



# ADDRESSING MARINE PLASTIC POLLUTION IN ASIA

POTENTIAL KEY ELEMENTS  
OF A GLOBAL AGREEMENT

WORKSHOP SUMMARY REPORT | JULY 2020



A clear plastic bottle is shown floating in the ocean. The bottle is partially filled with water and is positioned above a vibrant coral reef. The water is a deep blue, and the coral is a mix of orange, yellow, and green. The bottle's cap is a bright blue. The overall scene highlights the issue of marine plastic pollution.

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# A GLOBAL APPROACH TO MARINE PLASTIC POLLUTION

As plastic waste flows into the world's oceans at alarming rates, support for a global framework to tackle the ocean plastic crisis is rapidly growing.

Plastic litter and microplastics has been detected in all parts of the planet's marine environment, including the depths of the Mariana Trench<sup>1</sup>. Importantly, plastics cannot be contained with national boundaries. Over nine million tonnes of plastic waste enter the world's oceans every year. This plastic debris is a threat to wildlife – more than 270 species have been harmed by entanglement in discarded fishing gear and other plastic. Additionally 240 species have been recorded living with ingested plastic<sup>2</sup>. This is both a marine health and human health issue.

For most governments in Southeast Asia, this problem is particularly pertinent with the region at the receiving end of a broken global recycling system and waste management limitations. The economic impact of plastic pollution on the region's industries is estimated to reach US\$1.3 billion per year<sup>3</sup>.

While most governments in Asia have announced or are in the process of creating national-level legislative or regulatory measures, without coordination beyond national borders these measures are limited in their ability to address the broader transboundary challenge of marine plastic pollution<sup>4</sup>.

A UN Environment Programme (UNEP) assessment in November 2019 highlights the limited packaging-related policies and weak enforcement as aggravating factors, calling for harmonised, pan-ASEAN policies to address the issue for harmonised, pan-ASEAN policies to address the issue.

Plastic pollution is a global, transboundary and cross-sectoral problem that requires coordinated action, shared responsibility and a collective approach.

The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) has in its four consecutive sessions adopted resolutions recognised the need to stop the discharge of plastic litter and microplastics into the oceans. Reports have demonstrated fundamental gaps in the current international legal and policy frameworks, rendering them ill-equipped to eliminate this problem. Member states have started exploring a number of policy responses as well as measures to strengthen global governance structures, including the possibility of a new global agreement.

<sup>1</sup> Royal Society Open Science, Feb 2019, Microplastics and synthetic particles ingested by deep-sea amphipods in six of the deepest marine ecosystems on Earth

<sup>2</sup> Dahlberg, 2019, Solving Plastic Pollution through Accountability

<sup>3</sup> UNEP Report, Nov 2019, The role of packaging Regulations and Standards in driving the Circular Economy

<sup>4</sup> UNEP/AHEG/2018/1INF/3 Combating Marine Plastic Litter and Microplastics: An Assessment of the Effectiveness of Relevant International, Regional and Sub-Regional Governance Strategies and Approaches



To protect our oceans and prevent an ever increasing ecological, social and economic catastrophe at a global level, states must act decisively and negotiate a legally binding international treaty to combat marine plastic pollution as a matter of urgency. There is no time to waste.

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) calls on all countries to express their unequivocal support for the immediate start of negotiations, at the United Nations or in another available intergovernmental arena, for a new global treaty to combat marine plastic pollution.

## GLOBAL MOMENTUM IS GROWING

In the span of a year, a growing number of countries have issued regional declarations calling for global action on plastic pollution, with legally binding elements to be considered.

**APRIL 2019**  
**NORDIC REGION**

Nordic Ministerial Declaration on marine litter and microplastics calls for the development of a global agreement and agrees on a Nordic Report to inform decision-making.

**JUNE 2019**  
**ASEAN**

The Bangkok Declaration and Framework of Action on Combating Marine Debris seeks to enhance regional and international cooperation to address marine debris.

