

Future Leaders' Declaration on ASEAN-Japan Cooperation for International Marine Plastic Waste

Adopted in Tokyo, Japan on 16 March 2021

We, the young leaders of the academic sector (with candidate degrees from BAs to PhDs) and the public sector from the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, and Japan, have been selected by the ASEAN-Japan Centre to participate in its project entitled "Future Leaders' Declaration on ASEAN-Japan Cooperation for International Marine Plastic Waste" with the common goal of contributing to tackling the global challenges relating to marine plastic waste and proposing how these challenges should be addressed through a cooperation framework between ASEAN and Japan.

We aspire to dedicate ourselves to finding mid- to long-term solutions to the challenges posed by the issue of marine plastic waste, thriving on our exchange of individual expertise and views at the preparatory sessions for this Declaration held on 14 November 2020, 28 November 2020, and 12 December 2020, as well as the insights and learning gained regarding (i) the importance of science-based evidence, (ii) common challenges collectively faced by the ASEAN Member States and Japan, and (iii) the complexities of the marine plastic waste issue through informative and comprehensive lectures by, among others, Professor Takaaki Kajita of the University of Tokyo (Nobel Laureate in Physics) and Professor Atsuhiko Isobe of Kyushu University.

We also greatly appreciate the guidance received from the lecturers in the special seminar held on 20 November with regard to policy perspectives and practical implementation, namely Dr. Vong Sok from the Environment Division of the ASEAN Secretariat, Mr. Tatsuya Abe from the Ministry of Environment Japan, Mr. Shunsuke Nakamaru and Ms. Emi Teshima from the

Japan International Cooperation Agency, Mr. Hiroshi Yasutake from the Kitakyushu Center for Asian Low Carbon Society, and Mr. Mitsuru Takeshita from the Japan Clean Ocean Material Alliance.

We welcome the governments' heightened attention to the issue of marine plastic waste through the inclusion of the term "marine plastic debris" in Paragraph 4 of the Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), dated 12 November 2020, as a possible area for cooperation under the ASEAN-Japan Strategic Partnership in connection with the marine cooperation outlined in the AOIP, and we acknowledge and emphasize the realization of the aim and goals of the 2007 ASEAN Declaration on Environmental Sustainability, the commitments made in the 2019 Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in ASEAN Region, the focus of cooperation in the Chairman's Statement of the 22nd ASEAN-Japan Summit, and the engagements under the 2017 ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris and the 2018 ASEAN+3 Marine Plastics Debris Cooperative Action Initiative.

On the basis of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which defines "pollution of the marine environment" (Part I, Art.1, para. 1(4)), we are concerned about the continuing plastic pollution (including macroplastic and microplastic) of the marine environment and its harmful effects on marine life and human health, and recognize the threat of plastic pollution to the marine environment for future generations; thus, we advocate more enhanced global and regional efforts to address plastic pollution in the marine environment and further strengthened international legal instruments for addressing plastic pollution in the marine environment.

We, the young leaders who have committed to efforts to resolve the global marine plastic waste issue, hereby declare the following issues and concerns, on the basis of our joint findings on issues related to marine plastic waste, with respect to the specific recommendations we make for our leaders.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

We, the young leaders from ASEAN and Japan,

Clause 1

RECOGNIZING the differences between ASEAN countries and Japan in terms of topographical and geographical characteristics, population numbers, waste management systems, technological capacities and availability of data on coastal ecosystems and marine plastic waste, and the need to enhance countries' capacities to obtain and standardize survey measurements in collecting regional and country-specific data.

Clause 2

RECOGNIZING ALSO the slow expansion of businesses that would facilitate transferring technological know-how because of structural barriers such as market entry and language differences.

Clause 3

STRESSING that all countries need to improve data collection methods and mobilize resources to monitor the amount of plastic waste on land and in the ocean.

Clause 4

AFFIRMING that lack of education is a fundamental problem common to both ASEAN and Japan in relation to marine plastic waste. In ASEAN countries and Japan, environmental education is still not made widely available to citizens. In our view, the lack of knowledge of plastic waste at an early age could be an obstacle to raising public awareness in the future, and education of the elderly population cannot be overlooked. We believe that there is a need to address the effectiveness of existing environmental education in ASEAN countries and Japan by targeting age-specific grade levels. Easily accessible and widely published information

related to the environment and environmental education (made available as early as possible) are essential to raising public awareness in the future.

