

# Advancing Marine Litter Prevention in the ASEAN Region through the 3RproMar Project

## Background

Around 14 million tonnes of plastic end up in the ocean annually, making a large part of marine litter and constituting 80% of all marine debris across surface waters and deep-sea sediments.<sup>1</sup> Alarmingly, if current trends persist, projections indicate that the ocean may contain more plastic than fish, in weight, by 2025.<sup>2</sup>

The Coral Triangle, a vital hub of marine biodiversity in Southeast Asia with over 120 million people relying on its resources for livelihood, is disproportionately impacted by this crisis. Meanwhile, the volume of solid waste and marine litter in Southeast Asia is increasing, fueled by urbanisation and a growing consumer class, among other factors<sup>3</sup>. Given the transboundary nature of marine litter, collective action from ASEAN is imperative to mitigate further degradation of the marine environment. Recognising this urgency, ASEAN Member States (AMS) have demonstrated commendable progress in addressing marine litter, evident through the launch of the Bangkok Declaration for Combating Marine Debris and the ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris, as well as the ASEAN Regional Action Plan (RAP) for Combating Marine Debris in 2019 and in 2021, respectively.

In early 2022, United Nations Member States endorsed a resolution to combat plastic pollution (including the marine environment) through an international legally binding agreement (ILBI). This led to the formation of an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) on plastic pollution, which has begun its work since late 2022 to complete its task by the end of 2024. Presenting a promising framework for addressing the marine litter crisis in the region, it is crucial that AMS are well-prepared to engage with the ILBI effectively. ASEAN has acknowledged the importance of the INC processes and has increased its engagement in this regard.

## Our approach

In addressing these issues, the ASEAN-German cooperation project “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle to Protect the Marine Environment and Coral Reefs” (3RproMar) strives to assist AMS in enhancing their capacities to reduce land-based waste leakage, thereby safeguarding the marine environment through collaborative efforts. Given that land-based sources account for most marine plastic litter, the project applies integrated solutions across the plastic value chain, in line with the ASEAN Framework of Action and RAP on Marine Debris. The project commenced in July 2020 and is anticipated to be in operation until June 2025.

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Project name          | Reduce, Reuse, Recycle to Protect the Marine Environment and Coral Reefs (3RproMar)   |
| Commissioned by       | Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ)  |
| Project region        | ASEAN (Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, Viet Nam)  |
| Main beneficiaries    | ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment (AWGCME), ASEAN Working Group on Chemicals and Waste (AWGCW), ASEAN Working Group on Environmentally Sustainable Cities (AW-GESC) |
| Partner institution   | ASEAN Secretariat   |
| Lead executing agency | Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH  |
| Duration              | 01.07.2020– 30.06.2025  |

3RproMar outcome includes four output areas, with the first output focusing on the regional aspect of the project, aiming at strengthening regional cooperation and knowledge management and ensuring that members of the pertinent AWGs gain a better understanding of approaches to reducing land-based sources of marine litter. The project is conceptualised as a bridge connecting formal policy advice with the practical experiences of direct implementation. The project combines a unique approach to policy advice at the regional and national levels with direct implementation experience in the pilot sites. Therefore, it can serve as an intermediary to highlight best practices to be shared with all AMS. These hands-on experiences will be evaluated and shared at the regional level. One example is a planned toolbox for behavioural change campaigns that can be used by stakeholders at both local and national levels. With regards to the INC processes, such a unique strategy has the potential to seamlessly integrate insights derived from a national perspective into the broader international discourse surrounding the framework of ILBI. The project takes the opportunity to enhance its engagement with ASEAN and AMS to support collaborative actions in the INC processes, particularly through capacity development.

## Enhancing Regional Knowledge Management and Capacity Development in ASEAN

In May 2023, 3RproMar launched a **Regional Knowledge Partnership for Marine Litter Prevention in ASEAN** which involves the following organisations that are currently active in marine litter prevention in the region:



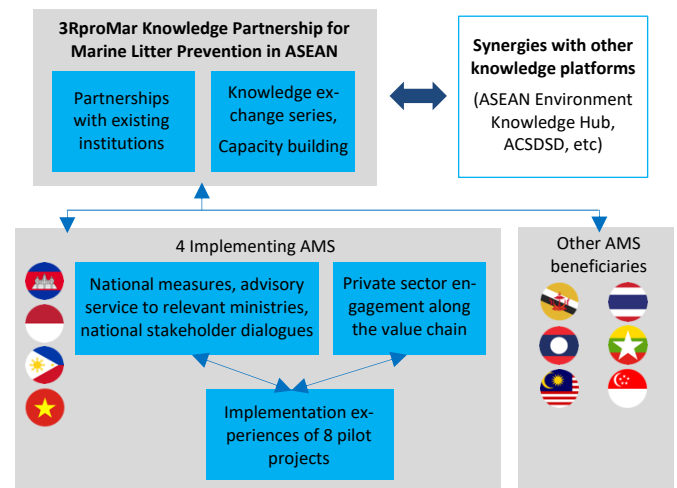
Piyush Dhawan  
Principal Advisor

[piyush.dhawan@giz.de](mailto:piyush.dhawan@giz.de)