**JULY 2019**  
**CARICOM**

St. John's Declaration underscores the urgent need for a global agreement.

**AUGUST 2019**  
**PACIFIC ISLANDS' KAINAKI II DECLARATION**

The endorsement for the Pacific Regional Action Plan 2018-2025 includes support the development of a global legal framework.

**OCTOBER 2019**  
**NORWAY, SWEDEN & GRENADA**

Through the Our Ocean's Commitment, the countries have committed to work for the establishment of a new global agreement.

**NOVEMBER 2019**  
**54 AFRICAN STATES**

The Joint African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) declaration supports global action, including to explore the option of a new legally binding agreement.

**FEBRUARY 2020**  
**INDIA & NORWAY**

Joint Declaration on marine plastic pollution commits to exploring the feasibility of establishing a new global agreement on plastic pollution.

**MARCH 2020**  
**EUROPEAN UNION**

The New Circular Economy Plan states the European Union's aim to lead efforts at an international level to reach a global agreement on plastics.

**JUNE 2020**  
**55 COUNTRIES**

The Group of Friends to Combat Marine Plastic Pollution, established by countries through their missions to the UN in New York, launched to support the process to explore global response options, including a new global agreement that will address marine plastic pollution on a systemic level.



## ABOUT THIS REPORT

# REGIONAL POLICY WORKSHOP

Organised by WWF, 14 delegates from Southeast and South Asia responded to a WWF invitation for a Virtual Workshop on 26-27 May 2020 to discuss potential global policy approaches to addressing marine plastic pollution. The countries represented are: Lao PDR, Maldives, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Timor Leste (via written submission) and Viet Nam.

Shared workshop objectives that delegates agreed on were as follows:

- Exploring potential elements in a legally binding instrument
- Global and regional instruments to address marine plastic pollution
- Taking a lifecycle approach to marine plastic pollution
- Strengthening science and technology
- Elevating the agenda at UNEA-5 and other international fora

To enable open discussions and free sharing of ideas, the workshop was conducted under Chatham House rules, where discussions are not attributed to specific participants. The key findings outlined in this report should be taken as the collective results of this workshop.

**This report aims to provide a guide for policymakers exploring the possible key elements of a global agreement to address marine plastic pollution. Based on the collective insights and contributions by representatives, the issues and potential policy approaches summarised in this report provide a starting point for further bilateral, regional and even global discussions.**



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TOWARDS 2030:

# SHARED GLOBAL POLICY APPROACHES

With the objective of finding policy approaches that effectively address the impacts of marine plastic pollution faced by countries in Asia and globally, workshop participants outlined and agreed on a set of shared goals and approaches. This helped frame the subsequent conversations, providing a starting point for all participants to recognise the shared values and outcomes for the region to work towards in the coming decade.

## SHARED GOALS BY 2030

Elimination of plastic leakage into the ocean, with realistic targets linked to SDG 14.1.  
A sustainable circular economy that includes a reduction of plastic use and phase out of unnecessary single use plastics.



## ...ACHIEVED BY

Comprehensive policy framework and common standards, considering land- and sea-based sources.  
Taking a life cycle approach.  
Clear, achievable and measurable targets and timelines for plastic waste and leakage reduction.  
Incentivised compliance and strengthened enforcement.  
Behavioural change.  
Financial mechanisms and support for developing countries and built-in flexibility.  
Extended Producer Responsibility and other market-based mechanisms.  
Evidence-based approach.



## ...AND GUIDED BY

Equitable distribution of environmental and social risks and costs.  
Participatory principle especially of the private sector.  
Polluter pays principle.  
Precautionary approach.  
Common but differentiated responsibility principle



# NATIONAL GAPS

A starting point for workshop representatives was to understand shared challenges in addressing marine plastic pollution, with every country outlining their national perspectives about the gaps that could not be effectively addressed at the national level. From among these, a common trend emerged on the need for better and coherent global actions across the life cycle of plastics, alongside national and regional efforts.