Clause 5

ACKNOWLEDGING the importance of the circular economy in addressing the marine plastic waste issue as an interplay with other global environmental problems, including climate change through plastic incineration during recycling or final disposal processes.

Clause 6

EMPHASIZING the pivotal role of governments, both national and local, which have distinct functions in combating the issue of marine plastic waste.

Clause 7

RECOGNIZING FURTHER the need of all ASEAN countries to establish sustainable and effective waste management systems and diversify resources (including infrastructure, technology and human resources) to manage the volume of land-based waste, as well as waste generated from natural and human-caused disasters, whose improper disposal contributes to increases in marine plastic waste.

Clause 8

EMPHASIZING ALSO the need to identify gaps in the legislative frameworks of ASEAN countries and Japan and propose development of a cooperative framework to support the implementation capacities of national and local governments in need of support for waste management.

Clause 9

MINDFUL OF the importance of increasing the awareness, accountability and transparency of information on marine plastic waste.

Clause 10

DEPLORING the insufficiency of the present systems to address (i) waste management and availability of recycling facilities and dumping sites; (ii) awareness raising about the separation of waste and plastics; and (iii) practical engagement in the 3Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle).

Clause 11

STRIVING to shift the perception of people from the convenience of using plastic in daily life to the prioritization of reducing plastic usage. We are concerned that (i) high consumption of plastic increases the generation of plastic waste, which requires more infrastructure to manage the volume of such waste, and (ii) there is no regulation of the consumption of plastic commodities. We recommend resolving the problem by increasing consumer awareness of alternatives to plastic products.

Clause 12

CONCERNED that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may leave a long-term impact on overall efforts to combat plastic waste, with the concomitant increasing consumption of plastic, improper management and disposal of plastic-based medical wastes, decrease in economic incentives, as well as the pandemic's impact on governments and households, and especially on women, whose attention is directed toward more immediately critical issues such as food, health and economic security. We are also concerned that the pandemic and its negative impacts in terms of restrictions on travel and meetings affect research capabilities, resources including budgets and grants, and outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Having expressed our issues and concerns, propose the following recommendations in the thirteen (13) areas for the pertinent stakeholders, namely from the private sector, the government sector and the academic sector, as well as the general public, taking into account the fact that the plastic waste problem requires concerted efforts from all the people on the planet.

Clause 13

Material innovations and production of biodegradable plastics

We recommend the following innovations in research and development (R&D) and analysis:

Clause 13.1 (Private Sector, Government and Academia)

PRIORITIZE AND SUPPORT R&D in the following areas: plastic-degrading organisms and enzymes that are safe for the environment, and bio-based alternative plastic materials (i.e. bioplastic), which have similar properties to plastic but degrade easily and are proven safe for the environment.

Clause 13.2 (Private Sector, Government and Academia)

CONDUCT comprehensive life-cycle analysis of plastics and set up of end-of-life management infrastructure will support the development of biodegradable plastics and their recovery, reuse and recycling. Appreciate research on the degree of biodegradability of plastics, and inform the public about proper disposal of biodegradable plastics, and proper handling of bioplastic products.

Clause 14

Research and academic collaboration

We recommend strengthening research and academic collaboration and knowledge transfer on marine plastic waste between ASEAN and Japan by the private sector as well as research institutions and universities.

Clause 14.1 (Government)

RECALL AND AFFIRM the established regional and international action plans of the Osaka Blue Ocean Vision (2020), the Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris (2019) and the Basel Convention Plastic Waste Amendment (2019), as well as country-specific guidelines customized to the specific needs of each ASEAN country.

Clause 14.2 (Academia)

PROMOTE the conduct of ecosystem survey and monitoring studies on the impact of plastic waste in the coast, deep sea, other bodies of water and atmosphere (considering the presence of airborne microplastics) to address the lack of data in ASEAN countries and provide country-specific data.

Clause 14.3 (Government)

CALL UPON the support of Japan in activities related to the reduction of marine plastic waste: in providing bilateral official development assistance in capacity-building projects and knowledge and technology transfer to ASEAN countries, promoting business partnerships between the private sector and local governments, and disseminating best practices in measures to combat marine plastic waste.

Clause 14.4 (Academia)

ENCOURAGE solid collaboration among the various research centers in the ASEAN region and Japan on major aspects of oceanography research such as coastal and sea surface surveys, ocean flow, open ocean data and the impact of microplastics on marine life, to combat marine plastic waste.

Clause 14.5 (Government)

RECOMMEND strengthening the means of implementation of effective waste management procedures, from collection to sorting and treatment, for both ASEAN-wide and context-specific settings, taking into consideration the variety of factors such as geography, topography, waste management systems, national policies and implementation levels.

