

# Marine Plastics Reduction Initiative for the China-ASEAN Eco-Friendly Cities Partnership

Marine debris threatens the sustainability of the marine environment. Marine environmental issue, especially marine plastics and microplastics, has become a global and regional environmental challenge facing China and ASEAN, which needs to be urgently addressed through cooperation of these geographically adjacent countries. To this end, China will discuss with ASEAN to launch Marine Plastics Reduction Initiative for the China-ASEAN Eco-Friendly Cities Partnership.



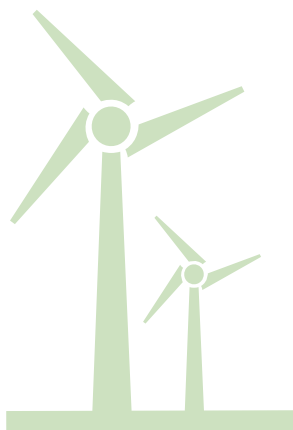
生态环境部对外合作与交流中心  
Foreign Environmental Cooperation Center



中国 - 东盟环境保护合作中心  
China-ASEAN Environmental Cooperation Center



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## Cooperation Background

China and ASEAN have been committed to promoting national and regional sustainable development towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In recent years, with continued attention paid to marine plastics, regional marine organizations and the international community have formulated a series of policies, guidelines, initiatives, and frameworks for marine debris prevention and control in recent years. In June 2019, the Group of Twenty (G20) Ministers Meeting on Energy Transitions and Global Environment for Sustainable Growth held in Japan, adopted the G20 Implementation Framework for Actions on Marine Plastic Litter, marking the first international framework dedicated to marine plastic governance. On November 2019, when attending the 22<sup>nd</sup> China ASEAN (10+1) leaders' meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, Premier Li Keqiang stated that China is willing to promote “Marine Plastics Reduction Initiative” for the China-ASEAN Eco-Friendly Cities Partnership.

ASEAN member states are largely coastal countries, with the population concentrated in relatively advanced coastal cities. The marine industry has bloomed, and contributed to nearly 20% of the gross domestic product (GDP) according to statistics. As a large amount of plastic waste enters the sea from land-based sources, marine plastic debris becomes a problem in coastal villages, fishing ports, and downstream cities; microplastics are pervasive in seawater, sediment, and shellfish. In November 2018, the 13<sup>th</sup> East Asia Summit adopted the Leaders' Statement on Combating Marine Plastic Debris, providing the basis and guidance for relevant cooperation. In June 2019, the 34<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit adopted the Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris. For the first time, the ASEAN countries collectively reiterated their concern on the marine debris and the increased negative effects on marine biodiversity, fisheries and tourism, and pledged to reduce marine debris at national and regional levels through strengthening research capacity and regional and international cooperation, raising public awareness, and applying an integrated approach for marine governance.

Cooperation with ASEAN countries on eco-friendly city and marine environment will help to improve the capacities of environmental management and marine environmental governance of coastal cities in the ASEAN region and the whole world, and deepen the regional and global contributions of China-ASEAN environmental cooperation.

## Cooperation Objectives

1. Integrate regional priorities and hotspot issues with the flagship project “China-ASEAN Eco-friendly Cities Development Partnership” to launch the China-ASEAN cooperation on maritime environmental protection and plastic pollution control, and promote the formation of a consensus between China and ASEAN countries on eco-friendly city and marine plastic reduction;
2. Conduct joint research on solutions to plastics (microplastics) pollution control of coastal cities, and push forward cooperation dialogue and network construction in the region;
3. Establish cooperation platforms that involve multiple stakeholders, such as governments, international organizations, research institutions, financial institutions, and communities, to address challenges in economic-social-environmental sustainable development and implement the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

## Plan of Actions

### Action 1. Roundtable Dialogue

1. Hold the “Marine Plastics Reduction Initiative for the China-ASEAN Eco-Friendly Cities Partnership :Science-Business-Community Roundtable Dialogue” to facilitate knowledge sharing, equal dialogue, and joint action of decision makers, scientists, private sectors and communities.
2. Establish the Local Roundtable Dialogue Mechanism on China-ASEAN Environmental Cooperation, and organize local roundtable dialogues to enhance local capacity of participation in China-ASEAN Environmental Cooperation. Combined with China's concept of waste-free cities, local roundtable dialogues will involve China's major coastal provinces and cities such as Guangxi, Guangdong, Hainan, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, Shanghai, and Shenzhen, and the ASEAN counterparts.