**1. The lack of legislation and a governance framework at an international level creates a gap in regulation and laws that manage the global plastic life cycle.** There was consensus on the need for regional and international cooperation, with a legally binding global agreement as a possible approach. This would enhance:

- a. Support from other countries to ensure effectiveness of new national measures to address plastic pollution
- b. Regulation on the import and export of plastic materials (including fossil-based plastics), products and waste
- c. Reduction in the production and consumption of certain plastics

**2. Limitations in effectively managing transboundary plastic waste nationally.**

A shared concern was the need to address plastic waste that originated from neighboring countries or outside national jurisdiction. Countries reported challenges in the monitoring and reporting of transboundary plastic waste flows, especially in international waters. A limited understanding of plastic waste leakage sources, in turn, impacts the accurate identification of intervention targets.

Key concerns around transboundary plastic waste highlighted were:

- a. Lost fishing gear or ghost gear, which in turn impacts marine species, fishery resources and tourism

- b. Dumping of plastics by the shipping industry

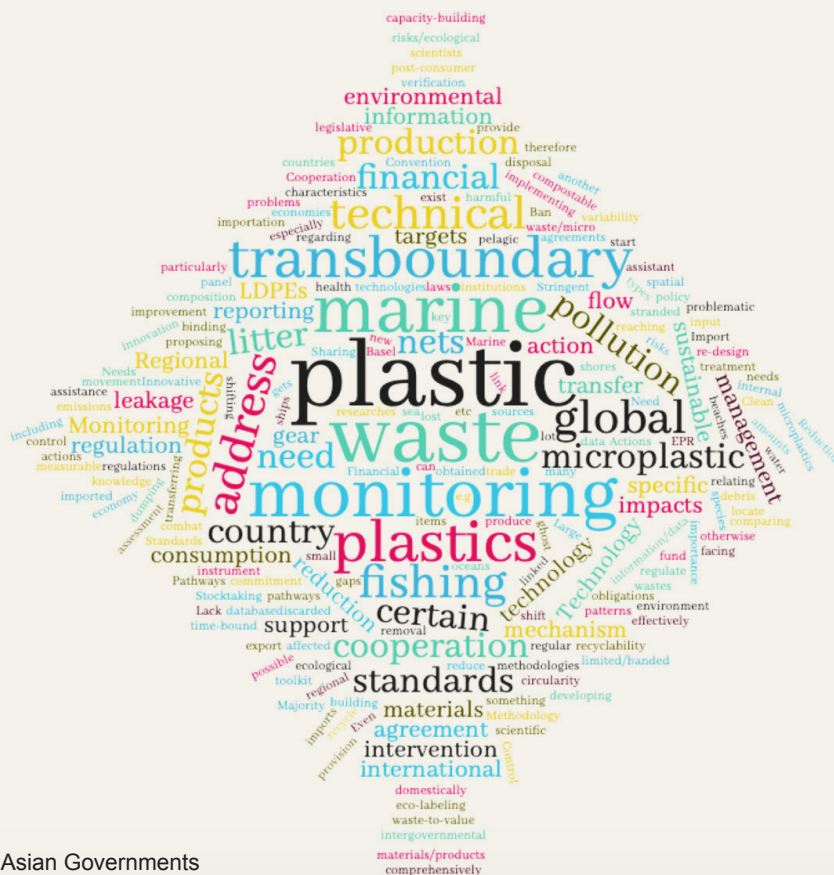
- c. Lack of recovery efforts of marine debris in national waters coming from the oceans

**3. The importance of technical cooperation and financial mechanisms** in supporting implementation, including capacity building and technology transfer, was highlighted by participants. This also addresses the need for solutions for better or equal alternative materials to plastic.

