for the project. Mr. Salehin works with Mr. Dhanushka Jayaweera, a consultant, to keep the project website updated.

In December 2023, Mr. Vu Hoai Nam Dang, an international consultant serving as a Data Analyst, was recruited to assist in collecting and analyzing data to prepare for the Annual Progress Report and a synthesis report aimed at scaling up SEA circular in the Asia-Pacific region as part of the UNEP Plastic Initiative’s chapter.

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

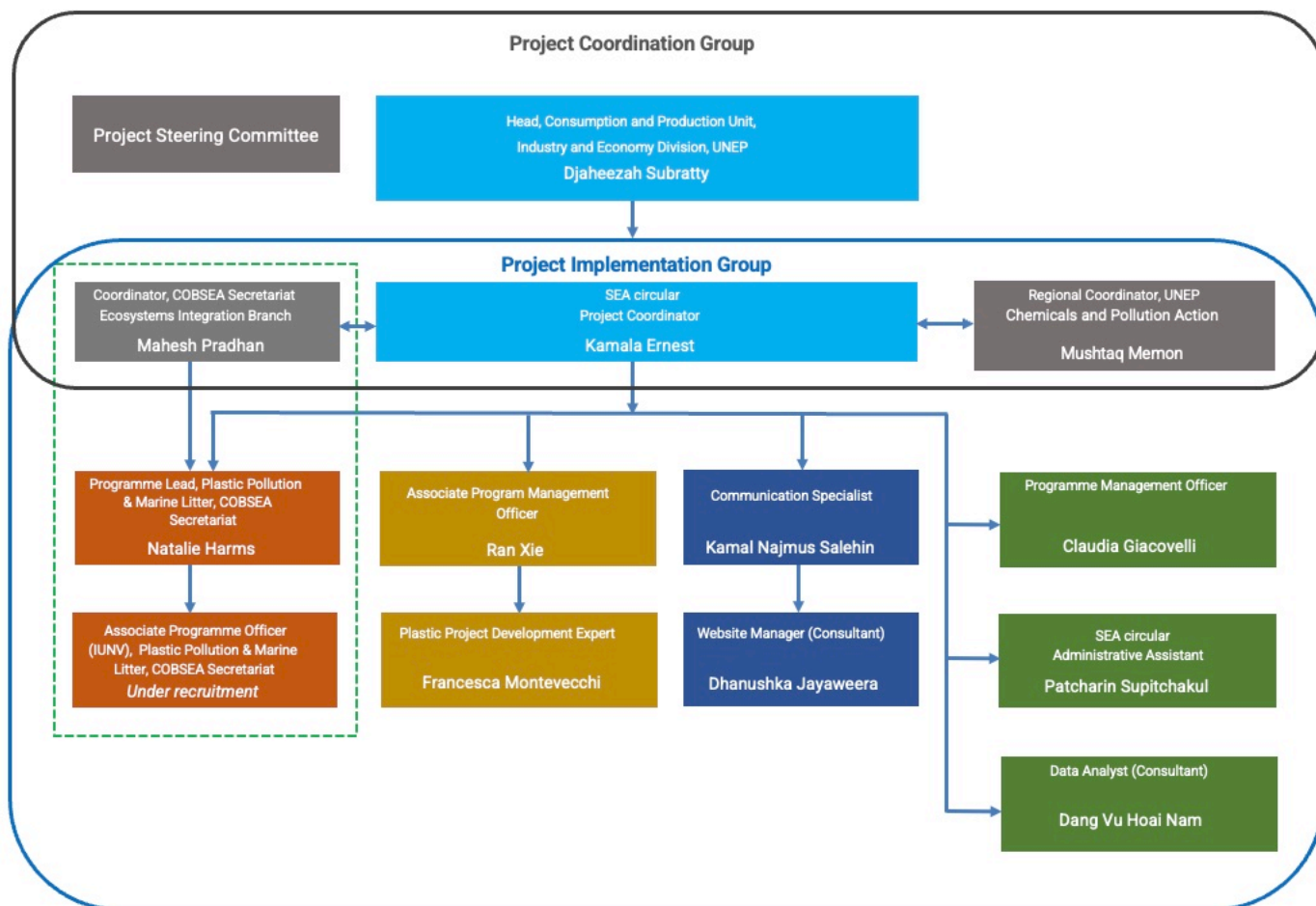


Figure 3. SEA circular project implementation organogram.

