

## 11. OTHER UN ORGANISATIONS AND GLOBAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES INVOLVED IN COMBATTING POLLUTION FROM MARINE PLASTICS

### 11.1 Global Environment Facility (GEF)

**Summary of role:** *GEF provides funding for developing countries and countries with economies in transition to meet the objectives of the international environmental conventions and agreements. GEF support is provided to government agencies, civil society organisations, private sector companies and research institutions, to implement projects and programmes in recipient countries.*

**Summary of recommendations and work status:** *Under the 7th replenishment of the GEF fund, marine litter and microplastics is now a GEF's focal area.*

**Keywords/research fields:** *Global Environment Facility; GEF; funding marine litter and microplastics projects and programmes; GEF Trust Fund; GEF assembly*

#### 11.1.1 Background and aim

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) was established on the eve of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit to help tackle the most pressing environmental problems. It is an international partnership of 183 countries, international institutions, civil society organisations and the private sector that addresses global environmental issues. Its site indicates that it has provided over \$17.9 billion in grants and mobilized an additional \$93.2 billion in co-financing for more than 4,500 projects in 170 countries. GEF provided funding to many projects implemented by Regional Seas programmes worldwide such as the GEF/UNEP project 'Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand' under COBSEA. Available: <http://www.unepscs.org/>.

#### 11.1.2 Ongoing work

GEF now has marine litter and microplastics within its focal areas, under the seventh replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund.

Marine plastics was a key topic of the 2018 GEF Assembly held in Vietnam. The statement made by the Assembly emphasises that the circular economy approach to marine plastics is well-aligned with the GEF commitments, and indicates strategic intervention points focused on plastic life cycle (material and design engineering; consumer use; and recovery and recycling). According to the GEF, because of the transboundary nature of pollution from marine plastics, global and regional alliances building on public-private partnership are critical to effectively combat this source of pollution. Available: [https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/GEF%20Assembly\\_MarinePlastics%20Factsheet\\_9.4.18.pdf](https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/GEF%20Assembly_MarinePlastics%20Factsheet_9.4.18.pdf).

At the 56<sup>th</sup> GEF Council Meeting on 11–13 June 2019 in Washington D.C., the issue of pollution from marine plastic was discussed. Some Council Members encouraged GEF to work further on the issue.

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See: <https://www.thegef.org/council-meetings/gef-56th-council-meeting>. The 57<sup>th</sup> GEF Council Meeting took place on 16–19 December 2019 and plastic was one of the numerous issues considered. However, agreed initiatives did not focus on this in the context of Southeast and East Asia. GEF 58 and GEF 59 were scheduled for June and December 2020 respectively.