

SEA circular News Series: Our Journey Toward a Plastic-Free Southeast Asia

Discover the SEA circular journey through this six-edition newsletter archive, showcasing pivotal milestones, innovative solutions, and united efforts to address plastic pollution at its source. From policies reshaping plastic value chains to community-driven initiatives, each edition highlights Southeast Asia's strides in reducing plastic waste. Now combined into one seamless digital document, this collection is an essential resource for everyone committed to a sustainable future free from plastic pollution.

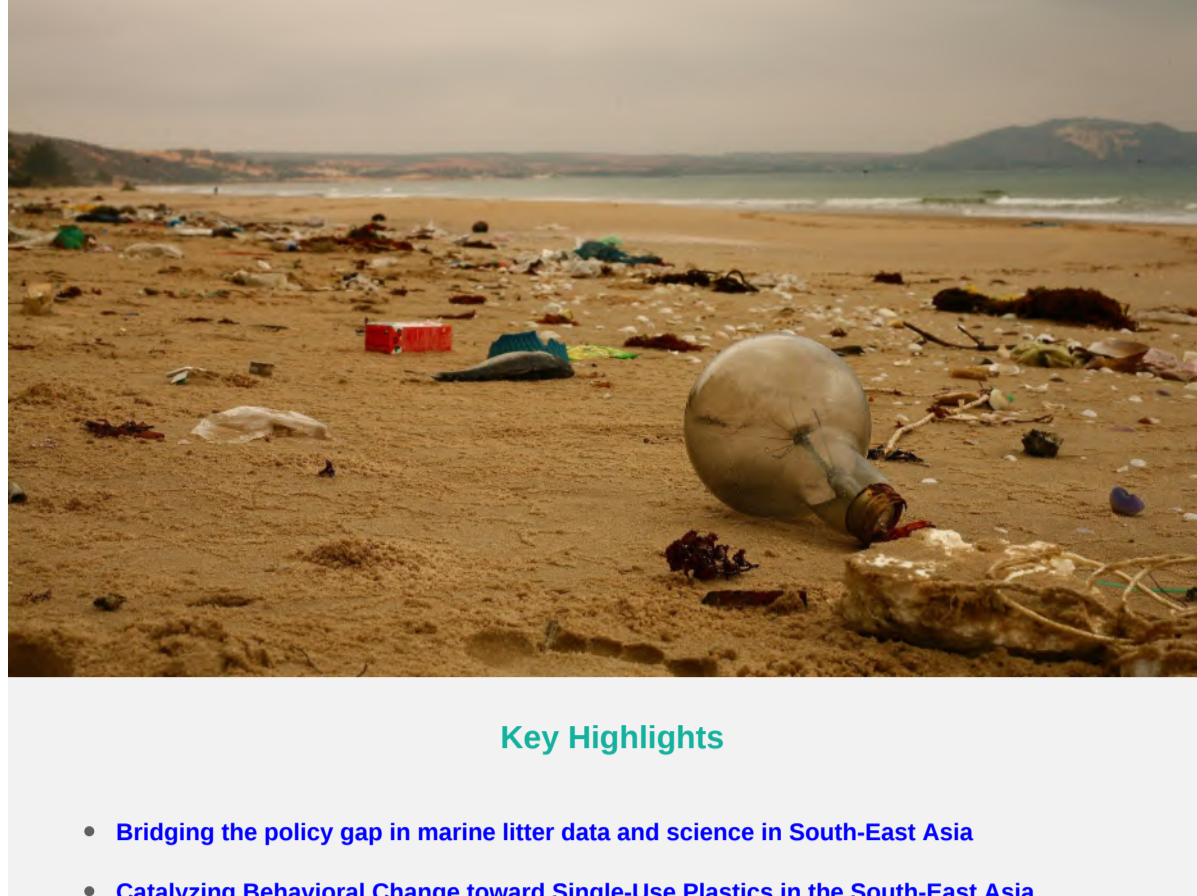
Newsletter - April 2022

In this edition of the SEA circular newsletter, we highlight significant strides across Southeast Asia in tackling marine litter and plastic pollution through collaborative efforts, policy advancements, and behavioral change initiatives. Key achievements include a regional consultation on bridging policy gaps in marine litter data, the launch of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) projects in the Philippines and Indonesia, and the introduction of acceleration solutions to end plastic pollution. With insights from multi-country surveys on consumer and business attitudes toward plastic waste, and initiatives like the 100 Days to #BeatPlasticPollution campaign, we spotlight progress towards a sustainable, circular approach to plastic management in the region.

SEA circular
Solving Plastic Pollution at Source

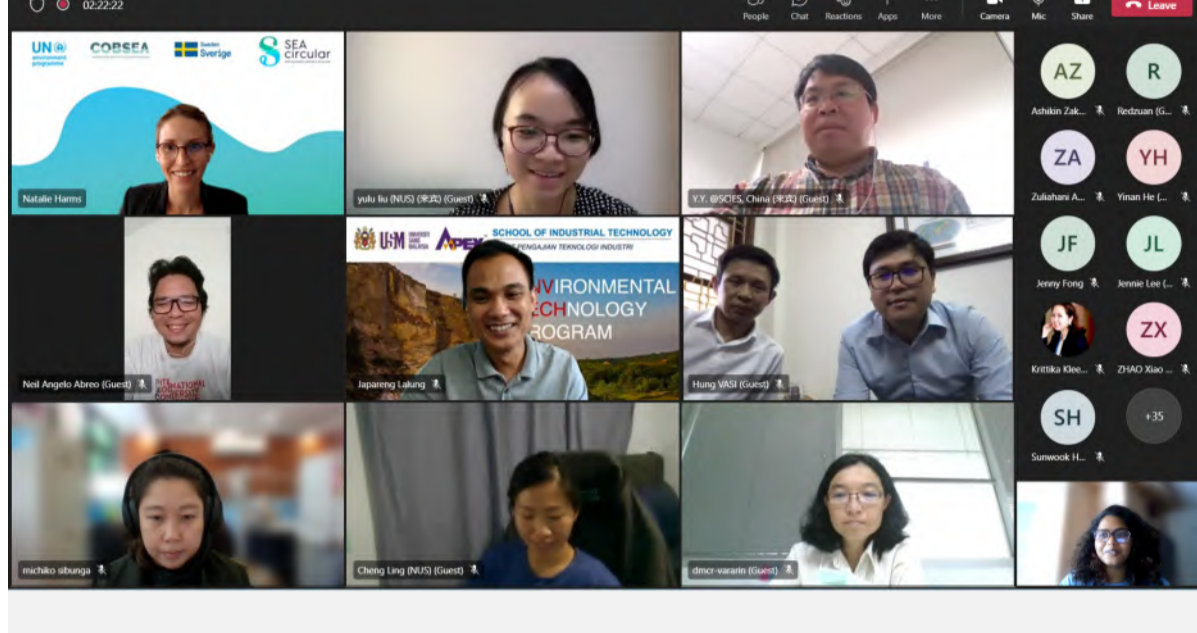
SEA circular is an initiative of the UN Environment Program and the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) to inspire market-based solutions and encourage enabling policies to prevent marine plastic pollution and less plastic wasted in South-East Asia

Newsletter - April 2022



Key Highlights

- [Bridging the policy gap in marine litter data and science in South-East Asia](#)
- [Catalyzing Behavioral Change toward Single-Use Plastics in the South-East Asia](#)
- [Building Foundation for a Robust National Marine Litter Monitoring Programme in the South-East Asia](#)
- [Ending Plastic Pollution Using 10 Acceleration Solutions](#)
- [Promoting the International Legally Binding Instrument to End Plastic Pollution in the South-East Asia](#)



Bridging the Policy Gap in Marine Litter Data and Science in South-East Asia

Under the SEA circular project, the COBSEA Secretariat and the National University of Singapore (NUS) held a [regional virtual consultation](#) on April 20, 2022 with participating countries of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) and stakeholders from academia to introduce the expanded regional marine litter research inventory and [online research database](#).