### Action 2. Scientific Research and Good Practice

1. Research on Actions and Prospects of China-ASEAN Eco-friendly Cities and Marine Plastics (Microplastics) Control. The action plans and progress of major ocean regions and the response plans of both China and ASEAN at national and city levels on marine plastics reduction will be analyzed and reviewed to provide policy recommendations for promoting regional action plans.
2. Research on the Methodology and Framework for Assessing Marine Plastics (Microplastics) Pollution and Its Impact on Major Coastal Cities in China and ASEAN Countries.
3. Cooperative Research on China-ASEAN Marine Plastics (Microplastics) Monitoring Technologies and Standards.
4. Research on Control of China-ASEAN Marine Pollution from Land-Based Sources.
5. Joint Research on Cases and Experience of Marine Plastics (Microplastics) Pollution Control and Coastal Biodiversity Conservation for Major Coastal Cities in China and ASEAN.

### Action 3. Conservation and Sustainable Use of Coastal Biodiversity Based on Nature Solutions

1. Examine the response and role of mangroves to global climate change, investigate the retrospective impacts of climate change on mangroves in the coastal cities of China and ASEAN, and propose nature-based solutions for protecting mangroves and tackling global climate change.
2. Share and exchange the practices of plastics (microplastics) pollution control of coastal cities and coastal biodiversity conservation in China and ASEAN.

### Action 4. Technology and Capacity Building Cooperation

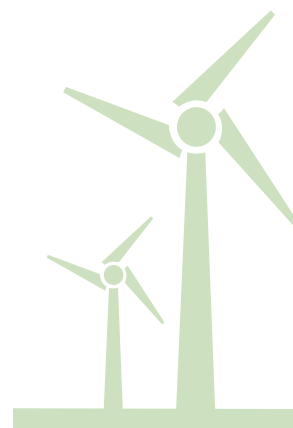
1. Establish the China-ASEAN Coastal Cities Cooperation Network on Marine Plastics and Microplastics Pollution Monitoring and Control Technologies.
2. Carry out capacity building activities for marine plastics (microplastics) monitoring in coastal cities of China and ASEAN.

### Action 5. Community and Enterprise Engagements

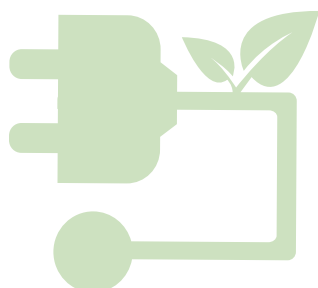
1. Take joint actions to control land-based marine pollution and plastic pollution in coastal cities of China and ASEAN, including the implementation of Clean Ocean Action Plan in coastal cities.
2. Take joint actions to reduce plastic pollution based on market mechanisms and enterprise responsibilities. Dialogue between China and ASEAN countries on the applicable market regulation mechanism for reducing marine debris from the source will be organized.

### Action 6. Ocean and Sustainable Finance

1. Establish a green finance system to support the China-ASEAN marine plastic reduction initiative. Promote financial institutions sponsored to issue marine plastic reduction initiatives.
2. Promote the establishment of an environmental and social risk compliance framework of financial institutions and bring the issue of marine environmental pollution into the scope of environmental impact in the compliance framework; Promote the formation of a sound environmental and social risk prevention mechanism for regional investment and financing and make environmental and social risk management more effective.



## Cooperation Mechanism



### 1. Organizational arrangements

The project activities will be implemented with the prior approval of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE) of China and the environmental authorities of ASEAN member states. MEE and the environmental authorities of ASEAN member states will provide guidance and support for the implementation, and the China-ASEAN Environmental Cooperation Center, National Marine Environmental Monitoring Center and South China Institute of Environmental Sciences will be responsible for the implementation.

The ASEAN Secretariat will specifically coordinate the ASEAN environmental departments to maximize work efficiency, while the National Liaison Officers will guide and supervise the implementation of project activities.

### 2. Partnership

The partnership welcomes the support and participation of regional governments, research institutions, international organizations, the private sectors, financial institutions, community and regional agencies, and third-party governments and organizations.

### 3. Resources and funds

China and ASEAN member states provide funding and support on a voluntary basis. Funding and support from other partners is welcome, including but not limited to, international organizations, third-party partner countries, and the private sectors.

The funding sources to support the partnership, including but not limited to, China-ASEAN Maritime Cooperation Fund, China-ASEAN Cooperation Fund, other funds and in-kind contributions from the Chinese and ASEAN governments, and financial support from international partners, third-party countries, and the private sectors.

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