Annex 3: Project Results Framework

| | Description | Country Relevance | 2023 | | | | 2024 | | | | Lead partners/Implementer |
|------------------|---|-------------------|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|--|
| | | | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | |
| Outcome | National actors adopt and implement policy measures, and consumers and private sector increase efforts to enhance the reduction in the most harmful and difficult to recycle plastics, as well as plastic reused and recycled | | | | | | | | | | |
| Indicator 1 | Number of SEA countries have adopted or revised national marine litter policies, regulations or equivalent to prevent or reduce plastic pollution in line with COBSEA RAP MALI. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Indicator 2 | Number of SEA countries have implemented policy measures to reduce plastic pollution and promote circularity in the plastic value chain, in accordance with relevant multilateral environmental agreements and international agreements, including the INC process to End Plastic Pollution | | | | | | | | | | |
| Indicator 3 | Amount of plastic waste collection by PROs in Southeast Asia region increased through efforts aimed at collection and recycling | | | | | | | | | | |
| Indicator 4 | Increase in the percentage of consumers having indicated to stop buying products with non-recyclable packaging. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Output 1 | Market-based solutions towards "less plastic wasted" accessible to national and regional actors in the plastic value chain. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Result 1.1 | Market-based solutions to reduce plastic waste are developed and promoted regionally. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Result 1.2 | Stakeholders in South-East Asia are more knowledgeable to manage the plastic value chain better. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Extension result | A regional Plastics Circularity guidance framework developed by bringing the learnings from the 6 countries in South-East Asia that integrate a human rights-based approach for market-based solutions, which will support stakeholders in the plastic value chain to improve the rate of collecting, sorting, and recycling as part of the EPR scheme. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Indicator 1.2 | A regional Plastic Circularity guidance framework developed for the South-East Asian region. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 1.2.1 | Produce a draft regional Plastics Circularity guidance framework integrating the human rights-based approach for market-based solutions. | SEA countries | | | | | | | | | Dalhousie University, regional expert |
| Activity 1.2.2 | Conduct consultation meetings with representatives of ASEAN member states and relevant agencies to review and finalize the regional Plastic Circularity guidance framework. | SEA countries | | | | | | | | | AIT, regional expert |
| Result 1.3 | Business incentives for plastic reduction and recycling enhanced. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Extension result | Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in 4 countries (Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Viet Nam) are more knowledgeable on how to increase plastic waste collection and recycling through engagement with Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs). | | | | | | | | | | |
| Indicator 1.3 | A set of evidence-based recommendations developed for PROs to increase plastic waste collection and recycling through engagements with SMEs. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 1.3.1 | Conduct research on the development of PROs in the region to understand the current level of achievement of waste collection and recycling, including recommendations to increase plastic waste collection and recycling. | CIPV ³ | | | | | | | | | International Solid Waste Association, country level expert. |
| Activity 1.3.2 | Conduct regional dialogues alongside capacity-building activities to discuss the research findings (1.3.1) and recommendations to facilitate in the direction of increasing the success of PRO programs and encouraging SME participation. | CIPV | | | | | | | | | International Solid Waste Association, country level expert. |
| Output 2 | Scientific basis for decision-making on marine litter enhanced. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Result 2.1 | Stakeholders have access to tools and training to monitor, assess and report on marine litter status at the national and regional level. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Extension result | Implementation of the national marine litter plans and national marine litter policies of 5 countries (Cambodia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam) accelerated by training and capacity building for relevant stakeholders, informed by the guidance and knowledge products from SEA circular. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Indicator 2.1 | Number of training and capacity building activities for the implementation of national marine litter plans and national marine litter policies in 5 countries (Cambodia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam). | | | | | | | | | | |