Potential approaches discussed include:

- a. Technology intervention and technical assistance for plastic production, assessment, monitoring, recycling and recovery
- b. Potential for a global fund, technical cooperation, or policy toolkit
- c. Transfer of technology on innovation and redesign of plastics, i.e., materials reduction, recyclability improvement, shift to compostable and waste-to-value schemes
- d. Innovative research methodologies regarding plastic characteristics related to ecological and health impacts

Additionally, participants highlighted factors for success to address gaps collaboratively across borders, such as the need for commitment by financial institutions as well as need for strong support from regional centres, with the Basel Convention Regional Centres cited as an example.



- 4. There are no consistent global standards for methodology, regulation of plastics, eco-labelling and EPR on plastics.** These are outlined, as follows:
  - a. Methodology on monitoring standards, regular reporting, verification and stocktaking
  - b. Global agreement to regulate certain types and composition of plastics
  - c. Eco-labelling standards for plastic products (to identify environmentally acceptable compositions of plastics)
  - d. EPR standards for the treatment and disposal of post-consumer products
- 5. There are gaps in science and knowledge for plastics and microplastics.** Participants reported a lack of information and database in informing the management of health and environmental risks or ecological impacts of plastic pollution. A potential suggestion raised to be explored was creating an intergovernmental panel of scientists.
- 6. There is currently no overview of progress towards clear goals and targets exist to track plastic emissions into the oceans.** While many governments have developed regulatory mechanisms on a national level, the lack of data and obligation to report on measures and results make it hard for countries to keep track of progress. Participants agreed on the need for specific measurable, time bound global reduction targets and monitoring schemes.
- 7. The global plastics economy is linear,** with limited emphasis on reducing usage or scaling recycling throughout the life cycle. Participants agreed on the need to shift to more sustainable consumption and production patterns, in order to build circularity into the plastics economy where all plastics are recovered.
- 8. Many areas have weak fundamental waste management systems,** resulting in plastic leaking into aquatic systems and national waters.



## POTENTIAL POLICY MEASURES COVERING

# THE LIFE CYCLE OF PLASTICS

Plastic pollution is a transboundary issue. Its impacts are experienced globally, caused by a supply chain that is also global in nature. The world's plastic economy today is a linear one. Failures at each stage in the plastics life cycle creates a systemic problem that results in a third of all plastic waste - amounting to 100 metric tons a year<sup>5</sup> - leaking into nature.

By creating consistent global standards from source materials to waste management and recovery, while ensuring global cooperation, policy measures can change the linear global economy for plastics into one that is circular. Participants discussed potential elements to be considered in a global treaty on plastic pollution to address the entire life cycle of plastics.



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## THE LIFE CYCLE OF PLASTICS:



<sup>5</sup> Dahlberg analysis, Jambeck et al (2017)

1

## SOURCE MATERIAL



The following measures are aimed at drastically reducing the environmental footprint created from the manufacturing of virgin plastic from fossil fuel chemicals, while reflecting the true cost of plastics to nature and society.

1. Promote the use of raw materials in plastic production with materials that are low carbon, low environmental footprint.
2. Provision of an incentive system for alternative and sustainable feedstock.
3. Introduce regulation on subsidies and incentives for fossil-based primary feedstock.
4. Identify better or equal alternative materials.

2

## MANUFACTURING



Plastic converters, manufacturers of products made out of virgin plastic, have limited responsibility for effectively managing end-of-life waste impacts. Decisions taken by plastic converters directly affect the price competitiveness and quality of recycled plastic. The following measures help ensure consistent standards and encourage innovation in facilitating the post-consumer recovery of plastics.

1. Innovate and redesign plastics.
2. Regulate certain types, composition and production methods of plastics.
3. Reduce production of certain LDPEs.
4. Introduce eco-labelling standards for plastic products.

3

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE



Uncollected waste often becomes plastic pollution, the main causes being underdeveloped waste management infrastructure and barriers that make it difficult for end-users to sort and dispose of their waste. Limited investment in waste management infrastructure amid the many competing development priorities makes this particularly challenging for low and middle-income countries.

By ensuring that international controls are in place for the movement of plastic products and waste, the following measures ensure shared accountability between producers and consumers; exporters and importers.

