



Virtual Working Group on Marine Debris

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Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the APEC 2021 host, New Zealand, is hosting all APEC meetings virtually this year. A brief recap of the APEC marine debris relevant events and meetings 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 news link.**

Ocean and Fisheries Working Group (OFWG) – 25-26 February, 2021

Canada, Chile, Japan, Korea, Peru, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam all submitted updates on their implementation of the [APEC Marine Debris Roadmap](#). You can view their implementation progress reports below:

Canada

- [APEC Marine Debris Roadmap](#) implementation progress.
- Canada also noted it remains globally active to mitigate marine litter and ghost gear, including participating in the [Global Ghost Gear Initiative](#).

Chile

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

Japan

- [APEC Marine Debris Roadmap](#) implementation progress.
- Japan also highlighted the [Osaka Blue Ocean Vision](#) aiming to reduce marine pollution by 2050 and requested APEC economies support this vision.

Korea

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

Peru

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

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The Philippines

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

Singapore

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

Thailand

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

The United States

- The United States noted it passed Save Our Seas Act 2.0 and has 4 APEC concept notes aimed at addressing the marine debris challenge, including a ghost gear initiative, a shoreline monitoring project, and 2 additional projects waiting for project approval.

Viet Nam

- [APEC Marine Debris Roadmap](#) implementation plan.

The Global Ghost Gear Initiative provided an update on “[Global Ghost Gear Initiative with APEC – Driving Solutions to Lost and Abandoned Fishing Gear in APEC Economies](#)” including developing an APEC Best Practice Framework to Address Lost and Abandoned Fishing Gear. The project is supported by Malaysia, Thailand, and the United States, and will also include an APEC appropriate Gear Marking Compendium, and host a Regional ALDFG Workshop.

Ocean and Fisheries Working Group (OFWG) – Project Proposals

The United States provided an update on the “[Development of a Marine Debris Monitoring Decision Framework for APEC Economies](#)” project, a guide for users to select the best methodology for marine debris monitoring through a series of questions/scenarios. The APEC Decision Framework Document/Tool will also include information on: why monitoring is important and how data can be used; examples of questions that monitoring can address, and considerations for establishing a monitoring program, among other topics.

Japan provided an update on the “[Good Practice and Innovative Workshop for Marine Debris Prevention and Management in the APEC Region](#).” Japan noted it is still trying to hold a physical workshop, with a date to be determined.

Viet Nam provided an update on “[Promoting APEC Innovative Models in Reducing and Managing Land-Based Marine Debris into Oceans for Sustainable Development](#).” The objectives of the project are to build the capacity of APEC economies in reducing and managing land-based marine debris; develop a set of recommendations to improve waste management measures, and identify cooperation areas and promote collective actions on marine conservation.

Chemical Dialogue (CD) 17 – 18 February, 2021

The United States provided a presentation on the [U.S. National Recycling Strategy](#). The presentation noted that the U.S. is working with key stakeholders who share a commitment to the recycling system, with all key stakeholders

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signing the America Recycles Pledge. The objectives of the National Recycling Strategy are to: 1. Reduce contamination 2. Increase processing efficiencies and 3. Improve markets. It highlighted that while the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) orchestrates the development of the strategy, all sectors should embrace the strategy and implement it. The presentation also noted next steps include evaluating and incorporating public comments, finalizing the strategy in Spring 2021 and developing a roadmap in Fall 2021.

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 2020 webinar series developed in collaboration with the Ocean and Fisheries Working Group, which focused on innovative funding models and innovative technologies for land-based waste management in the APEC region. 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](#).

Japan Industry presented the “[Status of efforts in the Japanese chemical industry to recycle plastic waste containing marine debris.](#)” The presentation noted that Japanese industry published a “Future Vision” document in December 2020, and highlighted the importance of the chemical sector to convert waste into useful materials for the environment and for the people. The Future Vision provides recommendations to the Japanese government on ways the Japanese chemical industry can support the governments’ recycling policy, including implementing chemical recycling.

Chinese Taipei presented “[The Challenges and Achievements for Marine Debris Recycling](#)” at both the OFWG and the CD. The presentation noted two main challenges for marine debris recycling, including waste fishing nets and Styrofoam. It highlighted the importance of collaborating with local governments. It also highlighted next steps including promoting successful technology incorporation into the recycling stream and promoting cooperation across sectors (brands, recyclers, research institutes, and financial investors) to establish a sustainable marine debris circular economy.

Update on Other CTI Initiatives and Projects

The United States’ self-funded Recyclable Materials Policy Program proposal was endorsed by economies on 13 June 2020. **Next steps include:**

- **Working on a study to provide a resource document for APEC on waste management and recycling (WMR).** This seeks to help build capacity of policymakers to identify appropriate domestic policies that promote better WMR infrastructure, and help stakeholders to identify best practices appropriate for the scale, scope, and geography of their domestic waste management and recycling challenges.
- **Looking at date in 2021 for the workshop/roundtable that will build off of the study.**

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Indonesia's "Community-based Waste Management to Renewable Energy Workshop" through the Energy Working Group aims to encourage application of waste management to renewable energy project through community involvement and engagement, as one of sustainable solutions for the waste crisis. The purposes of the workshop are: 1) increasing knowledge and understanding of waste management to renewable energy in Asia Pacific economies; 2) fostering community self-reliance in waste management.

Chinese Taipei's waste-to energy project proposal through the Energy Working Group, "**The Promotion of Community Waste-to-Energy System**", plans to involve APEC economies by performing inter-collaboration in household waste-to-power generation. This will be implemented through a policy dialogue for the purpose of condensing a set of recommendations that can be applied in many APEC economies and will involve a case study in local communities focusing on the scientific, economic, and social aspects of this issue.

[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;
- 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).