L. to r.: Collective action to protect the marine environment

| Platform   | Areas   |
|--|---|
| <b>kNOwWaste Knowledge (kKw)</b><br>Host: Regional Resource Centre for Asia and the Pacific (RRC.AP) by the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT)<br><a href="https://www.knowwaste.net/">https://www.knowwaste.net/</a> | Enhanced knowledge and capacity on waste data management, marine debris, and Circular Economy                               |
| <b>Regional Knowledge Center for Marine Plastic Debris (RKC-MPD)</b><br>Host: Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA)<br><a href="https://rkcmpd-eria.org/">https://rkcmpd-eria.org/</a>            | Enhanced knowledge and capacity on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and private sector engagement                     |
| <b>International Knowledge Hub Against Plastic Pollution (IKHAPP)</b><br>Host: Norwegian Institute for Water Research (NIVA)<br><a href="https://ikhapp.org/">https://ikhapp.org/</a>                                  | Enhanced knowledge and capacity in the informal recycling sector, micro- and macro-plastic releases models, and INC process |

range of topics across the plastic value chain such as EPR, behaviour change, and other emerging topics in line with the needs of AMS such as the upcoming ILBI and microplastic. The workshops also enable discussions on existing approaches, challenges, and opportunities, while facilitating the transfer of knowledge from the regional to national levels. Thus far, there have been two workshop series successfully conducted in 2022 and in 2023. Furthermore, thematic deep dives will be organised collaboratively with other organisations to provide insights on recent scientific findings and good practices, to furnish policymakers with the necessary background knowledge for informed decision-making at both regional and national levels, as well as in complying to international processes such as the ILBI.



Sources:

- <sup>1</sup>IUCN Issues Brief. 2021. <https://www.iucn.org/resources/issues-brief/marine-plastic-pollution#:~:text=At%20least%2014%20million%20tons,causes%20severe%20injuries%20and%20death.>
- <sup>2</sup>EllenMcArthur Foundation. 2014. <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/the-new-plastics-economy-rethinking-the-future-of-plastics>
- <sup>3</sup>ASEAN RAP for Combating Marine Debris. 2021. <https://asean.org/book/asean-regional-action-plan-for-combating-marine-debris-in-the-asean-member-states-2021-2025-2/>

The Partnership aims to bridge the knowledge gap and enhance the capacities of the AWGs in a coordinated manner, aligning with the priorities outlined in the ASEAN RAP and emerging topics covered within the upcoming ILBI. Through this initiative, (a) **knowledge and information sharing** among AWG representatives and pertinent stakeholders in the region will be improved through the strengthened use of digital knowledge platforms and regional workshops; (b) **capacities of AWGs** will be strengthened, among others, through the use of content generated and replication of good practices; and (c) **collaboration among existing initiatives** will be enabled through collective actions to tackle common challenges, minimise overlaps, as well as increase added-value and expertise. The Partnership is also expected to contribute to the ASEAN Environment Knowledge Hub, accessible at <https://environment.asean.org/>.

Complementing the Partnership, a series of annual regional workshops implemented in coordination with the ASEAN Secretariat offers a holistic platform for discussions among key AWG representatives and other stakeholders. These workshops cover a diverse

Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH  
Registered offices Bonn and Eschborn, Germany  
3RproMar Project

giz-indonesien@giz.de  
www.giz.de/indonesia  
Author Revina Indra Putri  
Layout Bonang Titian Rahardjo  
As of December 2023

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

In cooperation with ASEAN Secretariat



On behalf of Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Addresses of the BMZ offices  
 BMZ Bonn: Dahlmannstraße 4, 53113 Bonn, Germany  
 T +49 (0)228 99 535-0  
 F +49 (0)228 99 535-3500  
 BMZ Berlin: Stresemannstraße 94, 10963 Berlin, Germany  
 T +49 (0)30 18 535-0  
 F +49 (0)30 18 535-2501

poststelle@bmz.bund.de  
www.bmz.de