

CALL FOR PILOT PROJECTS

**PILOTING THE APPLICATION OF BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS FOR
PLASTIC REDUCTION.**

July 2024

Regional Knowledge Centre for Marine Plastic Debris, Economic Research Institute for East Asia and ASEAN Institute for Global Environmental Strategies



SUMMARY

The Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), a not-for-profit policy research institute in Japan is launching Phase II of the Breaking the Plastic Habit in Asia project to test the effectiveness of behaviour-centred interventions to reduce the use and waste of single-use plastics in cities and communities. The project is conducted in close collaboration with the Regional Knowledge Centre for Marine Plastic Debris, hosted by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA).

Phase II of this project, through an expanded set of pilot projects, plans to further develop practical knowledge and tools for applying behaviour-centred projects in concrete settings, pilot the use of a new measurement and assessment framework for behaviour-centred projects, and generate a set of cases studies to support policymakers, businesses, and civil society in implementing behaviour-centred programming in their efforts to address environmental challenges.

In line with this goal, the Breaking the Plastic Habit in Asia project calls for implementing partners from ASEAN countries to plan, implement, and monitor pilot projects in collaboration with IGES.

DURATION OF CALL:

Open from the date of announcement to the 31st of August 2024

Duration of eligible pilot projects: Up to 6 months during the period from the 1st of January to the 31st of August 2025

INSTITUTIONAL ELIGIBILITY:

The call is open to all organisations that meet the following eligibility criteria:

- ◆ Successful applicants will include local, regional, or national governmental institutions/agencies (or subsidiary bodies), companies, or not-for-profit organisations (including educational or research institutes).
- ◆ Eligibility will be limited to organisations based in ASEAN Member States (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam).

This document provides detailed information on this call and the application guidelines.

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BACKGROUND

Plastic is pervasive in modern life, making its reduction a complex societal challenge. Reducing plastic consumption will necessitate substantial shifts in societal behaviour, which must be supported by increased public awareness of the environmental and health impacts of plastic waste. To effectively address this issue, it is crucial to understand the decision-making processes that drive plastic usage and identify strategies to promote behaviour change.

While regulatory measures such as bans and taxes on plastics are effective in the short term, there are limits to market-based solutions. Regulatory approaches tend to be less effective at encouraging long-term behavioural shifts compared to voluntary, self-imposed goals informed by quality information campaigns and appeals to values and aspirations. Behavioural approaches that support personal autonomy and non-coercive methods have been shown to facilitate lasting changes by helping individuals adopt pro-environmental identities and sustainable behaviours.

In the context of growing awareness of plastic pollution, the persistent use of single-use plastics highlights a gap between intentions and actions. This "intention-action gap" is influenced by entrenched habits and external factors, including social norms, economic conditions, and physical environments. Addressing this gap requires interventions that go beyond simply providing information or imposing fees. Effective strategies should also consider altering ingrained habits and social norms through a combination of motivational and situational incentives.

Reducing plastic consumption involves navigating diverse cultural practices and community relationships with plastics, especially in contexts like food systems where health and convenience are key considerations. Engaging deeply with stakeholders and understanding local values and practices are essential for designing effective interventions and achieving sustainable behaviour change.

Behavioural Insights (BI), an interdisciplinary field integrating psychology, economics, and social science, offers valuable tools for understanding and influencing decision-making. BI encompasses the full range of often irrational and conflicting aspects of human behaviour and aims to align decisions with values and desired outcomes. Applying BI methods can complement

traditional policies by addressing the deeper causes of plastic use and tailoring interventions to specific cultural and contextual factors.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL

The call aims to select 4 to 6 implementing partners from ASEAN Member States (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam) to work on the planning, implementation, monitoring, and assessment of micro-scale pilot activities that test the effectiveness of behavioural insights methodology for reducing single-use plastic in concrete settings (e.g. shops, restaurants, campuses, event sites) and for specific target groups (e.g. families, workers, students, aged population).

During project implementation, IGES will provide technical assistance, capacity training, and offer ongoing support to implementing partners to address issues that may occur during the implementation. The lessons learned from the pilot projects will be gathered and examined by the partners and IGES to help refine a Measurement and Assessment Framework and set of case studies to help policymakers, businesses, educators or other stakeholders take advantage of behavioural insights to tackle single-use plastics and other environmental challenges.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PILOT PROJECTS

LOCATIONS/SETTINGS AND TARGETS

Selected pilot projects will work on reducing the use and/or waste of single-use plastic products in concrete settings by specific target groups through the application of behaviour-centred interventions (see below).

Locations/Settings could include but are not limited to the following:

- ◆ Restaurants, Cafeteria
- ◆ Campuses (schools, workplaces)
- ◆ Community centres

- ◆ Event sites
- ◆ Tourist sites
- ◆ Small retail shops, and/or ambulant shops

Target groups could include but are not limited to the following:

- ◆ Families / households
- ◆ Educators, students, workers
- ◆ Age groups (youth, elders, etc.)

Applications must identify *two or more target groups or locations* to implement the pilot activities.

