

## Environment Unit



### Regional Knowledge Centre for Marine Plastic Debris (RKC–MPD)

In recent years, the Southeast Asia region has been one of the biggest contributors of plastic leakage into the oceans. Without effective action this can eventually lead to the degradation of the marine ecosystem and it poses a threat to marine species. To reduce the leakage, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has made a bold effort by setting up several regional initiatives, which include the ASEAN+3 Marine Plastic Debris Cooperation Action Initiative and the ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris.

The Regional Knowledge Centre for Marine Plastic Debris (RKC–MPD) was set up inside ERIA on 1 October 2019 to support ASEAN in tackling marine plastic pollution. The centre serves as an information clearinghouse on marine plastic debris in ASEAN+3 countries. It aims to facilitate networking amongst stakeholders, raise awareness, promote innovative actions in each country, and facilitate national and regional cooperation to solve the marine plastic debris issue. As a knowledge centre, the current activity of the RKC–MPD is developing a website (<https://rkcmpd-eria.org/>), which contains good practices such as legal frameworks, action plans, and voluntary initiatives that have been performed by countries in the ASEAN+3 region to minimise plastic leakage as

well as other related information, such as scientific knowledge about marine plastic pollution. The website has recently also launched a platform to promote efforts by the private sector (<https://rkcmpd-eria.org/story>), in which companies can showcase their products, services, and technologies that contribute to the reduction of plastic waste and marine plastic debris.

The RKC–MPD has published research on various topics related to plastic waste and marine plastic debris, such as regional waste management, waste management during the pandemic, and plastic bag bans. In the future, the centre plans to expand its research publications to other topics such as extended producer responsibility, impacts of plastic pollution on the marine ecosystem, and a life cycle assessment of plastic.

## Agriculture Unit



ERIA's research activities related to the food and agricultural field had been conducted as needed since ERIA's establishment in 2008. Although the contribution of the agricultural sector to

overall economic growth is not necessarily large, its importance in the socio-economics of each country remains unchanged especially in the ASEAN region – the food and agriculture sector is a major