



# Virtual Working Group on Marine Debris

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As host of APEC 2022, Thailand has identified the “Bio-Circular Green (BCG) Economy” as one of the main themes for APEC this year. In February 2022, Thailand hosted a policy dialogue titled “[Understanding the Bio-Circular-Green Economy Model for Strong, Balanced, Secure, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth in the Asia-Pacific.](#)” The objectives of the policy dialogue were to increase knowledge and understanding of the BCG Economy Model as a post pandemic growth strategy to advance economic growth that is inclusive and sustainable, and to identify challenges and opportunities in applying sustainable economic growth, among others.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Thailand hosted all 2022 SOM1 meetings virtually. A recap of the APEC marine debris relevant events and meetings during the 1<sup>st</sup> Senior Officials Meetings (SOM) are listed below, including the APEC Oceans and Fisheries Working Group and the Chemical Dialogue.

### [APEC Marine Debris Website](#)

The APEC Marine Debris website can be accessed [here](#). The website is a tool to promote information sharing among the various working groups engaging on marine debris and waste management issues in APEC as well as provide a centralized location for relevant reports and meeting outcome documents. **You can also find this newsletter on the website.**

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### Ocean and Fisheries Working Group (OFWG) – 14-15 February, 2022

**Chinese Taipei, the United States and Viet Nam** submitted updates on their implementation of the [APEC Marine Debris Roadmap](#). You can view their implementation progress reports below:

#### Chinese Taipei

- [APEC Marine Debris Roadmap](#) implementation progress

#### United States

- [APEC Marine Debris Roadmap](#) implementation progress

#### Viet Nam

- [APEC Marine Debris Roadmap](#) implementation progress

Canada, Chile, Japan, Peru, Thailand, and Australia also provided verbal updates on the APEC marine debris roadmap and/or the Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Roadmap Implementation Plan.

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## Ocean and Fisheries Working Group (OFWG) – Project Proposals/Updates

**Chinese Taipei** provided an update on the “[Capacity Building on Marine Debris Monitoring by Using Innovative Technologies in APEC Region.](#)” The objective of the project is to find solutions to the inefficiency and labor intensity in monitoring via innovative technologies. A 2-day hybrid workshop and a 1-day site visit (via broadcast) was planned on March 24-25, 2022.

**Indonesia** introduced a project proposal titled “[Workshop on Promoting Bioplastic Materials to Reduce Marine Plastic Litter in the Asia Pacific Region.](#)” The workshop aims to identify barriers and opportunities faced by APEC economies in promoting bioplastic materials to reduce marine plastic in the Asia-Pacific. The outcome of the proposed workshop includes the development of recommendations for policy arrangements and capacity building activities needed to promote the use of bioplastic materials in the APEC region.

**Thailand** introduced a project proposal titled “[Technical Workshop on Marine Debris Management in Marine Ecosystem.](#)” The workshop aims to enhance participants’ capacity in marine debris management and to strengthen the existing regional efforts, including sharing scientific knowledge and technologies needed to better understand marine debris management.

**The United States** provided an update on the “[Nanoplastics in Marine Debris in the APEC Region.](#)” The objectives of the project include 1. Sharing best practices to collect, characterize, assess risk, exposure and remediating nanoscale plastic waste, 2. Leveraging of scientific resources, and sharing in the development of alternate technologies, products, capabilities, and facilities, and 3: Initiating a draft framework for addressing short- and long-term issues associated with micro- and nanoplastics in the environment. A project report, including key takeaways, is expected in June 2022.

### Chemical Dialogue (CD) 17-18 February, 2022

**The Virtual Working Group on Marine Debris (VWG)** presented at both the Chemical Dialogue and the Ocean and Fisheries Working Group. The VWG shared previous accomplishments, including the creation of the Policy and Practice Recommendations and the APEC Roadmap on Marine Debris. It also provided an overview of the numerous marine debris projects that are taking place in the Chemical Dialogue, the Ocean and Fisheries Working Group, and the Energy Working Group, among others. The APEC marine debris website was presented as a good resource to find marine debris related activity in APEC. You can find the presentation at this [link](#).

**Rebound Exchange**, a global quality-assured platform for the trade of plastic feedstock for recycling, presented how the organization provides new economic opportunities for economies through recycling, while reducing the impacts of plastic pollution. This includes creating a system that provides the supply of recycled plastic feedstock that can be used to create content. The process includes: collecting plastics, putting it into bales, transforming it into flakes, and finally, transforming it into pellets. You can learn more about Rebound Exchange and its platform [here](#).

In advance of the Fifth Session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) meeting, economy representatives from **Peru** and **Japan** shared their marine plastic draft

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resolutions submitted through the UNEA process. Peru's draft resolution includes several suggested elements, including a reference for a circular economy and tackling the full life cycle of plastics. Japan's proposal included promoting the Osaka Blue Ocean Vision and the G20 Implementation Plan Framework. You can view the Peru presentation [here](#) and the Japan presentation [here](#).

**The United States Industry** introduced a project proposal focused on chemical recycling. The self-funded APEC project proposal to explore advanced recycling – “Leveraging chemical recycling in a circular economy.” The proposal aligns to CTI and Thailand priorities with an objective to promote awareness and build capacity around advanced recycling. The project proposes three webinars and a potential best practices document, which will be shared at SOM3 in August. The proposal has been circulated and welcomes co-sponsors.

### Update on Other Marine Debris Initiatives and Projects

In the **Energy Working Group**:

- **Chinese Taipei** has a project titled “[Promotion of Community Waste to Energy System](#).” This project aims to promote power generation from community waste as it relates to the scientific, economic, and social aspects of other APEC economies in order to improve collaboration in the APEC region.

In the **Group on Services**:

- **Australia** has a project titled “[Services that Support the Clean-Up of Marine Debris](#)” in collaboration with the OFWG for 2022 which includes:
  - a public-private dialogue with industry to identify the market and scope of services providers as well as industry's view on barriers to trade in environmental and environmentally related services;
  - a cross-fora workshop between the Group on Services and relevant fora to discuss recommendations for ministers/and or leaders at the APEC Economic Leaders' Week; and
  - an APEC Policy Brief on marine debris and environmental and environmentally related services.

### Marine Debris Sub-fund

The APEC sub-fund for Marine Debris Management and Innovation (MDMI) is available for project submissions. The MDMI sub-fund will support capacity building activities to:

- promote the development of solid waste management infrastructure;
- inform the development of policies, regulations and practices to improve waste management and marine debris management;
- promote the development of technical innovations to create value from plastic waste;
- increase access to financing and promote the development of innovative financing mechanisms;

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- promote new technologies for reducing the prevalence and environmental impact of marine debris.

Projects seeking funding through the new sub-fund will first be evaluated by the Ocean and Fisheries Working Group. More information regarding the sub-fund may be found: [here](#). The eligibility criteria and guidelines for accessing the MDMI sub-fund may be found: [here](#). More information regarding the APEC project proposal process may be found: [here](#).

### **Additional Information**

If you are interested in additional information, have questions, or would like to be added or removed from the distribution please reach out to Ryan MacFarlane at ([rmacfarlane@crowell.com](mailto:rmacfarlane@crowell.com)).