Examples of the combination of target groups include the following:

- ◆ A site from a middle-to-high-income area and another site from a low-income area.
- ◆ A site from an area with well-developed public services, including waste management and another from an area without such services.
- ◆ A site from an area where businesses and/or citizens are already adopting circular practices (e.g. waste reduction and recycling) and another site from an area where these practices are not yet widespread.

APPROACHES TO BE TESTED

Selected pilot projects will apply *two or more levers of behaviour change*¹ (Material Incentives, Information, Rules and Regulations, Social Influences, Emotional Appeals, and Choice Architecture) to reducing consumption and waste of single-use plastic products among one or more target demographics. Sample interventions include but are not limited to the following:

¹ See the Levers of Behaviour Change as discussed in *Breaking the Plastic Habit: A Guidance Note and Practical Toolkit*, pages 4-8. <https://www.iges.or.jp/en/pub/breaking-plastic-habit-guidance-note-and-practical-toolkit-lessons-single-use-plastic-behaviour>

- ◆ Implementation of a tailored information campaign to reduce single-use plastic consumption among students that utilises relevant methods and modes of communication and leverages social influence.
- ◆ Introduction of an incentive scheme that encourages the target demographic to bring their own reusable container for drinks or food, complimented by a change in choice architecture that makes it easier to use reusables, including recycling of alternatives to single-use plastics.
- ◆ Changing institutional rules and regulations to ban or limit single-use plastics, while educating the public about the benefits of alternatives single-use plastics.
- ◆ Using social influences and emotional appeals to link the shift away from single-use plastics to traditional / cultural values and priorities.
- ◆ A less/zero plastic tourism campaign that encourages guide books/travelling videos/websites of touristic areas to include sustainable tourism ideas and information on the local waste management systems, online maps to locate sustainable businesses in touristic areas.
- ◆ Approach applied to retail shops and ambulant shops in poorer areas where traditionally small sachets are quite often used to sell products and waste management system (especially to collect and recycle plastics) are not well established.

Applicants should refer to existing cases of behaviour-centred interventions for plastic reduction or other purposes. Some cases will be found in the online reports and guidance published by the United Nations Environment Programme, Rare's Center for Behavior & the Environment, or the Behavioural Science for Sustainable Lifestyles Working Group of the One-Planet Network Sustainable Lifestyles and Education Programme.

MONITORING OF THE RESULTS

Selected pilot projects will implement a Monitoring and Assessment Framework, provided by IGES, to monitor their progress and results in cooperation with IGES. Key metrics to be monitored will be determined through consultation with IGES and may include:

- ◆ Amount of single-use plastic products used/wasted.

- ◆ Understanding/acceptance of behavioural insights to plastics reduction by the staff members/managers of the pilot sites and customers.
- ◆ Customer / target demographic response to behaviour change interventions.

IMPORTANT CONDITIONS OF THE CALL

ELIGIBILITY OF THE PILOT PROJECT PROPOSALS

All the project proposals submitted under this call must comply with the criteria indicated below:

DURATION OF ELIGIBLE PILOT PROJECTS:

Minimum duration 2 months, maximum duration 6 months.

All pilot projects should be completed by the 31st of August, 2025

FINANCIAL SUPPORT:

USD 14,000 will be granted to each of the selected partners as the budget to plan, implement and monitor pilot projects.

Preference will be given to project proposals that include the possibility of matching or supporting resources (i.e., funding, materials, space, materials, etc.) from local partner institutions.

DEADLINE OF THE APPLICATION

The call is open from the announcement date to the 31st of August 2024.

APPLICANTS/EXECUTING AGENCIES

All organisations that meet the eligibility criteria can apply to the call and work as the executing agency when selected.

Organisation types: Regional, national, local governmental institutions/agencies (or subsidiary bodies), private sector, or not-for-profit organisations (including educational or research institutes)

Countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam

Applicant should be the executing agency that leads the pilot projects when selected. Pilot projects can have multiple partners as necessary.

LANGUAGE:

Proposals, implementation and monitoring plans, and reports should be submitted in English.

DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED:

The following documents should be submitted and received by the 31st of August 2024 at appleby@iges.or.jp

- ◆ Application form (Mandatory)

- ◆ Annual and financial report (Optional)
- ◆ Supporting letters from partners (Optional)

SELECTION CRITERIA

IGES, ERIA and experts will evaluate the project applications based on the following criteria.

- ◆ Clear description of the context (settings and target)
- ◆ Clear description of the behavioural insights to be tested and which levers of behaviour change will be used
- ◆ Clear statement of a commitment to implementing the monitoring and assessment framework provided by IGES

PROJECT CYCLE (PLANNED TIMELINE)

Call for Pilot Projects	July-August 2024
Application Deadline	31 of August 2024
Evaluation/Selection of the pilot projects Kick-off Workshop (online)	September 2024
Capacity Training Course (in-person)	October 2024
Implementation Plan Development Contracting	January 2025
Implementation & Monitoring	2 to 6 months from January to August 2025

<p>Refinement of the Measurement and Assessment Framework based on the pilot results</p> <p>Development of case studies based on the pilot experiences</p>	<p>August to October 2025</p>
<p>Final Workshop (in-person)</p>	<p>November 2025</p>
<p>Submission of Synthesis Report and Measurement and Assessment Framework</p> <p>Submission of case studies</p>	<p>December 2025</p>