[Read more](#)



Ending Plastic Pollution Using 10 Acceleration Solutions

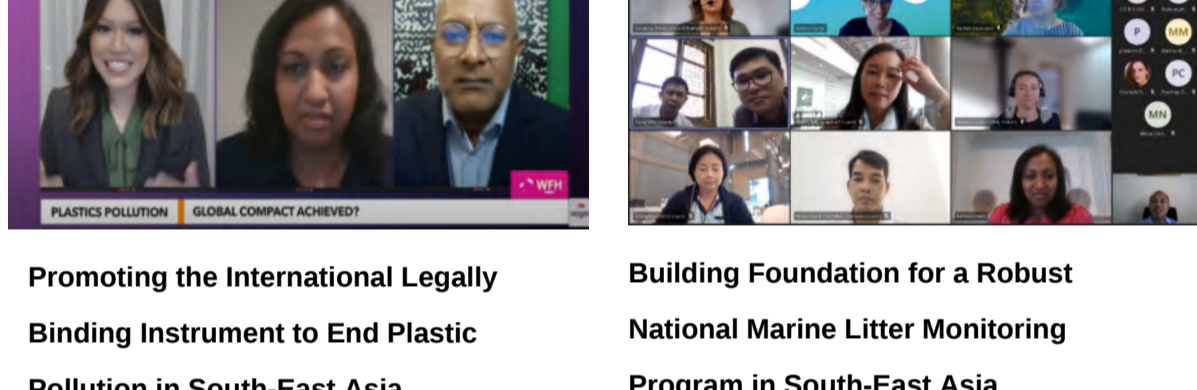
The SEA of Solutions (SOS) 2021 event closed with 10 acceleration solutions through in-depth and constructive dialogues, which set the benchmark for stepping up collective actions to end plastic pollution. These solutions were identified during the three-day programme....

[Read the report](#)

Catalyzing Behavioral Change toward Single-Use Plastics in South-East Asia

100 days to #BeatPlasticPollution campaign in 2021 helped the SEA circular project to reach over 21 million people with its message, stop using single-use plastics. The campaign was run on social media and encouraged the consumers to avoid plastics that are hard to recycle or reuse....

[Read the report](#)



Promoting the International Legally Binding Instrument to End Plastic Pollution in South-East Asia

Ms. Kamala Ernest, SEA circular Project Coordinator was invited on [Astro AWANI show](#), [#ConsiderThis](#), to discuss about the plastic resolution, which was endorsed by the representatives from 175 nations during the UN Environment Assembly 5.2 on 2nd March 2022

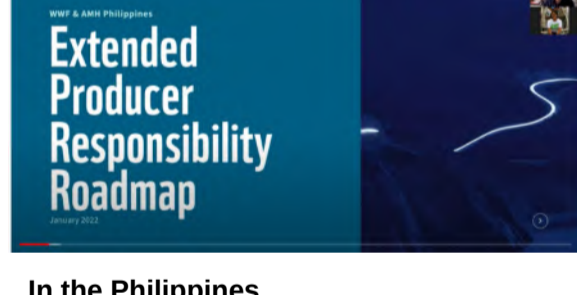
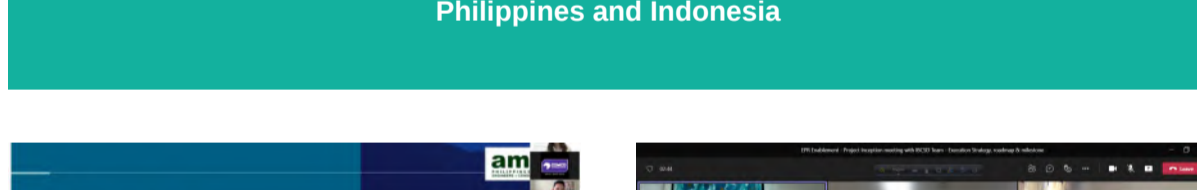
Building Foundation for a Robust National Marine Litter Monitoring Program in South-East Asia

In partnership with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), the COBSEA Secretariat held a regional consultation on April 04, 2022 with SEA circular project target countries to discuss planned activities on marine litter monitoring in 2022.....

[Read More](#)

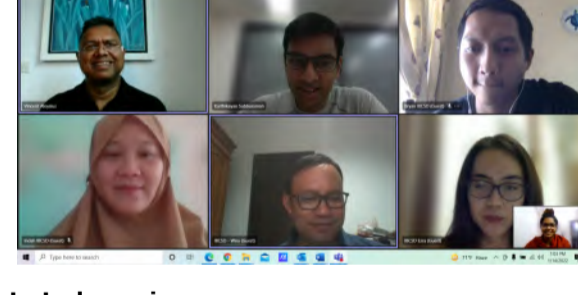


A joint webinar was organized by International Labor Organization, OECD and SEA circular, UNEP on *Addressing Plastic Waste Through Responsible Business Conduct: Shifting Towards Circularity in South-East Asia*. SEA circular presented about the efforts to support EPR implementation and how EPR & Human Rights Based Approach in the plastic value chain helps the private sector address and achieve responsible business conduct. There were discussions on responsible business conduct (RBC), and Circular Economy and Plastics at the OECD. A panel discussion was also held where three of the panelists were from current and past SEA circular project partners, ie Prof. Sara Seck from Dalhousie University, Josephine Tan from Penang Green Council, and Indah Budiani from Indonesia Business Council for Sustainable Development.



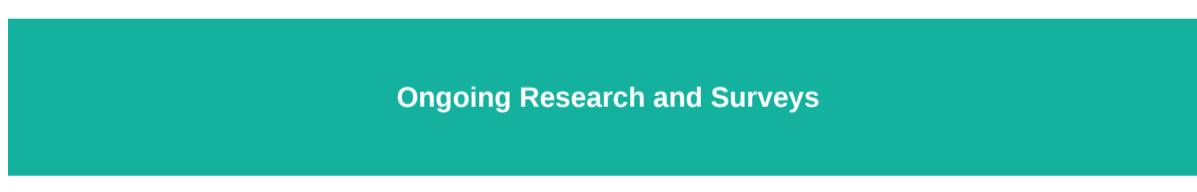
In the Philippines

The SEA circular project partner WWF-Philippines has launched the EPR project on January 20, 2022 in the presence of media and different stakeholders with an aim to establish EPR roadmap through developing toolkits that will help align all stakeholder groups about EPR and their role.



In Indonesia

Another EPR project was launched in Indonesia on January 18, 2022 in partnership with Indonesia Business Council for Sustainable Development (IBCSA). This project will primarily focus on the establishment of a multi-stakeholder working group, enablement of and capacity building on EPR and Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs) for achieving the Indonesian National Action Plan on Marine Plastic Debris and capturing circularity opportunities.

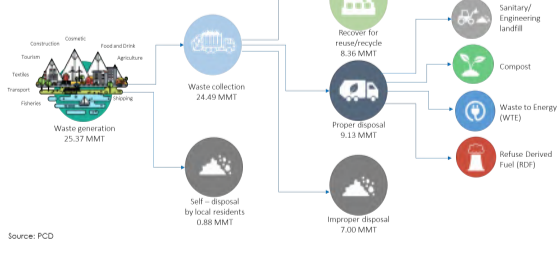


Situational Analysis on Plastic Credits and Recommendations towards a Harmonized Approach

The study is expected to bring about a better understanding on the credit mechanism and recommendations on what it should address, to be effective for stakeholders, decision, and policy makers. This project will contribute to the ten solutions summarized for the Sea of Solutions 2021, namely towards the solution of "functional circular solutions".

Second Phase: Multi-country Business and Consumer Surveys 2022

The second phase of the [multi-country consumer and business awareness surveys](#) is being conducted in 2022 in partnership with Food Industry Asia (FIA) conducted to understand consumer and business attitudes towards plastic waste, how they are currently tackling plastic waste issues as well as perspectives on how to best tackle plastic waste. The report will provide insights on the gaps and recommendations for Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam.



Material Flow and Value Chain Analysis Report in Thailand

Material Flow Analysis (MFA) is used to monitor the physical flows and stocks of single-use plastics in Thailand through the production, consumption and waste management processes to address marine litter pollution, and to better understand the factors that contribute to pollution prevention and to identify appropriate responses.



Modeling of Plastic Pollution Hotspots with a Focus on the East Asian Seas

This report will provide an overview of the University of Leeds' regional hotspot modelling, and convey its global estimates of the SDG 11.6.1 indicators and associated plastic pollution. Particular focus is additionally provided to the East Asia Seas countries.

About SEA circular project

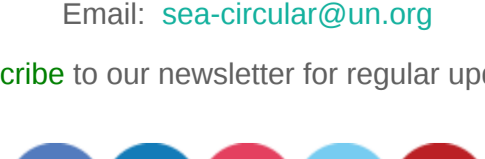
The SEA circular project – Reducing marine litter by addressing the management of the plastic value chain in Southeast Asia is implemented by the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific and the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), with funding support from the Government of Sweden. SEA circular aims to reduce and prevent plastic pollution and its impact by working with governments, businesses, civil society, academia, and international partners. The initiative promotes market-based solutions and enabling policies to transform plastic value-chain management, strengthens the science base for informed decision making, creates outreach and awareness. The project leverages COBSEA's regional mechanism to tackle the transboundary challenge of marine litter in a harmonized manner.