Clause 15

Technological innovations

We recommend that technological innovations, led by close engagement with the private sector, be strengthened and a sense of responsibility for and commitment to this issue be fostered through the following measures:

Clause 15.1 (Private Sector)

APPEAL for the use of eco-friendly products that use sustainable and biodegradable alternatives to plastic, and the redesign of package materials of existing products to reduce plastic components.

Clause 15.2 (Private Sector and Government)

CREATE an inclusive business environment to reduce marine plastic waste for a sustainable and responsible investment portfolio, which aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular Goals 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), 12 (Responsible consumption and production) and 14 (Life below water).

Clause 15.3 (Government)

ENCOURAGE governments to drive private sector engagement by providing assistance through various campaigns and establishing business incentives.

Clause 16

Evidence-based approach to the reduction of marine plastic waste

We emphasize the importance of an evidence-based approach to the marine plastic waste issue and recommend consideration of the following measures:

Clause 16.1 (Government and Academia)

PROMOTE consistent waste analysis and reporting, with globally or regionally consistent units of measurement and adoption at the local government level (such as data for the total amount or volume of plastic waste generated, types of plastic waste and corresponding percentages, and sources where waste is encountered (land, river, coast, sea, and so on), in order to enable data sets to be comparable. These actions are necessary to monitor the characteristics of marine plastic waste generated and its sources and to reach consensus on an ASEAN-wide goal for the reduction of such waste.

Clause 16.2 (Government and Academia)

RECOMMEND that government and academia co-develop an open database on marine plastic waste accessible to relevant institutions to identify the flow path of plastic waste from land to the ocean. Affirm the need to establish a central, accessible international database center (documenting e.g. the quantity of plastics in the ocean and research on potential organisms that degrade plastics) in the ASEAN region and Japan.

Clause 16.3 (Government, Private Sector and General Public)

EMPHASIZE the use of digital technology and communication, such as media, social media, advertisements and others to reach out to the public with information about marine plastic waste and its current state as well as to encourage people to actively participate in plastic-reducing actions.

Clause 17

Capacity-building and engagement with local governments

We promote capacity-building and engagement with local governments and recommend the following measures, as well as the use of successful cases as models – for example, the zero-single-use-plastic islands in Cu Lao Cham in Viet Nam and zero-waste Kamikatsu Village in Japan.

Clause 17.1 (Government)

RECOMMEND establishing cooperative partnerships between local communities and other stakeholders to work as a team on concerted efforts to devise effective policy on plastic waste reduction and tangible actions to reduce plastic waste.

Clause 17.2 (General Public)

ENCOURAGE local communities to actively participate in tangible actions and influence government policy on plastic waste reduction

Clause 17.3 (General Public)

APPRECIATE the need to acquire various perspectives from consumers and recyclers in order to identify and address gaps and challenges in the circular economy of plastics.

Clause 17.4 (Government and General Public)

RECOGNIZE the need to take differing socioeconomic circumstances into consideration in engaging local stakeholders and to leave no one behind.

Clause 17.5 (Government)

EMPHASIZE the need to mobilize resources to develop waste treatment infrastructure as well as human resources to ensure proper waste management at the local level.

Clause 17.6 (Government)

ENCOURAGE enactment of policies for proper waste collection methods to respond to the increase of plastic waste during the pandemic, in which lockdowns have exacerbated the issue.

Clause 18

Education and awareness

We recommend that education and awareness-raising be enhanced in ASEAN countries and Japan with the following measures, which should be wide-reaching for all age groups, from the young to the elderly.

Clause 18.1 (General Public)

EMBRACE the importance of “continuity” in taking actions and making “saving the environment” a norm.

Clause 18.2 (Government)

UPDATE the ASEAN Guidelines on Eco-schools, especially the National Policy Frameworks on Environmental Education developed in 2011, and disseminate their ideas and modalities for standardization across ASEAN countries.

Clause 18.3 (General Public)

ENHANCE the educational curriculum focused on environmental preservation, including the impacts of marine plastic waste, through in-class teaching, field trips, beach cleaning activities and campaigns, and online events, that can be organized periodically, targeting students’ compulsory formal education.

Clause 18.4 (General Public)

UTILIZE public spaces such as aquariums to help the general public recognize the impacts of

plastic waste on marine life such as through historical descriptions, short movies and virtual reality installations.