1. Regulate and control the import and export of plastic and plastic products.
2. Provision of safety measures on the international trade of plastic and plastic products.
3. Strengthen compliance to international standards in the trade of plastic waste, linked to the Basel Convention.



4

## CONSUMPTION



The convenience and prevalence of plastic products in the consumer market, particularly single use items, accounts for large volumes of plastic by individuals. The following policy measures are aimed at creating behavioural change towards consumption choices that enable better waste management and recovery, while creating market demand for effective alternatives.

1. Introduce incentives for innovations that promote sustainable or plastic-free alternatives.
2. Create a labelling mechanism to promote better consumer choices.
3. Consider to reduce the consumption of unnecessary single use plastics.

5

## WASTE MANAGEMENT



Mismanaged waste as a result of inadequate waste management infrastructure is a direct cause of plastic pollution. Without improvements to waste management systems, the global volume of plastic pollution is set to increase rapidly. The following outline global and national measures that can be undertaken to improve waste management infrastructure.

1. Create an international financial mechanism for waste management and recovery.
2. Set international standards on waste management practices, including export and import of recycled waste.
3. Implement Extended Producer Responsibility schemes to support private sector participation.
4. Set national targets for waste avoidance, diversion and recovery.
5. Introduce national laws and regulations on waste management to ensure compliance by waste management facilities.

6

## CLEAN UP



Plastic pollution in nature poses a serious threat to marine ecosystems, wildlife and even impacts human food chains. While upstream policies help address the root of the global crisis, measures to recover legacy plastic and clean up coastal and marine environments can be supported by effective systems and processes.

1. Set up waste management systems that can support the recovery of plastic waste from nature.
2. Consider regional efforts for the removal of fishing gear.
3. Ensure that collection processes also provide data on the source and types of waste in order to inform upstream measures.

# GLOBAL TREATY ON PLASTIC POLLUTION



## NATIONAL COMMITMENTS

A comprehensive global agreement for systemic change on the plastic economy must set out an international goal with strong national targets that are not just ambitious, but also measurable and feasible that take into consideration national contexts.

- All commitments should be **specific, measurable and time-bound**.
- All parties should commit to adopt and implement a **national action plan with set goals and targets**, which can **follow the recommendations of UN SDG 14.1**.
- The technical and financial **needs specified in national action plans** can be used to set targets for **additional global commitments**.
- There should be **strong national commitments regarding contributions to match the ambition of the global goal**.
  - Differentiate between targets of developed and developing nations
- **Developed countries** to be called upon to contribute to technology transfer and financial mechanisms.
- **Regular reporting** that includes general guidelines for methodology of monitoring and verification, as well as voluntary methodology as appropriate in the national context.
  - Consider regularity and timing of reports, i.e. whether annual/bi-annual, and the mode of reporting, i.e. standardised templates, preferably simplified and done online



## INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENTS

Legislation and financial incentives support industry to develop environmentally sound alternatives to conventional plastic, maximise opportunities to scale commercially viable alternatives while creating commercial schemes at regional, national and sub-national levels that ensure industry participation in the management of plastic production and use.

- **Public-Private Partnerships** can be a mechanism to facilitate cooperation between governments and corporations.
- **Enforceable technical regulations** to ensure/demand actions from the industry.
- **Global promotion and adoption of EPR schemes<sup>6</sup>**, that are customised and adapted to national contexts, using a phased approach where appropriate, is a potential regulation to ensure industry's role to support.
  - Ensure that international/multinational companies comply with and contribute to national EPR schemes
  - Consider also **reverse logistics systems** (buy-back systems, take-back systems) as part of industry engagement to support a circular economy
- Apply and use **polluter pays principle** as a guide to develop these regulations towards better actions from industry. Consider differentiating companies as to size and and their potential contribution to the problem.
- Consider **mandatory reporting/verification** of companies' compliance with regulations or commitments, including those on eco-labelling.