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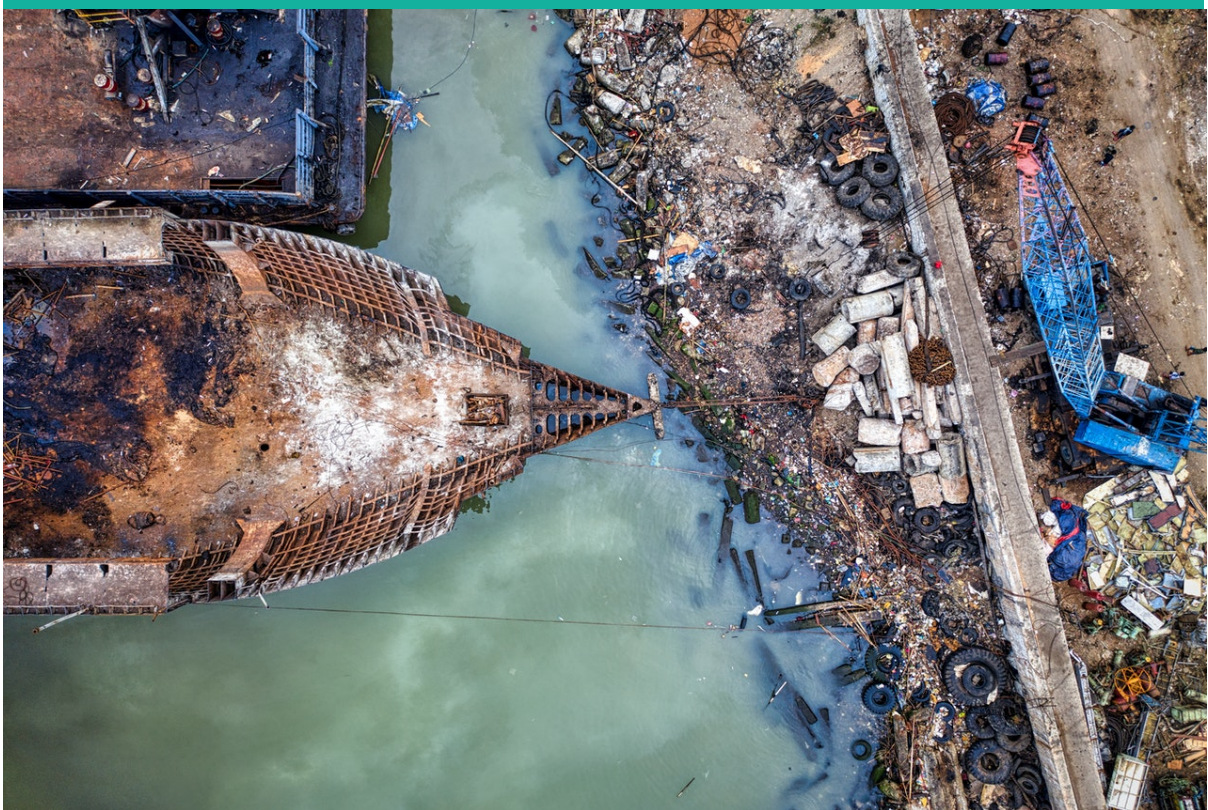
Newsletter - July 2022

In this edition of the SEA circular newsletter, we highlight collaborative efforts across Southeast Asia to combat plastic pollution. Key achievements include a virtual side event at the UN Ocean Conference 2022, engaging over 300 participants from four countries to discuss the Global Plastic Agreement and innovative financing for plastic waste management. We also launched the short film "PLASTIK" to raise awareness of the plastic crisis and conducted training sessions on a Human Rights-Based Approach to the Plastic Value Chain, involving 117 participants. Upcoming events include a regional training and the 7th International Marine Debris Conference, reinforcing our commitment to sustainable plastic management in the region.

SEA circular Solving Plastic Pollution at Source

SEA circular is an initiative of the UN Environment Programme and the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) to inspire market-based solutions and encourage enabling policies to prevent marine plastic pollution and less plastic wasted in South-East Asia.

Newsletter - July 2022



Key Highlights

- **Collective Efforts to End Plastic Pollution in South-East Asia**
- **(PLASTIK)” – A wake up call to end plastic pollution**
- **Adopting a Human Rights-Based Approach into the Plastic Value Chain**

Collective Effort in South-East Asia to End Plastic Pollution

29 June 2022

14:00-16:00 (GMT +7)

Via Webex

Collective Efforts to End Plastic Pollution in South-East Asia

The SEA circular project organized a virtual side event at the UN Ocean Conference 2022 on 29 June 2022 in collaboration with [the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia \(COBSEA\)](#), World Economic Forum's [Global Plastics Action Partnership \(GPAP\)](#), and [Food Industry Asia \(FIA\)](#) to discuss the way forward towards the Global Plastic Agreement and the preparation for the intergovernmental negotiations to tackle plastic pollution in the South-East Asian Region through collaborative actions among the governments, businesses and private sectors, consumers, and development partners. Over 300 active participants engaged with the panelists from four ASEAN countries, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Viet Nam, on the importance of and commitment to innovative mechanisms for financing and monitoring of investments in the area of plastic waste management to drive results.

[Read the event report here](#)



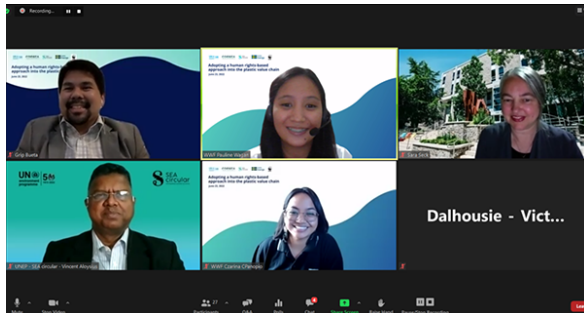
“(PLASTIK)” – A wake up call to end plastic pollution

In conjunction with the world environment day 2022, the SEA circular project jointly with MeshMinds and Studio Birthplace launched a short film – (PLASTIK), that exhibits the significance of both individual and

collective action to combat plastic pollution in the South-East Asian region. The film, featuring a child looking through a telescope made out of a plastic bottle, shows hyperrealist glimpses of a plastic-polluted future. The narrative helps the audience view the plastic pollution crisis through the eyes and imagination of a child. The film warns how human life can be affected if plastic waste becomes unmanageable. It shows that even children can influence their families to say no to single-use plastic and that we must #ActNow to #BeatPollution because we have #OnlyOneEarth

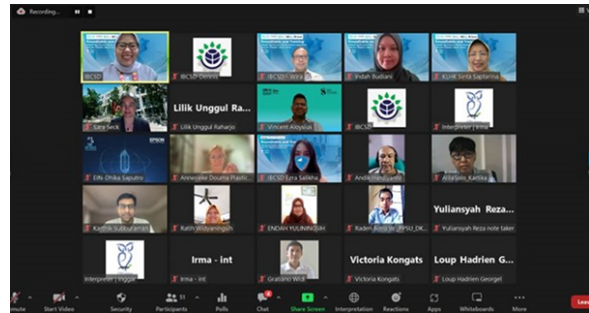
[Read the event report here](#)

Adopting a Human Rights-Based Approach into the Plastic Value Chain



WWF Philippines facilitated a training on 'Adopting Human Rights-Based Approach into the Plastic Value Chain', led by Prof. Sara Seck (Dalhousie University) on the 23rd June. 47 participants from the government, non-government organizations (NGOs), businesses, and the academe attended the training and 69% of the participants were female and 31% were male. The training was conducted via Zoom Cloud Meetings.

[Read the event report here](#)



A similar training was conducted on the 7th of June by the Indonesia Business Council for Sustainable Development (IBCSA) on 'Adopting Human Rights-Based Approach into the Plastic Value Chain', which was attended by 70 participants representing the government agencies, civil society and private sectors. The training session is divided into three modules starting with discussion of (i) Human Rights Dimensions of the Plastic Crisis, relations (ii) Plastics, Human Rights & Environment (HR&E) and (iii) Business & Human Rights (BHR) and Plastics.

