



Collaborative Action for Single-Use Plastic Prevention in Southeast Asia



Thailand and Malaysia



Background

Existing production and consumption patterns in Southeast Asian countries are mostly based on a linear raw materials economy in which plastic materials are poorly managed and disposed as waste after a short period of use. The widespread use of single-use plastic (SUP) contributes significantly to the pollution of water and seas. Low raw material prices, counterproductive incentive systems, a lack of awareness and missing alternatives are the main reasons for the rapidly growing amount of disposable plastic. Thai and Malaysian policy makers have recognised that the introduction of circular economy principles in production and trade along the waste hierarchy (i.e. reduce, reuse, recycle) can be an essential solution, although the focus on prevention strategies has only recently become a political focus. The project responds to Malaysia's upcoming 12th Five Year Plan (2021-2025) and Thailand's Plastic Roadmap (2018-2030), which aims at reducing or banning SUP products by replacing these with durable, repairable, and more environmentally friendly alternatives.

Aim of the cooperation

The aim of the project is to reduce single-use plastic waste with a clear focus on upstream strategies of prevention and preparation for re-use. To this end, the project employs a blended approach,



consisting of policy advice on circular economy and extended producer responsibility (EPR) approaches (Malaysia only), capacity development for key stakeholders, local government pilot activities and support for innovative business models tackling SUP prevention. The project contributes directly to the Sustainable Development Goal to ensure sustainable production and consumption patterns (SDG 12), especially Target 12.5 "By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse".

What we do

- **Institutional Framework:** We advise and support our local partners and other key players in the development of recycling markets and implementation of systems for extended producer responsibility (in Malaysia). Furthermore, we advise on product related environmental protection such as the development of eco-designs, guidelines and material efficiency criteria. These can then be certified with eco-labels and supported through sustainable public procurement.



- **New Business Solutions:** We support Thai, Malaysian and international partners in the development of innovative and sustainable business models for single use plastic prevention and/or preparation for reuse.
- **Pilot Projects:** We design and implement pilot projects aiming at SUP reduction with local municipalities.
- **Knowledge Management:** We analyse lessons learnt and disseminate best practices to relevant institutions.

Key results

- Using a design-thinking approach (Lab of Tomorrow #8), we developed innovative solutions and business models for the reduction of plastic packaging waste. The selection of possible solution approaches took place through an expert evaluation.

Project partners

Thailand:

- National Science and Technology Agency
- Thai Environmental Institute
- Pollution Control Department
- Thai Business Council on Sustainable Development
- Thai Industrial Institute
- Federation of Thai Industries
- PPP Plastics Thailand
- ÖKO Institut e.V.

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Global Project
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Köthener Str. 2
10963 Berlin / Germany
Tel. +49 (0) 30 338 424 646

E markus.luecke@giz.de
I www.giz.de

More information
<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/78869.html>

Edited by
Markus Lücke
Dr. Vanesa Rodriguez Osuna

Design
creative republic, Frankfurt am Main/Germany

Malaysia:

- Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister Department
- Ministry of Environment and Water
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