Clause 19

Model eco-cities

We recommend the creation and designation of model eco-cities in ASEAN countries and Japan.

Clause 19.1 (Government and General Public)

URGE the use of model eco-cities to spearhead the promotion of proper and sustainable waste management systems, infrastructure and strategies that can be modeled by other municipalities. An example is the Marikina City Eco Savers Program in the Philippines.

Clause 20

Taxation and plastic bag fee

We recommend the gradual imposition by national and local governments of bans or fines for improper plastic waste disposal, from the community to the national level.

Clause 20.1 (Government)

CREATE public consensus on the marine plastic waste issue so that the consensus becomes the norm as time passes, by establishing a “no plastic bag” mechanism through, for example, enacting legislation that encourages the public to buy affordable non-single-use items and bags instead of single-use plastic items and bags, and/or by introducing an environmental tax and/or regulations on using single-use plastic items or providing such plastic materials to consumers.

Clause 20.2 (Government and Private Sector)

EMPHASIZE the importance of incorporating the issues of logistics and manufacturing

process waste in overall efforts to reduce marine plastic waste.

Clause 20.3 (Government and Academia)

RECOGNIZE the need to study the effectiveness of taxation by observing the financial impacts over a long time frame for implementation.

Clause 20.4 (Government)

REQUEST governments to proactively improve the current situation by changing people's behaviors, which is the underlying cause that may influence the behaviors of our descendants. To do so, it is imperative that governments ensure the presence of political will and continuous commitment to tackling the issue.

Clause 21

Waste management and recycling

We recommend the promotion of waste management and recycling as follows:

Clause 21.1 (Government and Academia)

ESTABLISH optimized, forward-thinking, environmentally sound management as a guiding principle, with due consideration to costs and benefits including effectiveness, maintenance and minimization of the use of harmful substances.

Clause 21.2 (Government, Private Sector and Academia)

ENCOURAGE knowledge exchange to facilitate the replication of best practices in waste management technologies from other countries.

Clause 21.3 (Government, Private Sector and Academia)

PROMOTE synergies in improving the waste management process by drawing on the latest

technology and creative ideas, involving a wide range of stakeholders, including the private sector and communities.

Clause 22 (Government and General Public)

Curbing behavioral practices on plastic consumption

WELCOME the shift in public attention to plastics from viewing them as the culprit to focusing instead on social commitment to proper disposal and reduction of waste. Welcome also knowledge exchange and financial incentives for the development of innovative ideas and products that provide alternatives to plastic and influence social preference for those alternatives over plastic.

Clause 23

COVID-19-related countermeasures

We recommend the following countermeasures to deliver on our commitment to the marine plastic waste issue.

Clause 23.1 (Government, Private Sector and General Public)

PRIORITIZE tasks to overcome challenges and urge governments to delegate actions to relevant stakeholders. They can include developing sustainable materials for personal protective equipment during the pandemic.

Clause 23.2 (Government)

MAXIMIZE the benefits of the digital era by adopting new platforms and using online connectivity to foster international collaboration between ASEAN and Japan in the “new normal” conditions, and urge governments to make such technology accessible to both urban and rural communities where applicable.

Clause 23.3 (Government)

BUILD resilience so that we can maximize the use of local resources in counteracting the reduced mobility, logistics and transport resulting from the pandemic crisis.

Clause 23.4 (Private Sector and Government)

ENCOURAGE food services companies to use biodegradable packaging and prioritize environmentally sound waste management, and urge governments to subsidize the cost of producing alternative materials for the retail industry.

Clause 24

Youth engagement

We recognize the need to engage all age groups and in particular young people to institutionalize environmental actions.

Clause 24.1 (Government, Academia and General Public)

CONTEXTUALIZE environmental programmes in sociocultural and economic contexts in ASEAN countries and Japan and improve the people's (across all age groups) acceptance and sustainability of environmental programmes as a habit.

Clause 24.2 (Government, Private Sector and General Public)

SUPPORT young entrepreneurs in ASEAN countries and Japan who engage in start-up activities and businesses that develop innovative solutions for waste management, recycling and waste monitoring. Promote also initiatives and incentives for students and young people in formulating volunteer activities on waste management.

Clause 25

Technical cooperation

We recommend that technical cooperation between Japan and ASEAN should be enhanced in the context of sustainable economic development, through the following mechanisms:

Clause 25.1 (Government)



SUPPORT ASEAN and Japan in identifying their strengths and capacities in waste management programmes and research and promoting the sharing of best practices between ASEAN countries and Japan. Reiterate that Japan should enhance its role in supporting the technical capacities of and in transferring technology to developing countries to promote waste management, recovery of marine plastic waste and innovation under the “Marine Initiative: Toward the Realization of the Osaka Blue Ocean Vision”.