[Read the event report here](#)

Coming soon

Tuesday, 23rd August 2022
A Live Webinar

PART I: TRAINING ON HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH IN THE PLASTIC VALUE CHAIN
08:30 AM - 10:30 AM (GMT+7)



DR. SARA L. SECK
Associate Professor and Associate Dean, Research Yogi and Keady Chair in Human Rights Law, Schulich School of Law, Marine & Environmental Law Institute, Dalhousie University

MODULE 1: The Human Rights Dimensions of the Plastics Crisis
MODULE 2: Plastics, Human Rights, and the Environment
MODULE 3: Business and Human Rights (BHR) and Plastics

23 August 2022 - A regional training on "Human Rights Based Approach in Plastic Value Chain",

7IMDC program is now available
7TH INTERNATIONAL MARINE DEBRIS CONFERENCE

[Click here to see the schedule](#)



7TH INTERNATIONAL MARINE DEBRIS CONFERENCE
18th - 23rd September 2022
BUSAN, REPUBLIC OF KOREA

18 – 23 September 2022 – 7th International Marine Debris Conference (7IMDC)

and a dialogue on "**Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)**". This virtual live event will be facilitated by Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), while the training will be led by Prof. Sara Seck from Dalhousie University.

More information will be shared soon, [here](#).

- Session 1: SEA circular - Private Sector Engagement for Plastic Circularity
- Session 2: Act now - Solutions to Stop Plastic Pollution

More information will be shared soon, [here](#).

About SEA circular project

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Newsletter - October 2022

In this edition of the SEA circular newsletter, we highlight key developments in promoting a circular plastics economy in Southeast Asia. The SEA of Solutions 2022 event is announced, alongside discussions on achieving circularity through Human Rights-Based Approaches (HRBA) and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). Expert dialogues explored the risks and opportunities of plastic credits and the necessity of EPR in the plastic industry. The SEA circular project showcased its initiatives at the 7th International Marine Debris Conference, emphasizing the importance of coordinated communication and private sector engagement in tackling plastic pollution. Furthermore, regional collaboration was strengthened through the establishment of the East Asian Seas Regional Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, and a study tour from Cambodia to Vietnam provided valuable insights into EPR and circular economy practices.



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Newsletter - October 2022

The poster features a split image: the top half shows a white boat on the water with a person on deck, and the bottom half shows a school of fish underwater. The text is overlaid on the left side.

SEA of Solutions

A Spotlight on Solutions

to end plastic pollution in South-East Asia

23-24 November 2022 | Virtual Event

Save the Date

Coordinated by

UN environment programme

COBSEA
COORDINATING BODY ON THE SEAS OF EAST ASIA

SEA circular
SOLVING PLASTIC POLLUTION AT SOURCE

Supported by

Sweden Sverige

Event Partner

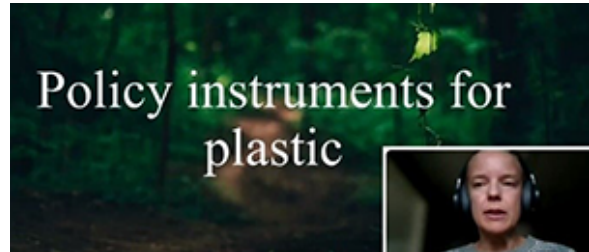
EB IMPACT

Key Highlights

- **SAVE THE DATE: SEA of Solutions 2022**
- **Achieving a Circular Plastics Economy through Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)**
- **Plastic Credits: Understanding the Risks and Opportunities in Addressing Plastic Pollution**
- **Realizing the Right to a Healthy Environment through Responsible Business Conduct in the plastic value chain**

- [SEA circular Project Featured at the 7th International Marine Debris Conference](#)
- [COBSEA Countries Come Together to Strengthen Regional Coordination for Tackling Marine Pollution](#)
- [Cambodia Learns from Viet Nam's Extended Producer Responsibility Initiatives](#)

Regional Dialogue Series by SEA circular



[Achieving a Circular Plastics Economy through Human Rights Based Approach \(HRBA\) and Extended Producer Responsibility \(EPR\)](#)

In this dialogue, experts on HRBA and EPR discussed about the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), recognized that businesses have a duty to uphold human rights, the significance of right to clean, healthy and sustainable environment, the importance of the plastic life span circular model, EPR approaches and practices that have been operationalized thus far in different countries, gaps that needed to be addressed to enhance EPR practices in businesses, catalysts that help strengthen partnerships amongst key stakeholders to adopt EPR, challenges to overcome, and the capacity issues to address.

[Learn more...](#)

[Plastic Credits: Understanding the Risks and Opportunities in addressing plastic Pollution](#)

In this dialogue, researchers, experts and professionals of circular economy and plastic credits addressed that the mandatory measures in place to promote comprehensive plastic waste management should be distinguished from the voluntary mechanism of plastic credits, and it might generate employment prospects at the local level. Experts emphasized that the plastic industry needs to accept Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). The panelists also highlighted that the plastic credits will eventually find a place as a voluntary tool for businesses that choose to focus more on a human rights-based approach. Thus, the government should develop a uniform standard for how policy makers declare footprint and how stakeholders calculate credits to account for social implications.

[Learn more..](#)

SEA circular Project Featured at the 7th International Marine Debris Conference

18-23 September 2022

Hybrid Format



SEA circular project organised a technical session at the 7th International Marine Debris Conference under **track 4 – Education, Awareness and Communication**. This session aimed to share trends, learnings, benefits and the successes in addressing plastic pollution crisis through products of different initiatives within and outside of SEA circular project, and to orient the audience on the importance and impact of coordinated communication around both problems and solutions in areas related to plastic pollution. Through knowledge sharing, participants gained insights on the multipronged nature of the plastic pollution challenge that needs multifaceted solutions with awareness and communication at the center of it. It is believed that the learnings from the communication, knowledge sharing and research initiatives will inspire others to develop meaningful interventions and partnerships contributing to reduction in plastic pollution.



SEA circular project organised another technical session at the 7th International Marine Debris Conference under **track 7 – Economics, Financing & Private Sector Engagement**. This session aimed to share learnings, knowledge and the successes in addressing the plastic pollution crisis through initiatives involving private sector engagement and market-based solutions in South-East Asia. The speakers showcased how various projects through SEA circular encouraged collaboration between the private sector, producer responsibility organizations and government agencies to support the enablement of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) with the right policies towards private sector meeting their EPR responsibilities. It also highlighted the evolving business solutions that can play a role in achieving circularity, their potential risks, and opportunities.

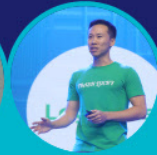


21 September 2022
Session 4
10:45 to 12:00 ICT

Plastic Circularity through Responsible Business Conduct: Realizing the Right to a Healthy Environment



Georgina Lloyd
UN Environment Programme



Nat Atichartakarn
CEO Trash Lucky



Sara Seck
Dalhousie University



Vivekanand Sista
Beauty & Wellbeing
R&D Head of SEA
Unilever



Dominic Thomson
Environmental
Justice Foundation



Naporn
Popattanachai
Faculty of Law,
Thammasat University



Orathai (Nok)
Pongruktham
Thailand Environment
Institute Foundation
(TEI)

The SEA circular project arranged a session on **Plastic Circularity through Responsible Business Conduct: Realizing the Right to a Healthy Environment** in the United Nations Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum, Asia-Pacific. The session aimed to provide a glimpse into the HRBA training material produced through the collaboration of the SEA circular Project with Dalhousie University, and to obtain perspectives from OECD, ILO, UNDP, the private sector (represented by a speaker from a relevant Business Membership Organization) and the informal waste sector on how the topics of responsible business conduct, EPR and rights are connected and how a rights based approach can deliver a healthy environment to all stakeholders, including to those that are most vulnerable.



COBSEA Countries Come Together to Strengthen Regional Coordination for Tackling Marine Pollution

The resumed 25th Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM 25) of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) accelerated regional knowledge sharing and networking on marine litter by establishing the East Asian Seas Regional Node of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML) at COBSEA. The Regional Node web platform will be launched in the coming weeks, providing access to policies, guidelines, a map of good practices, a Regional Research Database and Network, a network of experts, and a learning centre, which is linked to the Global Digital Platform of the GPML.

Cambodia Learns from Viet Nam's Extended Producer Responsibility and Circular Economy Initiatives

UNDP Vietnam and Cambodia jointly through SEA circular project organised a study tour in Viet Nam from 27 Sep - 2 Oct 2022 to understand Viet Nam's experiences in Circular Economy, Extended Producer Responsibility and plastic recycling as well as to discuss future opportunities for regional cooperation between the two countries. The Cambodia delegation team consisted of representatives from Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology and Innovation, UNDP, while the team has interacted

with Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) - Viet Nam, private sector, and UNDP Vietnam.