<sup>6</sup> A follow-through discussion on 10 June 2020 was held to gather feedback and finalise this report. An additional consideration on industry engagement suggested by a delegate, that was not part of the agreed discussion from the workshop, was to consider extended stakeholder responsibility to share accountability across the entire life cycle of plastics.

- Strengthen the implementation of environmentally sound management practices for industries, as related to the Basel Convention.
- Unlock private sector investment through enabling policies and reduced investment barriers and risks that will facilitate solutions and create market demand for material recovery and recycling.
- Incentivise private sector engagement and investment in waste treatment facilities and other infrastructures for waste management and material recovery. Consistent with the polluter pays principle, these incentives should only apply to the private sector that are non-plastic producers, manufacturers or distributors.



## SCIENCE & KNOWLEDGE

Whilst there was divergence with respect to the structure of a scientific institution at the global level, there was general consensus on the functions which need to be carried out at the global level, including access to regular and globally accepted scientific advice.

### Functions Requiring Global Coordination

- **Provide scientific advice and guidance at the global level, guide global and regional studies, build on existing cooperation and guide technical working groups and advisory groups.**
- **Identify gaps in the implementation process** such as communication among the regional platforms and to ensure equal progress within groups.
- **Consolidate knowledge and manpower** by mapping out the existing committees so as to prevent duplicates and over expenditure of funding.

### Approach to Receiving Scientific Advice

- **Option 1: Establish an intergovernmental scientific panel**, similar to the Inter-Governmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) for climate, drawing on the knowledge and scientific research of all relevant institutions.

## Option 2: Build on and further develop existing platforms, such as:

- UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC). The IOC promotes international cooperation and coordinates programmes in marine research, services, observation systems, hazard mitigation, and capacity development in order to understand and effectively manage the resources of the ocean and coastal areas
- International Resources Panel, launched by the UN Environment Programme to build and share the knowledge needed to improve the use of resources worldwide



## MEASURING PROGRESS

As countries implement measures at the sub national, national, regional levels, it is important to measure the progress at the global scale in reducing plastic pollution. Globally accepted and comparable/interoperable standards for measuring and reporting progress is important to provide a complete picture. When countries report progress, tracking is standardised to determine which countries are progressing well or which ones require further support.

General consensus with respect to some of the key features of measuring progress which are important at the global and regional levels include:

### Adoption of Common Standards for Measuring Progress

- Parameters reported on by countries could be based on existing indicators set under global, regional and national frameworks such as SDG 14, and other existing time bound and measurable targets.
- A stocktake of existing reporting requirements and the harmonisation of said reporting standards is needed to prevent duplication.





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- Strengthen coordination and cooperation between various existing scientific platforms to harmonise reporting needs, data collection methods and to prevent future duplications and divergence where possible.
- In parallel with the global harmonisation of reporting standards, countries could adopt localised minimum standards for reporting which relate to their national, regional and global commitments. The indicators could include:
  - Innovations and new measures that are being applied or implemented
  - Targets and progress on plastic recycling, reduction in plastic manufacturing and consumption, as well as the reduction of waste leakage
  - Scientific research methodology for data collection
- Additional parameters/indicators should be introduced based on the guidance of the scientific community/panel.
- Common standards with respect to the method of data collection and reporting would also be needed for data to be reported in a consistent manner and for data to be comparable.

#### **Transparent Reporting and Review System**

- A mechanism that promotes transparent reporting system is needed to promote good governance, collaboration, co-operation and to prevent unfair treatment with respect to non-compliance.
- The platform should be easily accessible.
- Transparency in reporting on capacity gaps and needs is also important to prevent unfair penalisation in the face of non-compliance. I.e., Countries need to report on capacity gaps rather than opting to state “Not Available/Not Applicable” when reporting.
- The monitoring and review framework and method also needs to be transparent to ensure equitable treatment for all.