³ C: Cambodia, I: Indonesia, P: Philippines, V: Viet Nam

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|--|--------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Activity 2.1.1 | Conduct a regional training for all COBSEA countries to further harmonize monitoring methods and strengthen capacity on monitoring and data analysis to inform decision making | CMPTV ⁴ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | CSIRO, national partners |
| Activity 2.1.2 | Conduct and expand marine litter surveys to build harmonized national monitoring programmes. | CMPTV | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | CSIRO, national partners |
| Activity 2.1.3 | Conduct a regional assessment of marine litter status and trends, building on national monitoring data. | CMPTV | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | CSIRO, national partners |
| Result 2.2 | Decision makers and the academic community in the region have access to marine litter research and data on marine litter (reformulated). | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Result 2.3 | Obstacles and opportunities for policies and regulations to reduce plastic wastage and pollution based on best available evidence are identified | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Output 3 | Outreach on plastic pollution and its impacts is enhanced. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Result 3.1 | Project products and results reach target groups to inform efforts to tackle marine litter and plastic waste. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Extension result | Best practices of plastics circularity inform national accelerated solutions and the International Negotiations Committee (INC) for an International Agreement to End Plastic Pollution through Southeast Asia regional dialogues and knowledge exchange platforms. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Indicator 3.1 | Number of countries referencing best practices and recommendations from SEA circular for the INC process. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 3.1.1 | Develop communications products for sharing knowledge and learnings from the project in meetings, events, and other communications channels. | SEA countries | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Consultants (incl. copy editor, graphics designer, content/video producer) and contractual service providers |
| Activity 3.1.2 | Engage relevant stakeholders from South-East Asia, incl. government partners, private sector, CSOs, media, through regional dialogues and knowledge exchange platforms. | SEA countries | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Eco-Business |
| Result 3.2 | Consumer awareness of solutions to marine litter and plastic pollution is increased to inform decision making and behaviour change. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Indicator 3.2 | Number of consumers reached through awareness raising campaigns. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 3.2.1 | Conduct a regional campaign to increase consumer awareness of solutions to marine litter and plastic pollution to inform decision-making and facilitate behaviour change. | SEA countries | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | MeshMinds, UNDP |
| Activity 3.2.2 | Conduct an online survey on the effectiveness of the campaign to measure changes in consumer intention and behaviour. | SEA countries | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | EB Impact |
| Output 4 | National actors in the region are more knowledgeable on how to coordinate action on plastic pollution. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Result 4.1 | Regionally coherent national marine litter plans, policies, regulations and/or standards to prevent and reduce plastic pollution developed. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Extension result 1 | Guidelines developed for managing the plastic value chain, building upon SEA circular's solutions and recommendations for the implementation of national marine litter plans, policies, regulations, and standards in South-East Asia and the harmonization of standards and practices through ASEAN and COBSEA. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Indicator 4.1 | A set of guidelines for the harmonization of standards and practices for managing the plastic value chain with reference to knowledge products of SEA circular. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 4.1.1 | Conduct a study and gap analysis on areas that can be aligned for a regional harmonized approach and develop a set of guidelines for the harmonization of standards and practices for the managing the plastic value chain. | SEA countries | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | International Solid Waste Association, regional experts |
| Result 4.2 | Information sharing and stakeholder engagement to support targeted action on reducing plastic pollution enhanced. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

⁴ C: Cambodia, I: Indonesia, M: Malaysia, P: Philippines, T: Thailand, V: Viet Nam

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|--|---------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| Extension result 2 | The implementation of UN Country Framework of at least 3 SEA countries (Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines) incorporates joint UN initiatives to support respective countries to accelerate solutions to end plastic waste. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Indicator 4.2.1 | Number of joint initiatives with other UN agencies to support respective countries to accelerate solutions to reduce plastic pollution. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 4.2.1 | Engage with UNCTs and national partners to incorporate joint UN initiatives to accelerate solutions to reduce plastic pollution into UN Country Frameworks. | CIV | | | | | | | | | Regional experts |
| Extension result 3 | The 5th SEA circular's SEA of Solutions on Circularity for Ending Plastic Pollution Forum showcases innovative solutions and strengthened strategic partnerships that have accelerated progress to end plastic pollution in South-East Asian region. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Indicator 4.2.2 | Number of stakeholders participating in South-East Asia regional dialogues for knowledge exchange on best practices for plastics circularity. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 4.2.2 | Organize the fifth regional SEA of Solutions forum in line with the international negotiations for a global plastic agreement, in coordination with regional partners as relevant. | SEA countries | | | | | | | | | Government partners, regional experts |

Annex 4: Implementation Agreements

[SSFA with Viet Nam National University Hanoi \(VNU\), School of Law](#)