About SEA circular Project

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Newsletter - December 2022

In this edition of the SEA circular newsletter, we highlight key developments in Southeast Asia's efforts to combat plastic pollution and marine litter. Significant outcomes from the SEA of Solutions 2022 forum include the establishment of five action points aimed at promoting a circular economy in plastics, underscored by the participation of stakeholders across the region. The newly launched interactive resources and tools provide critical insights and case studies to advance plastic waste management. Additionally, a regional knowledge platform has been introduced to enhance access to essential information on marine litter. Notably, the enactment of the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Act in the Philippines marks a significant policy advancement in tackling plastic waste.

SEA circular Project Newsletter

Issue #4 of 2022

Season's greetings from the entire SEA circular team!

As we conclude 2022, we thank YOU - our friends, partners and stakeholders for another year of successful collaboration to beat plastic pollution.

As we go into 2023, we have some good news. The SEA circular project has been extended until December 2024 with a renewed focus on addressing the plastic pollution and marine litter in South-East Asia and strengthening the capacities of Member States in the region for effective participation in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) process to End Plastic Pollution.

Please stay tuned! Get involved and **contact us** for more information.



Key Highlights

- **SEA of Solutions 2022 Outcomes - Voices from South-East Asia to end plastic pollution**
- **New interactive assets, tool and resources to end plastic pollution in South-East Asia launched**
- **Regional knowledge platform and networking on marine litter and plastic pollution in East Asian Seas goes live**
- **New law in the Philippines to address plastic pollution**

A Spotlight on Solutions to end plastic pollution in South-East Asia

23-24 November | Virtual Event

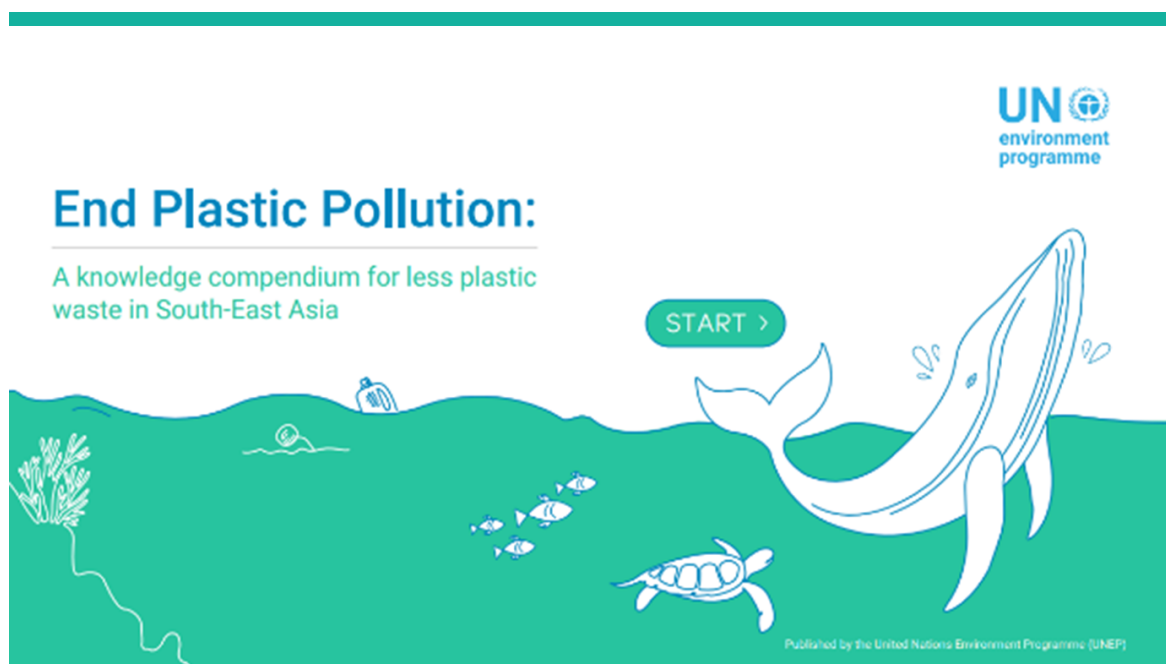
Voices from South-East Asia to end plastic pollution

SEA of Solutions 2022 successfully concluded bringing together **stakeholders** in South-East Asia working towards ending plastic pollution around **5 action points**.

With the theme “**A Spotlight on Solutions to End Plastic Pollution**”, SoS highlighted **12 inspiring solutions** from South-East Asia that promote the transition from a linear to a circular plastics– from designing, producing, and consuming products to post-consumer waste management.

The forum was convened by **SEA circular**, an initiative by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the **Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia** (COBSEA) supported by the Government of Sweden. It came at a critical time as 2022 marks a historic year for global action to beat plastic pollution with 175 UN member States agreeing to negotiate an international legally binding instrument by 2024 on ending plastic pollution.

[Here](#) is the SoS 2022 outcomes summary. The full event report is available [here](#).



New interactive assets, tool and resources to end plastic pollution in South-East Asia launched

We have produced an interactive compilation of assets based on intensive research, benchmarking, stakeholder dialogues and consultations supported and enabled by the **SEA circular project** and it's

implementing partners.

Built on the learnings of SEA circular's partners, the compendium includes country studies of plastic footprint; market-based solutions showcasing regional good practices; campaign materials that created a social movement through digital marketing campaigns that touched millions of youth; and learning materials to sensitize stakeholders on various aspects of circularity in the plastic value chain.

[Access the Knowledge Compendium here](#)



Regional knowledge platform and networking on marine litter and plastic pollution in East Asian Seas goes live

As part of increasing access to marine litter and plastic pollution knowledge targeted for South-East Asia region, SEA circular project, in partnership with the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML) have launched a regional web based knowledge platform. The web knowledge platform includes a knowledge library with policies, tools, and resources, case studies, the Regional Research Database, and a learning centre with training resources and events. The web platform was developed with support from the Government of Sweden through the [SEA circular project](#).

[Learn more](#)



New law in the Philippines to address plastic pollution

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Act of 2022 was enacted into law on 23 July 2022. To support the government in its implementation, SEA circular project through our implementing partner WWF-Philippines, held a dialogue to gather the views and recommendations of stakeholders active in the plastic value chain including businesses, government agencies, local government units, the informal waste sector, waste management operators, and academic institutions. The inputs and recommendations gathered will be consolidated into a white paper that will be made available soon.

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Newsletter - January 2024

In this edition of the SEA circular newsletter significant initiatives include the upcoming SEA of Solutions 2024 conference, where we invite your input to shape the agenda, and the launch of a comprehensive digital resource deck aimed at enhancing accessibility to vital information on marine litter and plastic pollution.

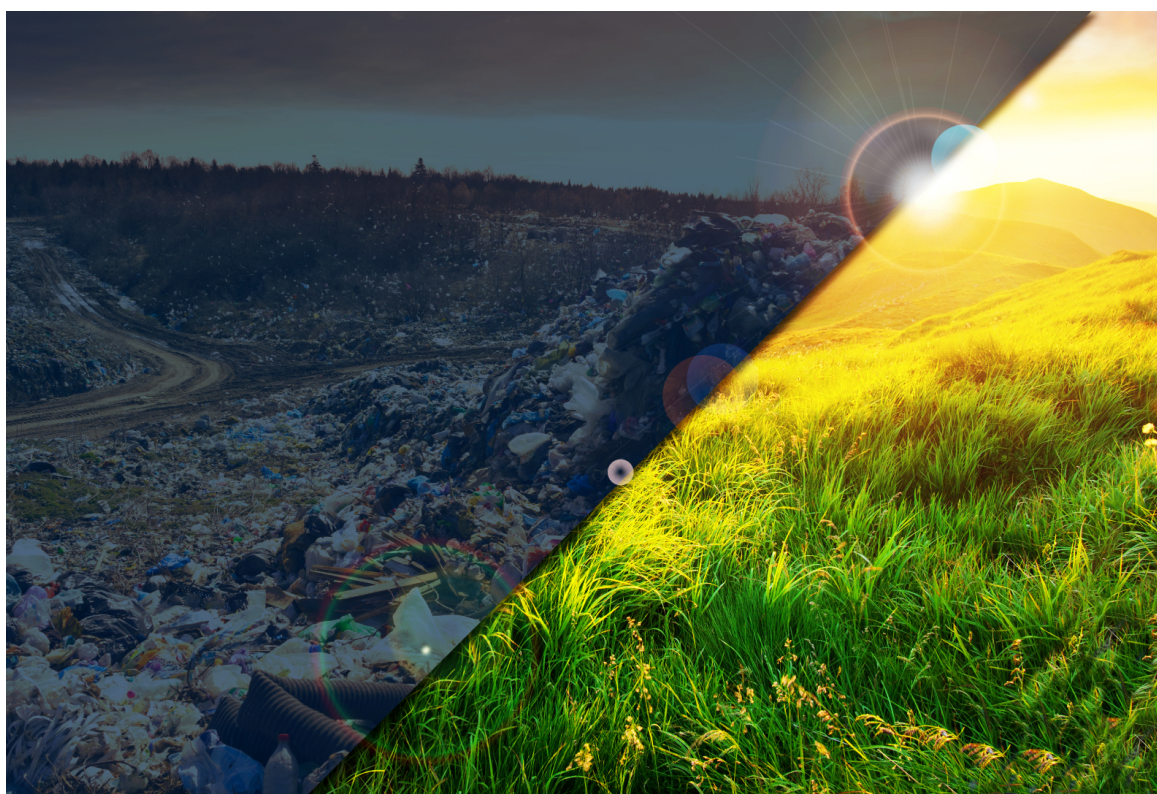
We also spotlight the crucial role of women in the informal sector and their contributions to plastic waste management, along with discussions on integrating human rights into business models along the plastic value chain. Lastly, advancements in marine litter monitoring emphasize the importance of robust data analysis for effective policy implementation.