#### **Capacity Considerations**

- Progress to be benchmarked against capacity, knowledge, resource gaps as well as to access to resource needs.
- Access for technical, financial and knowledge resource to fulfil reporting needs should be created.

#### **General**

- Progress should be measured based on nationally determined targets.
- Differentiated targets should apply to developing and developed nations.



## FUNDING MECHANISM

Participants generally agreed on the need for new and innovative financial mechanisms to support or fund measures to address marine plastic pollution, based on national context and circumstances. Suggestions ranged from setting up a dedicated global fund to using innovative financial mechanisms such as public-private partnerships. In addition, the adoption of Extended Producer Responsibility approaches could free up public funds by keeping producers accountable for post-consumer plastics.

### Global Fund

- Set up a **global fund** similar to the Global Environment Facility or the Global Climate Fund to support efforts of countries against reducing plastic pollution.
- The global fund and how it will be set up, funded, managed and accessed by countries can be based on common but differentiated responsibilities and should consider national circumstances of countries.
- Given the different capacities of countries with the means, these countries can potentially pledge funding.
- Eligibility to access the funds should extend even to land-locked countries, following an ecosystem-based or ridge-to-reef approach to stop the leakage from rivers and waterways into the ocean.
- Support inexperienced countries or institutions in proposal development and application for funding to access the fund.
- Consider provision of funds to promote research and education.

### Extended Producer Responsibility

- To increase industry engagement, the **adoption of an EPR scheme** that is customised, phased and adapted to national contexts, as well as other buy-back systems, are innovative ways to increase funding for waste management and material recovery.
- Following the polluter pays principle, companies can be responsible for the end of life of their products in the market.
- Ensure that international/multi-national companies comply with and contribute to national EPR schemes.



## PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships can be tapped as a support mechanism to countries needing assistance. Various approaches discussed include:

- Role of development partners in international cooperation could be to assist countries in providing financial/technical support to implement obligations under the treaty.
- Regional partnerships, which can be effective in ensuring close cooperation.
- Involvement of the private sector in innovative research and technology as they have the resources and ability to add value.
- Global collaboration amongst academic institutions and NGOs would also be a good to promote and enhance research and education, increasing expertise and information in addressing reducing plastic pollution.



## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE/ TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

While compliance mechanisms need to be in place to ensure that countries follow through on their commitments, it is critical to understand that countries have different capacities in technology know-how and access. Support mechanisms in the form of technical assistance, technology transfer and capacity building help ensure that all countries have the capacity to comply with obligations set out in any global agreement.

### Technical Assistance

- Set up facilities for technical assistance on waste management and material recovery.
- Global and regional cooperation on innovative research and methodologies on plastic characteristics related to ecological and health impacts.
- Create a knowledge sharing platform for innovative technology by setting up or strengthening existing ones.

## Technology Transfer

- Technology transfer on innovative systems/processes/ solutions on how to shift to reusable, more recyclable materials; for increasing recycled plastic waste/ recyclability component of the plastic products; and the re-design of product or packaging.
- Consider the mechanisms for such technology transfer, e.g. clearing house for technologies to be shared, or the development of a knowledge platform.
- Consider availability of manpower and resources to implement the transferred technology.



## CAPACITY BUILDING

Participants agreed on the need to enhance the capacities of implementing countries to help address plastic pollution and support the move towards a circular economy. This can be achieved through platforms for information exchange and capacity building programmes<sup>7</sup>.

- Some **thematic areas** for capacity-building and information exchange are as follows:
  - Focus on material recovery toward a circular economy
  - Enabling policies targeting the private sector to facilitate market demand for innovative products or re-designed products
  - Set up, transition towards and implement EPR schemes and eco-labelling initiatives
  - Innovative financial mechanisms, including traditional approaches of using tax, fees, penalties and incentives and public-private partnerships
  - Awareness and behavioural change led by government and private sector, while keeping in mind the impact of COVID-19
  - Monitoring of transboundary movement of marine debris through the provision of monitoring tools
- Incorporate **monitoring, evaluation and reporting of progress** within capacity building programs to determine whether new knowledge and skills from the programs are applied and implemented by countries in achieving progress.

