



Republic
of Indonesia



Supported by:



Federal Ministry
for the Environment, Nature Conservation,
Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection



Federal Foreign Office

Implemented by



giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

based on a decision of
the German Bundestag



IORA Strategic Framework of Action on Marine Debris in the Indian Ocean

September 2022

Strategic Framework of Action on Marine Debris in the Indian Ocean

IORA Member States bordering the Indian Ocean are home to 2.5 billion people. They represent a densely populated region with rapidly developing nations that must face the growing quantities of marine debris, in particular plastic waste. Globally, it is estimated that between 5 and 13 million tons of plastic enter the marine environment each year. A recently published study on the environmental impacts of plastic pollution by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) indicates that the damage to ecosystems and species is far more severe than previously assessed.

To combat this crisis at a global level, Heads of State, Ministers of environment and other representatives from UN Member States have voted a historic resolution during the 5th session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) in March 2022 to forge an international legally binding agreement by 2024 to end plastic pollution. This UN Environment Assembly Plastic Pollution Treaty aims to address the full lifecycle of plastic from source to sea.

The objective of this IORA strategic framework should ensure alignment with the UNEA treaty on plastic pollution, as well as other global or regional plans already signed by IORA Member States and serve as a complementary tool. This non-exhaustive list includes the 2020 International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Action Plan on Marine Litter, the Cleaner Pacific 2025: Pacific Regional Waste and Pollution Management Strategy hosted by Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the ASEAN Regional Action Plan for Combating Marine Debris, the COBSEA Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter and the instructive work of the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA).

Every IORA Member State is affected by marine debris due to its transboundary nature which requires an integrated regional cooperation. Consulted efforts between IORA states are therefore important. Some Member States have national plans and policies to reduce plastics on land and manage waste on their territory. However, no integrated approach addresses plastic pollution and marine debris in their regional dimension.

IORA Member States recognize that without immediate action, marine debris pollution will negatively impact marine biodiversity, the environment, health, society, and the economy.

This strategic framework has emerged from Member States' inputs during two online workshops, a round of consultation, and the closing workshop organized in Bali (Indonesia) on 28/29 September 2022.

Objectives

The overarching objective set by IORA for the framework is to minimize the waste generation on land and sea, thereby reducing the amount of plastic waste that enters the rivers and oceans by developing joint strategies and actions to:

- ➔ Develop a marine debris strategy framework that ranges from land-based via waterway-based (rivers) to sea-based (fishing activities/ ghost net/ shipping) pollution sources;
- ➔ Support the initiation and implementation of pilot projects, capacity building, technological and scientific cooperation and investments to strengthen policy advice and response;
- ➔ Develop and support the implementation of strategies to reduce the amount of waste and thus plastic waste;
- ➔ Promote the regional exchange of knowledge and experiences in waste management, circular economy and marine debris;
- ➔ Enhance collaboration in combatting marine plastic pollution;
- ➔ Exchange information and share knowledge on monitoring of marine debris and its impact to the ocean.

Principles

The underlying principles for the development of the strategic framework are:

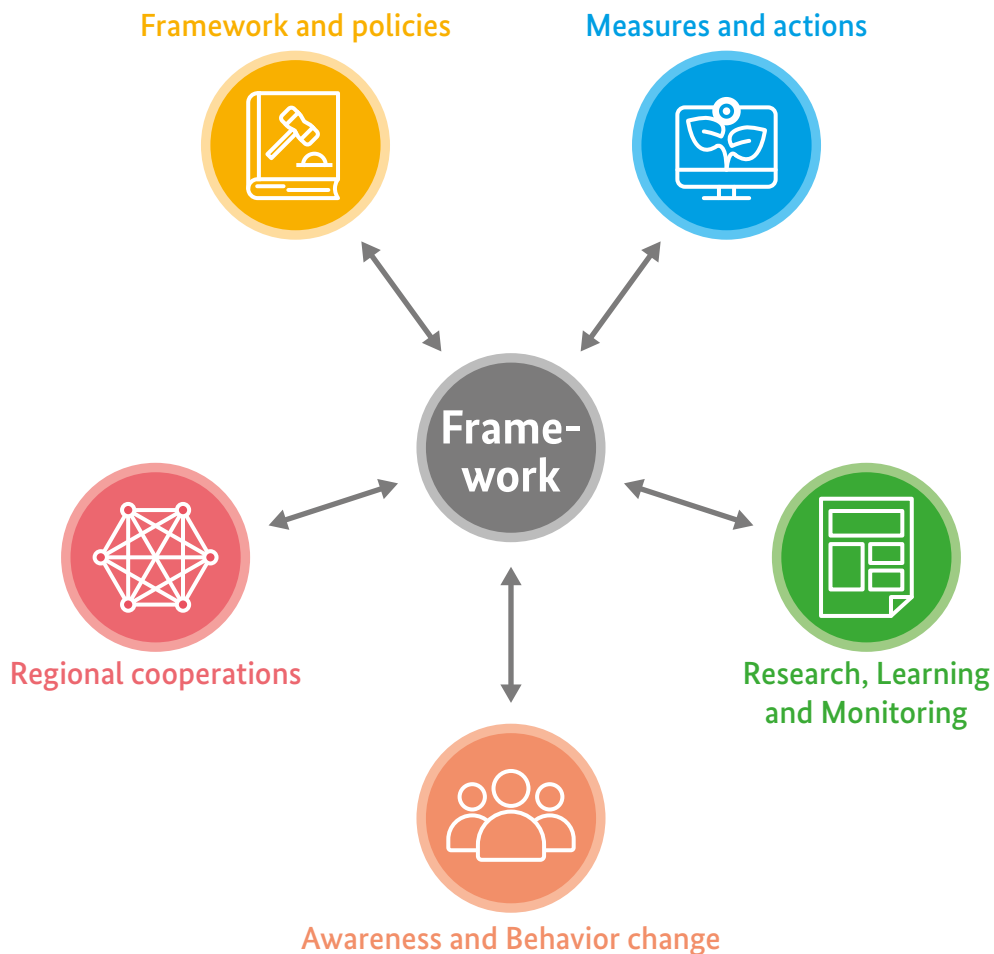
- ➔ Consider both land-based and sea-based sources;
- ➔ Prevent the loss of marine biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- ➔ Respect the principle of the waste hierarchy: Reduce-Reuse-Recycle before Disposal;
- ➔ Promote international cooperation and further development of international agreements;
- ➔ Reduce the amount of plastic consumed by applying concepts actions of reduction, substitution or alternative approaches;
- ➔ Prevent the leakage through waste management systems which capture plastic waste more efficiently than removing it from the environment;
- ➔ Rely decision making on a solid information basis, as surveys and monitoring systems are key steering instruments for all levels of intervention.

Strategic Framework

The Strategic Framework is based on five pillars (priority areas), as follows:

- I. Framework and Policies
- II. Measures and Actions
- III. Research, Learning and Monitoring
- IV. Awareness and Behavior Change
- V. Regional Cooperation

Each priority area consists of actions and initiatives that will be developed for further collaboration in the IORA region in combating marine debris.





I. Framework and Policies

1. Capacity building to discuss and exchange knowledge between IORA Member States to strengthen their awareness on the different **frameworks, policies, institutional setups, and solutions to address marine debris more efficiently from a government perspective.**
2. Set clear **goals and targets** that align with broader global, regional, and national targets. With the development of various regional initiatives in which Member States are already involved in, the IORA framework will be aligned with an international legally binding instrument and facilitate its integration within that global framework.
3. Elaborate a **set of initiatives** that could be implemented in Member States to pilot, guide and help Member States to get **policies** implemented in their respective countries with the aim of reducing waste generation, enhancing collection rates, introducing environmentally sound alternatives, minimizing leakage, and creating value for waste reuse and circular material flows.
4. Promote IORA Member States' **regional policy dialogue** on best practices and lessons learnt for the prevention and reduction of marine debris from both land-based and sea-based activities.
5. Address **each stage of the plastics life cycle**. All stages from the design, the manufacturing process, to the use and disposal phase, need to be assessed. The aim of addressing the whole plastic life cycle is to reduce plastic inflow into the market (especially low value plastics), enhance its collection, minimize plastic leakage in the environment, and create value for plastic waste reuse.