SEA circular Project

Solving Plastic Pollution at Source

Newsletter - January 2024



As we start the New Year, we are thrilled to reconnect with you and share the exciting developments. In 2023, the [SEA circular Project](#) aligned its work on **gender and human rights-based approach**, enhanced collaboration with the **informal sector** for better **management of plastic value chain** and build foundation for **marine litter monitoring** in the **South-East Asia** region. The project, under the broader "**One Plastics Initiative**", organized technical regional knowledge sharing sessions for Member States, ahead of the Third session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) for an **International Legally Binding Instrument on Plastic Pollution**.

Looking ahead to 2024, our calendar is brimming with exciting activities, including **SEA of Solutions 2024**, Plastic Action Week, National Consultation/Workshops, regional capacity building and knowledge sharing on topics such as Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), Reuse Schemes and more. These endeavors align with our overarching goal—to contribute to a healthier environment in South-East Asia.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude for being an essential part of the SEA circular Project journey. We eagerly anticipate the ongoing collaboration in this crucial year. Thank you for your continued support!

Key Highlights

- **SEA of Solutions 2024: Help us shape the event!**
- **Unlocking Solutions for Plastic Pollution in South-East Asia: A Digital Resource Deck**
- **The role of women in the informal sector and their contributions to prevent plastic pollution**
- **Business models that integrate a human rights-based approach along the plastic value chain**
- **Marine litter monitoring: Advancing data analysis and data comparability**



SEA circular solving plastic pollution at source

SEA of Solutions

Make Your Opinions Heard

Scan to Participate in the Survey

SEA of Solutions 2024: Help us shape the event!

SEA of Solutions (SoS) is an annual partnership event for South-East Asian countries towards **solving plastic pollution at source**. Since **2019**, SoS has served as a platform that enables sharing of **information, best practices, meaningful dialogue, facilitate collaboration and partnership opportunities in promoting circularity in the plastic value chain among stakeholders**. SEA of Solutions is convened by SEA circular, an initiative by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), supported by the Government of Sweden.

Take a moment to share your **inputs to this survey**, to help us shape the agenda of the next SEA of Solutions conference (**September 2024**).

[Take the Survey](#)

SEA circular

Solving Plastic Pollution at Source in South-East Asia

Resource Deck

Unlocking Solutions for Plastic Pollution in South-East Asia: A Digital Resource Deck

The [SEA circular Project](#) has launched a comprehensive digital [resource deck](#) to enhance accessibility to information on marine litter and plastic pollution in the South-East Asia region. This **compilation includes 18 research and assessment reports**, providing a solid foundation for in-depth knowledge on tackling plastic pollution. Complementing these reports are **23 case studies** offering real-world applications, and **21 practical tools and manuals** for actionable solutions. To provide a global perspective, the resource deck includes **6 detailed project country profiles**, showcasing how plastic pollution manifests in different geographic and cultural contexts. Additionally, **14 informative videos** cater to diverse learning preferences, offering engaging supplements to the written content.

Whether you're a policymaker, activist, or concerned citizen, this resource deck serves as a comprehensive guide to understanding, addressing, and mitigating the impacts of plastic pollution in South-East Asia.

[View Resource Deck](#)



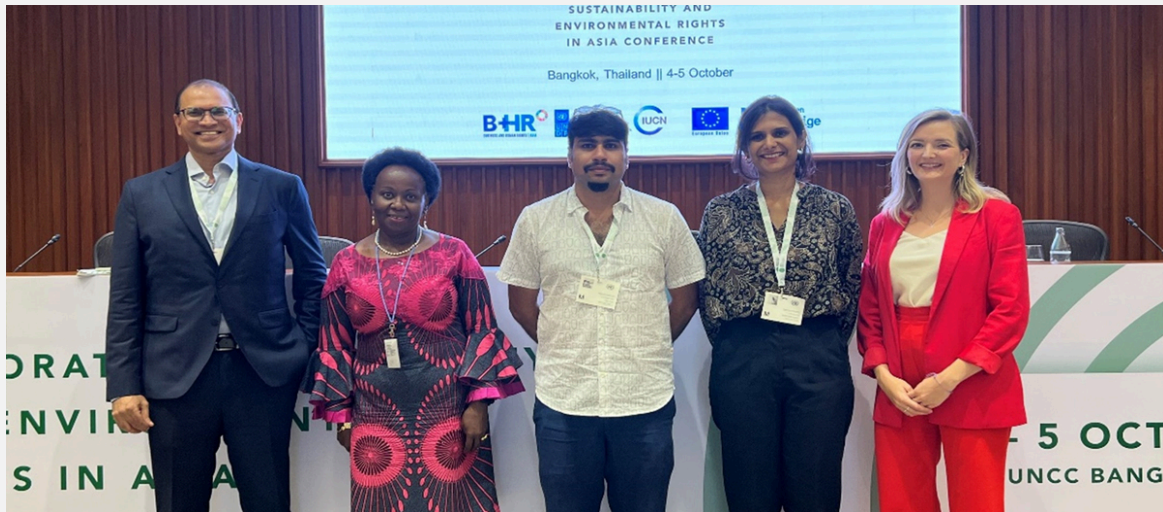
The role of women in the informal sector and their contributions to prevent plastic pollution

Vietnam, fueled by its dedication to environmental preservation and gender equality, has outlined a comprehensive “**Strategy for Sustainable Development of the Maritime Economy**” and the “**National Action Plan on the Management of Plastic Waste in the Ocean until 2030**”. Aligned with Vietnam's National Action Plan, the partnership between UNEP through SEA circular Project and

Vietnam National University seeks to enhance capacity and support the plan's implementation through three activities: i) conducting research on relevant laws and policies for implementing the National Action Plan; ii) organizing training workshops to promote extended producer responsibility and the role of women in the informal plastic waste treatment sector; and iii) assessing the feasibility of integrating and developing the content of marine pollution, plastic waste, and management as a subject in the Master of Law's degree.

The training workshops were held in [Hanoi](#) and Hai Phong cities to raise awareness among stakeholders.

[Read More](#)



Business models that integrate a human rights-based approach along the plastic value chain

A recent UNEP report suggests that a **transformative reduction of 80% in plastic pollution by 2040** is **achievable** through market shifts emphasizing "**reuse, recycling, and diversifying alternatives**" alongside policy changes. Businesses, especially in **Asia**, play a key role; adopting Extended Producer Responsibility (**EPR**) and a human rights-based approach in the plastic value chain is vital for sustainable solutions. A panel discussion session on "Plastic Pollution in Asia" at Corporate Sustainability and Environmental Rights in Asia conference organized by UNEP's SEA circular Project and UNDP emphasized this, fostering dialogue among businesses, government, and civil society for impactful change.

This collaboration brings together stakeholders from the private sector, academia, development partners, and civil society to discuss challenges and solutions for a rights-based approach to addressing plastic pollution in Asia.

Click [here](#) to see the event at a glimpse. Click [here](#) to read the event report.

[Read More](#)



Marine litter monitoring: Advancing data analysis and data comparability

The Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter (RAP MALI), established by the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), underscores the critical importance of monitoring and assessing marine litter to understand its status, trends, and impacts. Recognizing the necessity for robust and harmonized monitoring efforts, COBSEA countries have embraced the Regional Guidance on Harmonized National Marine Litter Monitoring that developed under SEA circular Project.