Clause 25.2 (Government)

ENCOURAGE Japan and ASEAN to learn from each other across all sectors and thematic areas so as to embed sustainability in policy and practice, including the issues and methods of combating plastic waste not only through technology, but also through other dimensions such as social and cultural efforts, education, policy and product manufacturing.

DONE in Tokyo on the sixteenth day of March in the year two thousand twenty-one

SIGNED by the young leaders:

<p>1. Aye Mee BARTOCILLO (Philippines)</p> 	<p>2. Souphaphone CHANTHAVONG (Lao PDR)</p> 	<p>3. CHUNG Si Ying (Singapore)</p> 
<p>4. Helen Valerie CORALES (Philippines)</p> 	<p>5. Yasmin Nabilah binti Mohd FAUZEE (Malaysia)</p> 	<p>6. FUJIKAWA Machiko (Japan) Translation Committee</p> 
<p>7. Jomphol LAMOONKIT (Thailand)</p> 	<p>8. LAO Chhunhong (Cambodia)</p> 	<p>9. MASUDA Haruna (Japan) Translation Committee</p> 

<p>10. Thi Thanh Tra NGUYEN (Viet Nam)</p>  <p>Nguyen Thi Thanh Tra</p>	<p>11. NURLATIFAH (Indonesia) Preamble Committee</p> 	<p>12. OKUIZUMI Towa (Japan) Translation Committee</p> 
<p>13. Rafidah RAHMAD (Brunei Darussalam)</p> 	<p>14. Bandos ROS (Cambodia)</p> 	<p>15. Shelvy Elvina SANTOSO (Indonesia)</p>  <p>SHELVEY E. SANTOSO</p> 
<p>16. Fajar Ajie SETIAWAN (Indonesia) Preamble Committee</p> 	<p>17. Aye Myint Myat SOE (Myanmar)</p> 	<p>18. Thuy Tien TRAN (Viet Nam)</p>  <p>Tran Thuy Tien</p> 

<p>19. TSUBOI Masahiro (Japan) Translation Committee</p> <p>坪井 昌宏</p>	<p>20. Thant Zin TUN (Myanmar)</p> <p>Thant Zin</p>	<p>21. UCHIDA Yukiya (Japan) Translation Committee</p> <p>内田 祐紀哉</p>
<p>22. YAMAMOTO Marie (Japan) Translation Committee</p> <p>山本 麻莉絵</p>		

ATTACHMENT

Fellows' Personal Statements on Their Commitment to Combat Marine Plastic Waste

1. Aye Mee BARTOCILLO (Philippines)

I am a wildlife enthusiast with a compassionate heart to speak for the minority and unheard species of this world. I believe that marine plastic waste is a silent enemy that slowly destroys the marine biodiversity and negatively affects marine life forms from the microscopic planktons to the gigantic whales.

2. Souphaphone CHANTHAVONG (Lao PDR)

To solve environmental problems, we must first understand environment itself. Same as the plastic waste problem, the perception of this issue has not yet received so much attention from the society. Thus, it became a commitment for me as an environmental studies student to initiate solutions regarding this issue.

3. CHUNG Si Ying (Singapore)

“What goes around comes around” – I believe this is the perfect phrase to describe the marine plastic waste issue that we are currently facing now. Plastic is created and mismanaged by humans, and we have to step up and take the responsibility before the issue becomes a crisis.

4. Helen Valerie CORALES (Philippines)

The ocean is the cradle of life and an essential global support for human survival. Having experienced the beauty, use and ecological services of marine ecosystems, I believe that it is the right of future generations to inherit these same amenities we enjoy for free from our oceans.

5. Yasmin FAUZEE (Malaysia)

The Internet has exposed the impact of our ignorance on the health of the ocean and wildlife. Aquatic animals which rely heavily on the sense of smell often mistaken plastic as food. These poor animals suffer for a long time before ending up dead. Because of this, I believe changes should be done NOW.

6. FUJIKAWA Machiko (Japan)

My laboratory is studying microplastics in the atmosphere (airborne microplastics). They have environmental and human health risks. Now, I'm analyzing microplastics in the softeners which are the source of airborne microplastics and also the cause of fragrance pollution. Finally, I want to elucidate the movement of plastic waste.

