

# ASEAN–China–Japan–Korea Joint Actions on Marine Plastic Reduction and Offshore Biodiversity Conservation

## Background:

On November 3, 2019, Premier Li Keqiang of the State Council attended and addressed the 22<sup>nd</sup> China-ASEAN Summit in Bangkok, Thailand. In his speech, Premier Li proposed to “build a China-ASEAN partnership on blue economy, strengthen practical cooperation with ASEAN on marine ecosystem preservation, ocean industry and marine technology innovation, with a view to enhancing the stability of the ocean economy. The Marine Plastic Reduction Initiative for the China-ASEAN Partnership for Eco-friendly Urban Development will be taken forward and the China-ASEAN Collaborative Action on Climate Change and Air Quality Improvement launched.....”.

Most ASEAN countries and all of China, Japan and Korea are facing or surrounded by oceans, often with a large population distributed in relatively developed coastal cities, so they are susceptible to marine ecology and environment. The cooperation among ASEAN, China, Japan and Korea on control of marine plastic (microplastic) pollution and the resulting destruction of marine biodiversity has become an important part of international and regional environmental pollution control.

## Targets and significance

By cooperating with ASEAN countries, Japan and Korea on eco-cities and marine ecology and environment, and participating with them in the research on solutions to marine plastic (microplastic) pollution control in coastal cities and those to offshore biodiversity conservation, China can promote cooperation, dialogues and network construction in the region. This can also drive ASEAN, China, Japan and Korea to reach a consensus on marine plastic reduction and marine biodiversity conservation, deepen the regional and global contribution of ASEAN-China-Japan-Korea environmental cooperation and improve East Asian and even global capabilities of environmental management in coastal cities and marine environmental governance.



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## Main content:



**1. Convening ASEAN-China-Japan-Korea roundtables on plastic reduction and biodiversity conservation in coastal cities to strengthen crosscutting cooperation and exchanges in this regard in the region.** A cooperation platform engaging governments, international organizations, research institutes, enterprises, civil society and other stakeholders will be built to promote successful experience sharing and exchanges in coastal solid waste disposal technologies, plastic use, discharge and control measures, and economic policies in plastic recycling mechanisms, and enhance regional prevention and control of marine plastic waste pollution;

**2. Launching coastal/river plastic (microplastic) waste monitoring demonstration projects in coastal cities.** Key coastal cities in ASEAN, China, Japan and Korea will be selected to establish a China-ASEAN cooperation network of land-based plastic (microplastic) pollution monitoring and control technologies for coastal cities and intensify exchanges between China and ASEAN countries in marine plastic (microplastic) monitoring technologies and methods. These cities will be organized to launch river (micro) plastic monitoring demonstration projects, so as to standardize relevant technologies and methods in the region and improve and expand China's global and regional influence in marine plastic (microplastic) monitoring;

**3. Conducting joint research on prevention and control of marine plastic (microplastic) pollution and offshore biodiversity conservation,** and producing a report titled "ASEAN-China-Japan-Korea Joint Research on Cases and Experience Concerning Prevention and Control of Marine Plastic (Microplastic) Pollution in Main Coastal Cities and Offshore Biodiversity Conservation. Main coastal cities in ASEAN, China, Japan and Korea will be selected for the exploration of the status and foundation of coastal marine litter and biodiversity conservation in ASEAN, China, Japan and Korea, in a bid to promoting international cooperation and sharing of cutting-edge knowledge in the sector and providing technical support for project implementation later;

**4. Selecting main coastal cities in ASEAN, China, Japan and Korea for the implementation of the coastal city community response action – the Clean Ocean Program.** Fixed beach areas for litter pickup will be set up and community- and university-based pickup teams organized to pick up and collect all plastic waste on beaches and at the seaside within the region, improve public awareness of marine ecology and environment protection, and promote non-governmental environmental exchanges in the region.

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