A recent **workshop** delved into **effective plastic pollution management and evidence-based marine litter strategies**. The workshop underscored the pivotal role of data analysis in evaluating policy effectiveness, advocating for the Before-After-Control-Impact (BACI) design for monitoring.

[Read More](#)



Subscribe

to the UNEP's **One Plastics Initiative*** Newsletter!

We are excited to announce the launch of the One Plastics Initiative Newsletter!

Our quarterly newsletter will inform you of timely updates on the latest science and data, publications, compelling stories, engaging videos, upcoming events, collaborative partnership opportunities, and more regarding the One Plastics Initiative's global, regional, and national efforts.

We invite you to sign up for our newsletter [here](#).



*The **One Plastics Initiative** 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. [Click here](#) to learn more about the Initiative.

About SEA circular project

The SEA circular Project – Reducing marine litter by addressing the management of the plastic value chain in South-East Asia is implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific and the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), with funding support from the Government of Sweden. SEA circular aims to reduce and prevent plastic pollution and its impact by working with governments, businesses, civil society, academia, and international partners. The initiative promotes market-based solutions and enabling policies to transform plastic value-chain management, strengthens the science base for informed decision making, creates outreach and awareness. The project leverages COBSEA's regional mechanism to tackle the transboundary challenge of marine litter in a harmonized manner.

Contact Us

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Newsletter - June 2024

In this edition of the newsletter, we highlight crucial developments in tackling plastic pollution in Southeast Asia. The upcoming SEA of Solutions 2024 event in Bangkok aims to catalyze innovative actions for a circular economy in the plastic value chain. We also showcase UNEP's video "Plastic - Not So Fantastic," which reveals the hidden costs of plastic, and highlight Sheila Aggarwal-Khan's insights on Bernama TV.

Moreover, we are focusing on revolutionizing Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) by integrating the informal waste sector into sustainable practices. A recent UNEP Multistakeholder Knowledge-Sharing Meeting in Bangkok gathered over 190 participants to discuss collective strategies for addressing plastic pollution, reinforcing our commitment to sustainable solutions across the region.



SEA circular project Newsletter June 2024



[SEA circular](#) project, part of UNEP Plastic Initiative, promotes market-based solutions and advocates for policies to prevent plastic pollution and reduce plastic waste at its source in Southeast Asia.

Key Highlights

- **Join us at SEA of Solutions 2024, Bangkok, Thailand!**
- **Unveiling the Reality: Watch "Plastic - Not So Fantastic"**
- **Addressing the Global Plastic Crisis: Sheila Aggarwal-Khan, UNEP, Shares Innovative Solutions on Bernama TV, Malaysia**
- **Driving Change: Empowering UN Resident Coordinators Against Plastic Pollution**
- **Bridging Rights and Responsibility: Revolutionizing EPR in Southeast Asia**
- **Recap of UNEP's Regional Event Addressing Plastic Pollution in the Asia Pacific**

Join us at SEA of Solutions 2024, Bangkok, Thailand!



The graphic features a central image of a globe with plastic waste floating around it, set against a background of a blue sky and ocean. The text 'SEA of Solutions' is prominently displayed in large, bold letters. Below it, the tagline 'Delivering Actions to End Plastic Pollution' is written in a smaller font. The dates '18-20 September 2024' and the location 'United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC) Bangkok, Thailand (Hybrid)' are clearly stated. Logos for UN environment programme, COBSEA, and Sweden/Sverige are included at the bottom left. Contact information, including the website 'www.sea-circular.org' and email 'sea-circular@un.org', is provided at the bottom right.

SEA of Solutions
Delivering Actions to End Plastic Pollution

18-20 September 2024

United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC)
Bangkok, Thailand (Hybrid)

More info www.sea-circular.org
sea-circular@un.org

UN environment programme
COBSEA
Sweden Sverige

Join stakeholders from around the world at [SEA of Solutions 2024](#) in Bangkok, Thailand, from 18-20 September 2024. This pivotal event aims to catalyze actions and innovations towards circularity in the plastic value chain. It's a crucial platform to exchange knowledge and build partnerships leading up to INC-5, focused on a global treaty to tackle plastic pollution by 2024.

Explore sessions on **science-driven action**, **policy measures**, **finance**, **circularity**, and **community engagement** under the theme "**Delivering Actions to End Plastic Pollution.**" Don't miss out – register today for a sustainable future!

For more details, please click [here](#).

[Register Here!](#)



Unveiling the Reality: Watch "Plastic - Not So Fantastic"

Experience the eye-opening UNEP video, crafted with contributions from the SEA circular project. It exposes the hidden costs of plastic, from ecological devastation to health risks and economic strain. Available in multiple languages, including [English](#), [Thai](#), [Malay](#), [Bahasa Indonesia](#), [Khmer](#), [Vietnamese](#), and [Tagalog](#). Join us in advocating for reduced plastic usage today!

[Watch the Video](#)



Addressing the Global Plastic Crisis: Sheila Aggarwal-Khan, Director of UNEP's Industry and Economy Division, Shares Innovative Solutions on Bernama TV, Malaysia

[Watch the Video](#)



Driving Change: Empowering UN Resident Coordinators Against Plastic Pollution

In a pivotal briefing session by UNEP and the Development Coordination Office (DCO), UN Resident Coordinators (RCs) in Asia-Pacific united to combat plastic pollution. The session, held during the Annual RCs retreat highlighted policy frameworks, project development, finance mobilization, and capacity building, aimed to bolster UN interventions. Together, we are shaping a sustainable future.

[Read More](#)



Photo credits: Francesca Montevocchi

Bridging Rights and Responsibility: Revolutionizing EPR in Southeast Asia

With [nearly 40%](#) of the global informal sector engaged in waste management, integrating them into Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes is paramount. In recognizing the vital role of informal waste management, especially waste pickers, we are reshaping plastic pollution management to safeguard labour rights, health equity, and the environment. Partnering with WWF Germany and a range of stakeholders, this regional study aims to empower communities and drive sustainable change. Stay tuned for its launch and regional capacity building to be held during the SEA of Solutions 2024!



In addition, SEA circular, in collaboration with Vietnam National University (VNU), spearheaded the integration of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for managing marine plastic litter in Vietnam. Focused on enhancing women's roles in waste collection and aligning with Vietnam's National Action Plan on Plastic Waste Management, this initiative has bolstered capacity and supports its policy goals.

[Read More](#)



Recap of UNEP's Regional Event Addressing Plastic Pollution in the Asia Pacific

On March 8, 2024, in Bangkok, Thailand, the UNEP Plastics Initiative organized a pivotal Multistakeholder Knowledge-Sharing Meeting, supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), Government of Japan, UNPDF, and GIZ Thailand. This gathering united over 190 participants, comprising government officials, private sector representatives, civil society organizations, academia, and donors. The objective of the event was to raise awareness, share best practices, and outline strategies for collective action to address the harmful effects of plastic pollution throughout its lifecycle.

[Read More](#)



Subscribe
to the **UNEP Plastics Initiative*** Newsletter!

We are excited to announce the launch of the UNEP Plastics Initiative Newsletter! Our quarterly newsletter will inform you of timely updates on the latest science and data, publications, compelling stories, engaging videos, upcoming events, collaborative partnership opportunities, and more regarding the UNEP Plastics Initiative's global, regional, and national efforts.

We invite you to **sign up** for our newsletter [here](#).

Explore the inaugural issue of our newsletter by clicking [here](#).



*The UNEP Plastics Initiative is a comprehensive programme aimed at addressing the escalating global issue of plastic pollution. It consolidates all UNEP's plastic-related projects into a unified programme, focusing on activating and scaling up actions at the global, regional, and national levels. [Click here](#) to learn more about the Initiative.

Contact Us

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Newsletter - November 2024

In this edition of the SEA circular newsletter, we showcase remarkable progress across Southeast Asia in addressing marine litter and plastic pollution through strategic partnerships, capacity-building, and innovative solutions.

Key highlights include SEA of Solutions 2024, a landmark regional event uniting over 600 participants to drive collaborative actions for a plastic waste-free future, and capacity-building initiatives on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) to promote sustainable packaging and inclusive waste management. We also spotlight advancements in marine litter monitoring methodologies, supported by regional training sessions and multi-stakeholder collaborations.

With impactful initiatives like the GPAP Community Breakfast fostering regional cooperation and insights from the UN Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum on integrating informal waste workers into EPR schemes, this edition underscores the power of collective action in driving a circular approach to plastic waste management in Southeast Asia.



