

“Accelerating solutions to reduce plastic waste”

16-18 November 2021
Virtual Event



SEA of Solutions is an annually occurring partnership event towards solving plastic pollution at source. It is convened by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), through the SEA circular Project, supported by the Government of Sweden. This year’s Co-host is the Government of Malaysia through the Ministry of Environment and Water.

SEA of Solutions serves as a platform for information exchange, collaboration, and partnerships for marine litter and plastic pollution prevention. The event will be delivered virtually and will bring together representatives of local and national governments, value chain stakeholders, investors, civil societies, youth, thought leaders, academia, and development organizations.

Programme

This year’s theme calls upon plastic value chain stakeholders to engage and unite in “Accelerating solutions to reduce plastic waste” by exploring policies, partnerships, innovative technologies and financing that help address present challenges and mitigate the potential impacts of future disruptive global events.

Sessions and activities aim to unite seekers and providers of market-transforming policy, business, and technology solutions, enabling a space for dialogue among plastic value chain stakeholders.

Time (ICT)	Time (MYT)	16 November Tuesday	17 November Wednesday	18 November Thursday
09:30-10:10	10:30-11:10	Opening session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Opening Remarks 	10:00-11:30 ICT 11:00-12:30 MYT	
10:10-10:30	11:10-11:30	Keynote Address	Session 3 Cities and urbanization towards less plastic leakage	Session 6 Sustainable financing for a waste-free future
10:30-11:30	11:30-12:30	Soft Launch Malaysia’s National Marine Litter Policy and Action Plan 2021-2030		
11:30-13:00	12:30-14:00	Break/transition to next session		
13:00-14:30	14:00-15:30	Session 1 A new wave of eco-friendly consumer society	Session 4 Plugging plastic leakage: Enabling extended producer responsibility through producer responsibility organizations	Distinguished Panel Dialogue Accelerating solutions to reduce plastic waste
14:30-15:00	15:30-16:00	Break/transition to next session		
15:00-16:30	16:00-17:30	Session 2 Innovations in sustainable packaging value chain	Session 5 Circular economy for less plastic wasted	Closing session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voices for Acceleration Summary SoS2021 Key Message Closing Remarks

Session 1: A new wave of eco-friendly consumer society

Consumer awareness of plastic waste in the ocean and landfills is an important factor in driving change. However, despite this encouraging trend, a UNEP survey between 2019-20 revealed a significant disconnect between expectation and action on reducing plastic waste. In addition, unprecedented change in consumption habits during the COVID-19 pandemic could have undermined efforts to combat plastic pollution.

This session aims to identify effective strategies for transforming consumer behaviour, including industry initiatives to shape and address consumer demand, as well as advocacy initiatives that catalyse consumer awareness and action for more eco-friendly behaviour and lifestyles beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

Session 2: Innovations in sustainable packaging value chain

Plastic packaging generates the most plastic waste of any sector, posing a significant threat to the Earth's ecosystems. Due to poor product design and lack of adequate infrastructures, single use plastics and packaging waste, particularly those of low value, are main contributors to plastic leakage that end up as land-based and marine plastic pollution. In recent years, new innovations in design, collection schemes, infrastructure and products from recovered waste along the plastic value chain have delivered positive impacts, offering promising longer-term solutions.

Session 3: Cities and urbanization towards less plastic leakage

Cities play a critical role in addressing waste management and eliminating plastic waste leakage from the system. Successful pilot initiatives have been carried out at city levels, promoting a circular approach, applying innovative tools to identify waste leakage, engaging citizens and businesses in change, and creating inclusive policies and regulations.

Session 4: Plugging plastic leakage: Enabling Extended producer responsibility through producer responsibility organizations

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is at an early voluntary phase in this region. Collection and recycling levels are extremely low while leakage that cause plastic pollution remain unacceptably high, particularly for low value post-consumer packaging materials. Companies and sectors engaged in the Plastic Value Chain are beginning to address the problem through producer responsibility organizations

(PROs). These organizations can act as a conduit to connect actors in the value chain, close waste management infrastructure gaps, connect businesses to the informal sector and enable collection of waste for recycling. However, we need to see great acceleration and a shift from voluntary to mandatory EPR to be able to see a difference.

Session 5: Circular economy for less plastic wasted

A circular economy aims to accelerate our efforts to address plastic pollution, by ensuring that plastic products remain in the economy at their highest economic value for as long as possible and do not pollute our oceans, rivers and land. Businesses have a crucial role to play in building circularity in our economy and society. Over the past years, many businesses have stepped up their commitments and have recognized the potential of circular business models.

Session 6: Sustainable financing for a waste-free future

Mobilizing investments is key in transforming markets and societies towards a waste-free future by boosting the economic value of waste materials and de-risking investment in circular innovation. Innovative financing calls for a combination of public and private mechanisms, from large-scale grants and loans by multilateral development banks, private sector incubators for innovative business models, plastic credit schemes to catalyse change, to micro-financing for community-based action.

Distinguished Panel Dialogue: Accelerating solutions to reduce plastic waste

Reducing plastic pollution is one of the greatest challenges the world is facing. Fortunately, there are existing solutions - but actions must be accelerated. SEA of Solutions 2021 sessions will showcase diverse experiences and recommendations from innovation, financing, circularity, behaviour changes, research, as well as policies and incentives.

Governments, consumers, investors, businesses, and millions of people are stepping up. Together, we can fight over 13 million tonnes of plastic that end up in our oceans and waterways each year, which negatively impact on our natural ecosystems, economies, livelihoods and health.

The Distinguished Panel will share and discuss effective solutions, which are addressing this pressing issue, while highlighting actions that we must urgently take from local to global levels together.

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