II. Measures and Actions



1. Implement a **set of measures** applicable on a national or regional level to reduce plastic waste through guidance and list of best practices that have been developed regionally and internationally.
2. Implement **pilot projects to develop capacities** of Member States to address plastic pollution at a local level, including, but not limited to, the promotion of zero waste initiatives, sound waste management or the introduction of plastic return schemes.
3. Support Member States to **develop and/or to strengthen their legislation** dealing with marine debris including its implementation, upon request.
4. Promote innovative solutions to **enhance plastics value chains** and improve resource efficiency by prioritizing approaches such as the concepts of circular economy and the waste hierarchy, together with the support of external partners from the public and private sectors, as well as from civil society and NGOs.

III. Research, Learning and Monitoring



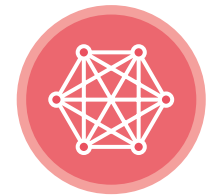
1. Promote **research sharing and regional cooperation** of scientific expertise, technology and innovation among IORA Member States, by engaging with research institutions, public and private sectors, international partners, and other relevant stakeholders. Initiatives should:
 - ➔ **Enhance research/studies on marine debris**, including economic and human health impacts of plastics and microplastics.
 - ➔ Promote **cooperation and partnerships** to collect and exchange data and information and to develop a long-term monitoring framework for marine debris and plastics in aquatic systems.
2. Promote the **understanding of the path from source to sea**, as a basis for the implementation of an adequate monitoring system and methodology for reliable data collection that can be harmonized across all Member States, where applicable, in alignment with international standards and with an access to a platform for sharing the data.
3. Facilitate the **development of a baseline report** to assess the situation in the region, by reviewing and analyzing information and data on status and impacts of marine debris, including recommendations for a harmonized scientific approach across Member States.
4. Promote efforts on research and cooperation on the development of **environment friendly alternatives to plastic** that will help in combating marine debris.
5. Promote **science-policy interface** to enhance interaction between scientists and policy makers, by providing access to scientific information with recommendations for policy actions.

IV. Awareness and Behavior Change



1. Promote actions to **change the mindset of the population** to understand the impacts of their actions with respect to environmental, social, economic, and health implications.
2. Provide support in **raising environmental awareness and in accelerating advocacy** with the aim to change behavior towards preventing and reducing marine debris.
3. Promote the **involvement of local communities in the clean-up** of coast lines, inland water bodies, wetlands, illegal dumpsites, and roads, to raise awareness.
4. Promote actions to **enhance education of both the industry and consumers**, by addressing the challenges of plastic waste, ways to reduce plastic usage, proper management, circular economy principles, and the waste hierarchy.
5. Highlight the **economic value of waste derived products**, including the introduction of incentives to promote behavioral change, as well as the potential for repurposing of products to minimize the waste stream.

V. Regional Cooperation



1. **Enhance collaboration and dialogue between Member States** to:
 - ➔ Promote **partnerships amongst Indian Ocean countries with relevant international, regional and sub-regional organizations**, to enhance the multistakeholder coordination and cooperation.
 - ➔ Promote the **exchange of knowledge and experiences and technological expertise** in waste management, eco-friendly alternatives, circular economy, and marine debris (recycling partnerships, EPR, etc.).
 - ➔ Promote **resource sharing** in case of marine debris related disasters and emergencies.
2. **Promote private sector engagement and investment** in preventing and reducing the leakage of plastic waste into the environment, including partnerships between public and private sector and the introduction of EPR systems.