SEA circular project
Solving Plastic Pollution at Source
Newsletter - November 2024



Welcome to the November edition of the SEA circular newsletter! The past few months have been a dynamic journey in our fight against plastic pollution across Southeast Asia. At the heart of it all was SEA of Solutions 2024—a powerful gathering where regional leaders, innovators, and changemakers came together to unite in the fight against plastic waste. In addition to SEA of Solutions, we also organized several other key initiatives, from capacity-building sessions on sustainable packaging to regional trainings on marine litter monitoring, all aimed at advancing our collective efforts to solve plastic pollution at its source. Together, these efforts are not just steps forward—they are laying the foundation towards a cleaner and sustainable future.

Key Highlights

- **Catalyzing Regional Actions: SEA of Solutions 2024 Celebrates Partnerships for a Plastic Waste-free Future**
- **Driving Impact in Sustainable Packaging: Building Regional Capacity for Effective Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and a Just Transition**
- **Enhancing Data Comparability and Data Analysis for Effective Marine Litter Monitoring in East Asian Seas Region**

- **Uniting Forces: SEA circular & GPAP Drive Regional Momentum to Tackle Plastic Pollution**
- **Bridging Rights and Responsibilities: Tackling Plastic Pollution Together with the Informal Sector**
- **26th Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM-26) of Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA): Empowering Regional Collaboration**
- **Advancing Marine Litter Solutions: Strengthening National Capacity on Survey Sampling of Plastic Waste in Malaysia**



Collaboration in action at SEA of Solutions 2024

Catalyzing Regional Actions: SEA of Solutions 2024 Celebrates Partnerships for a Plastic Waste-free Future

SEA of Solutions 2024 held from September 18-20 at the UN Conference Centre in Bangkok and supported by UNEP and the Government of Sweden, united over 600 participants from 76 countries in a landmark effort to combat plastic pollution in Southeast Asia. Under the theme "Delivering Actions to End Plastic Pollution," the event fostered collaboration among governments, businesses, civil society, and intergovernmental organizations.

Featuring **70 expert speakers**, the event included 7 plenary sessions, 8 knowledge sessions, and 23 exhibitors, covering topics like circularity, community engagement, and innovative financing. Field visits showcased real-world plastic recycling and community-driven initiatives, providing participants with practical insights.

The event underscored the urgency of establishing stronger legislative frameworks at national level, particularly through Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations, which hold producers accountable for plastic waste pollution; innovative financing models as a key enabler for regional plastic pollution initiatives, providing businesses and local communities with resources to scale solutions that tackle pollution at its source; and comprehensive change must span the entire plastic lifecycle, requiring a collaborative, multi-sectoral approach that is inclusive of communities and resilient across diverse sectors - driving long-term regional impact.

The momentum generated by SEA of Solutions 2024 is set to have lasting effects in the region. Resources including the **session recordings**, **presentations**, and an extensive **photo gallery** are now available, providing a foundation for continued engagement and capacity-building across Southeast Asia and beyond. SEA of Solutions 2024 highlighted the power of coordinated, region-wide efforts in combating plastic pollution, demonstrating the potential of collaborative platforms to drive sustainable change.

[Read More](#)



Experts from 14 ASEAN countries come together for the EPR capacity-building session on sustainable packaging

Driving Impact in Sustainable Packaging: Building Regional Capacity for Effective Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and a Just Transition

On September 17, we organized a capacity-building session on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), bringing together 39 participants from 14 ASEAN countries, including Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs), government officials, and the informal sector. The session explored key areas such as EPR policy development, the role of Producer Responsibility Organizations, and the just transition for informal waste workers. By focusing on practical strategies for managing packaging waste, this initiative strengthens the region's efforts to reduce plastic pollution and promote sustainability.

[Read More](#)



Participants at the Regional Training on Marine Litter Monitoring

Enhancing Data Comparability and Data Analysis for Effective Marine Litter Monitoring in East Asian Seas Region

The "Regional Training on Marine Litter Monitoring: Advancing Data Analysis" took place from September 15-17, 2024, in Bangkok, Thailand, gathering representatives from COBSEA member countries. This training

was designed to boost regional capabilities in marine litter data collection and analysis, equipping participants from the East Asian Seas region with critical skills to tackle marine plastic pollution. Supported by the SEA circular and MA-RE Design Projects, the event included hands-on exercises and collaborative case study discussions, emphasizing the need for standardized data collection and sharing. By enhancing skills in harmonized methodologies, the training directly supports [RAP MALI's](#) goal of fostering a coordinated regional response to reduce plastic waste and pollution.



Stakeholders unite at the GPAP Community Breakfast

Uniting Forces: SEA circular & GPAP Drive Regional Momentum to Tackle Plastic Pollution

On September 19, SEA circular and the Global Plastic Action Partnership (GPAP) joined forces to host a Community Breakfast at SEA of Solutions 2024 in Bangkok. Under the theme "Leading the Change: Collaborating Towards Ending Plastic Pollution in Asia," this gathering brought together government officials, private sector leaders, and key stakeholders, enhancing collaboration to combat plastic pollution across Southeast Asia.

Key takeaways from this impactful event include:

- **Enhanced Understanding:** Participants gained insights into regional challenges and collaborative opportunities, setting the stage for stronger partnerships.
- **Facilitated Dialogue:** Open discussions paved the way for innovative solutions, driving progress toward circularity in the plastic value chain.
- **Regional Cooperation:** Talks on forming a Regional Plastic Action Group highlighted the need for sustained coordination across GPAP, National Plastic Action Partnerships (NPAPs), and regional initiatives to address the transboundary nature of plastic pollution.

This collaboration aligns with global momentum toward a legally binding Global Plastics Treaty and underscores the urgency of regional cooperation in effective EPR schemes, funding mechanisms, and circular design to tackle plastic pollution at its source.



Participants engage in discussions on empowering informal waste workers in EPR schemes at the UN Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum

Bridging Rights and Responsibilities: Tackling Plastic Pollution Together with the Informal Sector

At the UN Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum, Asia Pacific, UNEP's SEA circular project hosted the session, "Bridging Rights and Responsibilities: Tackling Plastic Pollution Together with the Informal Sector," highlighting the critical role of informal waste workers in sustainable waste management. The session gathered 200 participants to discuss how Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes can include waste pickers and SMEs, ensuring their voices are heard in decision-making processes. Key takeaways emphasized the integration of human rights into business strategies and the importance of empowering informal workers to contribute to both upstream and downstream plastic waste solutions.

For more insights and key outcomes, [click here](#).

Watch events highlights [click here](#).



COBSEA IGM-26 in Siem Reap to enhance regional collaboration for sustainable marine environments

26th Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM-26) of Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA): Empowering Regional Collaboration

The Secretariat of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) and Cambodia's Ministry of Environment hosted the Twenty-sixth Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM-26) from 23 to 25 October 2024 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. This event included the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group on Marine Litter (WGML-6) held on 21-22 October.

The SEA circular project plays a crucial role in achieving RAP-MALI objectives through the development of harmonized methodologies for marine litter monitoring, enhancing regional capacities, and promoting collaboration among member countries to align national action plans with regional goals.

IGM-26 highlighted the commitment of COBSEA countries, to advancing sustainable marine and coastal environments across the East Asian Seas.



Participants conduct hands-on marine litter monitoring and survey sampling in Malaysia to enhance plastic waste management

Advancing Marine Litter Solutions: Strengthening National Capacity on Survey Sampling of Plastic Waste in Malaysia

As part of the SEA circular project, COBSEA co-organized a training session on marine litter monitoring in collaboration with Malaysia's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability (NRES), the Marine Institute of Malaysia (MIMA), and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) from 21-26 April. Led by CSIRO and hosted by the University of Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), the training included practical inland, river, coastal, and trawling survey sampling of plastic waste. This training and subsequent surveys aim to enhance harmonized monitoring and build capacity within the COBSEA region.

Photo Credits: United Nations Environment Programme

About SEA circular Project

The SEA circular project – Reducing marine litter by addressing the management of the plastic value chain in Southeast Asia is implemented by the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific and the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), with funding support from the Government of Sweden. SEA circular aims to reduce and prevent plastic pollution and its impact by working with governments, businesses, civil society, academia, and international partners. The initiative promotes market-based solutions and enabling policies to transform plastic value-chain management, strengthens the science base for informed decision making, creates outreach and awareness. The project leverages COBSEA's regional mechanism to tackle the transboundary challenge of marine litter in a harmonized manner.

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