7. Jomphol LAMOONKIT (Thailand)

I have a passion for Engineering and Earth Sciences, especially for Oceanography. I also come from Thailand, and marine plastic waste is one issue that has gained my interest for a long time. I believe, through collaboration, we can make a real global impact to tackle the issue.

8. LAO Chhunhong (Cambodia)

Having seen the amount of plastic bags used in everyday life, my desire to combat plastic consumption has inspired me to further engage in the issue of marine plastic waste. As a human being, who is a part of nature, we should learn to appreciate our current existing environment.

9. MASUDA Haruna (Japan)

I realized the issue of marine waste when I was living near the ocean and scuba diving. I didn't know how serious it was in the city. Then I decided to study environment and work with the locals. I believe it can be solved with innovative ideas, detailed research, and enthusiasm.

10. Thi Thanh Tra NGUYEN (Vietnam)

My grandmother lives in a coastal province in Vietnam, I usually visited there whenever I could. I'm among the people who understand the most the impacts of marine plastic waste. My motivation to join this project is giving support to my own family even if I live far from home.

11. NURLATIFAH (Indonesia)

I grew up seeing many garbage in public areas, markets, and rivers. I realize that up until now less efforts have been done to tackle or even measure the occurrence of this pollutant in my country. Thus, I am eager to be the agent of change to solve this matter!

12. OKUIZUMI Towa (Japan)

Plastic materials are an excellent material which spread into the world in very short period. However, it's also true that it often appears as bad for the environment. Therefore, I felt that people like me who are studying polymer chemistry and understand the materials should tackle this problem, and this is my motivation.

13. Rafidah RAHMAD (Brunei)

The door of opportunity opened up and I was welcomed to the discussion table so I decided to take a step forward and declare to make changes not just for the good of the society and the environment, but also for myself.

14. ROS Bantos (Cambodia)

As an environmental activist in the past and a public servant in environmental sector in the present, my vision is to see a society where people and nature can live together in harmony.

Conversely, I've seen plastic debris everywhere, harming both human life and wildlife. I am indeed curious to know how it happens and how to solve it.

15. Shelvy SANTOSO (Indonesia)

My hometown's only resource of water, Brantas River has been severely flooded with plastic waste and deeply contaminated by microplastics which come from the mismanaged imported plastic waste from US, Europe, and Japan. This has driven me to save Brantas River and contribute more to environment sustainability-related action.

16. Fajar Ajie SETIAWAN (Indonesia)

Citarum River, dubbed as the dirtiest river in the world, streams through Bandung, Indonesia, my hometown city, so I've witnessed how plastic waste heavily damaged our waters. I'm also currently studying the legal development Basel Convention, one of its chapters is on the 2019 Plastic Waste Amendment, giving me insights from the perspective of international environmental law in addressing the issue.

17. Aye Myint Myat SOE (Myanmar)

Around 1990, my country was plastic-free and leaves were used for packaging and the bag or containers were bought for buying food. After 30 years, not only in cities but in mountains, we can easily find plastic wastes everywhere. I wish to give back my generation their land free of plastic wastes.

18. Tien TRAN (Vietnam)

My frustration started when I cleaned my house and realized how much stuff I owned, especially those with plastic packaging or single-use plastics, thus I decided to embark on a journey of reducing my own use of plastics and spread the same spirit to others.

19. TSUBOI Masahiro (Japan)

Through the program in Indonesia and Japan, the issue of garbage was brought up. At that time, I could not explain with sufficient evidence how plastic waste in the ocean was a problem. I was interested in the scientific approach of how to indicate the degree of its danger.

20. Thant Zin TUN (Myanmar)

I am interested in microplastic concentration and their hazardous chemicals, and plastic debris pollution in ocean. In the past, I easily discarded plastic garbage through improper means; however, I abstain from that kind of behavior now and I want to reduce using plastics and improve its proper waste disposal. In the future, I will try to investigate the microplastic occurrence in open dumping sites soil, estuary sediments and coastal area in Myanmar.

21. UCHIDA Yukiya (Japan)

I have lived with the ocean my whole life. From an early age, I helped my grandfather work as a fisherman, played in the ocean, and learned many things in the ocean. I want to protect the ocean and the people who live with the ocean.

22. YAMAMOTO Marie (Japan)

Marine plastic waste is a field that essentially affects the entire global population, and yet, rarely do we truly understand what it entails. For the future generation, we have responsibilities to keep marine clean so as to protect the economy, environment, and the traditional way of life.