

9. ARCHIPELAGIC AND ISLAND STATES FORUM

Summary of role: Archipelagic and Island States Forum (AIS Forum) is a forum initiated by Indonesia for archipelagic states and island states around the world in 2018, to strengthen cooperation between members to deal with shared challenges in areas of climate change mitigation, adaptation, and disaster management; economic challenges and opportunities such as the blue economy, responsible and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, economic growth and creation of decent working opportunities; marine plastic debris; and good maritime governance

Summary of work: One of the focus areas of the AIS Forum is marine plastic debris. Cooperation on this topic appears to have until now been focused on sharing of smart solutions

Keywords/research fields: Archipelagic Island States Forum, AIS Forum, Archipelagic States, Island States, Function and mandate, Manado Joint Declaration, marine plastic debris

9.1 Function and mandate

The Archipelagic and Island States Forum (AIS Forum) was officially established by the Manado Joint Declaration adopted by the 1st Ministerial Meeting of Archipelagic and Island States Forum on 1 November 2018 in Manado, Indonesia (the AIS Manado Declaration). The idea of establishing a global forum for archipelagic and island states was an outcome of the Conference on the Archipelagic and Island States Forum initiated by and held in Indonesia in November 2017.

It is designated in the AIS Manado Declaration as an “open-ended, complementary, integrated and inclusive developmental forum, with regular meetings that is in synergy with other initiatives and serving as an avenue for collaboration and sharing of expertise to generate smart and innovative solutions”.

Its mission is to strengthen collaboration and identify specific areas for partnership on efforts linked to combating climate change impacts, as well as conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas, coastal, and marine resources with an integrated approach. These also include specific mention of collaborative action to combat marine plastic debris. The approach adopted in the Declaration is to use “smart and innovative solutions”, including blended financing mechanisms and an integrated approach. Participating countries to the AIS Manado Declaration from Southeast and East Asia include: Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Japan and Timor-Leste. The map shared on its website suggests that other partners may join the AIS Forum, even if they are not from Southeast or East Asia (www.aisforum.org/aisforum-map). Its Secretariat is located in Jakarta, Indonesia. It is coordinated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The AIS Manado Declaration is available at: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d285a05b4ed260001751e86/t/5d42b4f8f7232f000133fc4f/1564652793910/MANADO+JOINT+DECLARATION+ON+AIS+011118+%281%29.pdf>.

The 2nd Ministerial Meeting of the AIS Forum took place on 30 October–1 November 2019 in Manado under the theme of ‘Natural Beauty and Prosperity: Marine Ecotourism Opportunity’. It discussed the

progress that the AIS Forum had made, preparations for the 1st High Level Meeting of AIS Forum in 2020, and concrete cooperation among governments and businesses. Within the framework of the Meeting, an AIS Start-up and Business Summit (SBS) was also organised to involve the business sector into the cooperation. Available:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d285a05b4ed260001751e86/t/5dd74c71ba1dae0d81676631/1574390901136/CONCEPT%2BNOTE%2BSBS%2BFINAL.pdf>.

9.2 Work on marine plastics

Much of the work and approach of the AIS Forum is summarised in concept notes and posters available on their website. With respect to marine plastic debris, the initial AIS Forum's Concept Note from 2018 links issues of marine plastic debris in AIS countries to shortage of land areas and resources available for safe disposal of waste, population growth, poorly managed garbage dumps and the disposal of toxic chemicals. The Concept Note is available at: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d285a05b4ed260001751e86/t/5d42ddcd1ac53e0001726c65/1564663247623/CONCEPT_NOTE_AIS_Rev1_%2812th_September_2018%29_copy.pdf.

The 'Smart and Innovative Solutions 2019–2020' poster indicates two activities on marine plastic debris in 2019:

- Solutions related to waste for energy, waste for asphalt mix, waste for bricks, plastic neutral policies, and the circular economy to be developed by the AIS Business Responsibility Forum in August 2019; and
- The AIS Youth 'Visualthon' Competition of ideas for zero marine plastic debris. Winners received impact investment in September 2019. The 10 top education posters are available online: <https://www.aisforum.org/marine-posters>.

(<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d285a05b4ed260001751e86/t/5d9bedc7b9c85c1e7419bb38/1570500045679/Smart+and+Innnovative+Solutions.pdf>)

An example of a solution presented at the SBS Panel Discussion in 2019 was that of Gringgo TrashTech, a technology start-up that seeks to transform waste management through a phone application that tracks plastic waste and puts waste managers in contact with buyers of selected types and quantities of plastic waste. It has received funding from Google and uses artificial intelligence. See: <https://blog.google/outreach-initiatives/google-org/reduce-plastic-waste-indonesia/>.