<sup>7</sup> At the follow-through discussion on 10 June 2020, an additional consideration that was not part of the agreed discussion from the workshop was to set up a Regional Support and/or Research Centre on Plastic to help guide commitments to reduce plastic pollution and leakage by countries in ASEAN or Asia. This would help:

- a. Reduce the divergence in views on the approach for combating plastic pollution;
- b. Establish a science community for plastic;
- c. Build and check a progress report by giving comments, advisories, technical assistance;
- d. Approach new technology relating to recyclable materials, re-design of product or packaging;
- e. Create platforms for information exchange. Chair to deploy and implement capacity building programmes.



## NEXT STEPS

# THE ROAD AHEAD

Workshop participants agreed on follow through actions moving forward, including potential platforms where the results can be elevated at. Some options considered were:



- Follow up meeting or workshop with interested countries in the region to sustain momentum and cover areas of discussion.
- All member states to consider individual submissions that include results of this workshop to the UN Ad Hoc Open Ended Expert Group on Marine Litter and Microplastics (AHEG). Submissions should be submitted to UNEP: <https://papersmart.unon.org/resolution/response> or sent via email to [unenvironment-gpml@un.org](mailto:unenvironment-gpml@un.org) and [stephanie.vanderpoel@un.org](mailto:stephanie.vanderpoel@un.org)
- Bring discussion to a political level through the preparation and submission of official statements, and continue to have bilateral meetings.
- Consider a joint official statement of support circulated amongst countries for agreement, as usually done among ASEAN countries at other meetings (i.e., UNGA, UN, UNEA, COP).
- To share outcomes with all ASEAN countries and all stakeholders within the respective countries.
- The Norwegian government welcomes political dialogue with interested countries from the region. Eg., Potential conference hosted by Viet Nam and co-hosted by Norway could discuss these issues.

### TO FIND OUT MORE, PLEASE CONTACT:

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# LIST OF DELEGATES AT THE VIRTUAL WORKSHOP

|                    |                                                                 |                                                                                                 |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>LAOS</b>        | Ministry of Natural Resources<br>and Environment Laos           | Mr. Sivannakone Malivarn                                                                        |
| <b>MALDIVES</b>    | Ministry of Environment                                         | Ms. Fazeela Ahmed Shaheem                                                                       |
| <b>MYANMAR</b>     | Ministry of Natural Resources<br>and Environmental Conservation | Mr. Soe Naing<br>Ms. Thin Thin Soe<br>Ms. Thaw Thaw Han<br>Ms. Khin San Hlaing<br>Ms. Su Su Win |
| <b>PHILIPPINES</b> | Department of Environment<br>and Natural Resources              | Mr. Albert Magalang<br>Mr. Conrad Bravante<br>Ms. Eda Soriano                                   |
| <b>THAILAND</b>    | Ministry of Natural Resources<br>and Environment                | Mr. Supawat Kan-atireklap<br>Dr. Suree Satapoomin                                               |
| <b>TIMOR LESTE</b> | Office of Secretary State<br>for Environment                    | Ms. America "Meni" Machado<br>Fernandes (Written Submission)                                    |
| <b>VIET NAM</b>    | Ministry of Natural Resources<br>and Environment                | Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Son<br>Mr. Vu Dinh Hieu<br>Mr. Luu Anh Duc                                      |



A vibrant underwater photograph of a coral reef. The water is a deep, clear blue, and sunlight filters down from the surface, creating a shimmering effect. The coral is diverse, with various shapes and colors including yellows, oranges, and browns. The overall scene is healthy and thriving.

# OUR MISSION IS TO STOP THE DEGRADATION OF THE PLANET'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND TO BUILD A FUTURE IN WHICH HUMANS LIVE IN HARMONY WITH NATURE.



Working to sustain the natural  
world for the benefit of people  
and wildlife.

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WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

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