

# PROMAR Phase II: Kick-Off Meeting and Study Tour

25 – 28 June 2024 | Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

## *Event Summary*

To mark the start of PROMAR Phase II implementation, project partners gathered in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic to exchange on project plans and shared learnings. The meetings included Phase I (Colombia, Costa Rica, and Dominican Republic) and Phase II (BVI, Guyana, Suriname, St. Kitts & Nevis, Trinidad & Tobago) countries. Over the course of the week participants achieved the following objectives:

- Learned about good practices and exchanged on varied approaches, challenges, and opportunities to PROMAR project implementation, which aims to prevent plastic pollution in the Caribbean Sea
- Catalyzed relationships between the PROMAR partners, both from government and civil society / academia (refer to Annex 1: Participant List)
- Participated in a study tour / site visit to learn from pilot projects in the Dominican Republic

### **Tuesday, 25th of June 2024 – Day 1**

During the first day of meetings, PROMAR partners, from both Phases 1 & 2 were acquainted. Participants were welcomed to the meeting and an overview of the PROMAR project and the institutional set-up between the German Federal Ministry of Environment, adelphi and UNEP's Cartagena Convention Secretariat was presented. The importance of the PROMAR project, in the context of the INC process and broader global landscape, was also highlighted. In addition, participants learned more about:

- The PROMAR project's objectives and the four work packages
- A "sister" initiative, UNEP's project, "[Zero Waste in the Caribbean](#)", given the focus of both projects on waste in the Caribbean region, to identify synergies for mutual benefit and impact
- The [Blue Box](#), a compilation of instruments, tools, guides, tutorials, success stories and good practices within the PROMAR project; these tools can help guide the actions of municipalities and governments to move towards the circular economy and reduce plastic pollution

Phase I countries provided an overview of their project activities and key learnings and successes including:

- Strengthening the capacities of local coastal governments in solid waste management and connecting the business sector and the government to create shared responsibility for marine debris prevention (Costa Rica)
- Seeking multi-stakeholder collaboration amongst diverse actors and identifying educational and awareness needs (Dominican Republic)
- Linking pilot interventions with waste management legislation (Dominican Republic)
- Effectively identifying interested parties, strengthening linkages with the Ministry of Environment, and generating replicable methodologies (Colombia)

- Overcoming the challenge of the multitude of different actors and incomplete data to establish a waste collection pilot (Colombia)

Meeting participants also had the opportunity to learn more about each of the Phase II country's project implementation plans and to offer feedback. Key points included:

- A need to overcome the challenge of high waste generation and little space for management (British Virgin Islands)
- Opportunities to leverage new, forthcoming legislation (British Virgin Islands)
- Pilot project implementation innovating with 3D printer for recycled materials (British Virgin Islands)
- Overcoming limited infrastructure for recycling (Guyana)
- Embedding pilot projects in four coastal communities and leveraging students and events and schools for increased public awareness (Guyana)
- Finding creative solutions to address limited government budget and political will to promote recycling, in addition to the absence of adequate regulations and monitoring (Suriname)
- Identifying opportunities to leverage ongoing activities, e.g., International Waste Platform (IWM) work to improve comprehensive solid waste management and Zero Waste in the Caribbean's activities on EPR (Suriname)
- Opportunities to harness the development of a strategy and action plan for comprehensive waste management, and establishment of new recycling facilities (Trinidad & Tobago)
- Identifying collaboration with e.g., International Coastal Day, Maraval River Plastic Extraction Project (GEF), SWMCOOL recycling facilities, and recyclable solid waste collection projects by the Environmental Management Authority (Trinidad & Tobago)
- Seeking solutions to address limitations on landfill access and proper disposal, especially for low-income residents (St. Kitts & Nevis)
- Focusing on better waste separation of organic and plastic waste while also leveraging collaboration with private sector on pilot projects (St. Kitts & Nevis)

## Wednesday, 26th of June 2024 – Day 2

On Wednesday, participants travelled to Santiago to visit the pilot projects implemented under the PROMAR project in the Dominican Republic. The visit included viewing the “riverboom” and learning more about its operations, installation and progress to date, as well as visiting [Cilpen](#), a robust recycling facility. Participants were particularly interested in challenges to date as well as initial capital and ongoing operational costs for the riverboom, and in recycling operations and volumes at Cilpen. Key observations included:

- Riverboom installation costs: US\$150,000 in initial infrastructure; variable operating costs (further details are forthcoming from Parley/adelphi)
- The riverboom relies upon solar energy, 100% through panels, with backup from the municipal electrical grid
- Suggestions to improve the educational and awareness raising component of the riverboom

- Many Phase II countries would need to adapt a riverboom or bio-barrier model in their own countries due to e.g., size of the river, need for transportation on the river, etc.
- Cilpen, a private enterprise, receives, processes and recycles a variety of waste streams (plastics, among others) from around the country; they are closely following legislation on a global treaty for plastics

### Thursday, 27th of June 2024 – Day 3

During the second full day of meetings, participants had the opportunity to reflect on the study tour and share learnings and insights relating to their forthcoming projects. The post-study tour poll indicated significant learning and increased knowledge of riverbooms, bio-barriers and local recycling processes. The logical framework for PROMAR was also presented, with opportunities to discuss the various indicators and milestones. Key observations and insights included:

- Phase II countries will need to define the percentage of waste reduced at each site, targeting the collection of 5000 tons of single-use plastics (total for Phases I & II) for recycling by the end of implementation
- It will be important to focus on progress and context-based measurement of project indicators
- Phase I country partners shared insights and learnings from their own experiences, including as pertaining to the establishment of baseline data

Additionally, participants learned the development of a regional monitoring and knowledge platform, led by [GRID Geneva](#) under UNEP's guidance, to support better decision making through data and data visualizations. Participants learned about the platform's aims and how their own data collection, particularly under the first work package, could feed into the platform. Important observations from participants included:

- A need to connect the dots with other, existing platforms, including the regional platform recently launched at the SIDS conference in Antigua and Barbuda
- Questions were raised about integration of this work into (existing) global platforms such as GPML as opposed to the need for region-specific platforms
- A suggestion to also include, and leverage Phase I partners in this initial phase of consultation and research
- The platform's longevity and sustainability were also highlighted, emphasizing the need to identify a local partner in the region for ownership after project completion

In the afternoon, attendees participated in hands-on, workshop-format “deep dive” discussions on the four work packages: WP1: Analyzing material flows and establishing monitoring data, WP2: Pilot case implementation and demonstration site, WP3: Policy development and EPR systems, and WP4: Stakeholder awareness and behavior change. Five groups (one for each Phase II country) worked on each work package to identify challenges, opportunities and support needed across their planned activities. Photos of the work package posters created by each country will be sent to the project counterparts individually.

Prior to the group work, Phase I countries presented key learnings and best practice across the work packages. Some observations and topics included:

- Good practice on methodologies for beach sampling and benefits for awareness raising (Costa Rica)

- Going forward, material flow analyses, part of WP1, will be supported by adelphi
- The importance of considering social factors in implementing pilot projects (Colombia)
- Building strong political ties and connections with the municipalities for policy (e.g., EPR) implementation (Dominican Republic)
- Importance of undertaking the first KAP survey at the beginning of project implementation
- Key aspects to align on at the beginning of project implementation are a) demonstration site location and pilot project focus and b) what policy instrument to pursue (EPR or otherwise)

#### **Friday, 28th of June 2024 – Day 4**

On the final day of the Kick-Off Meeting and Study Tour, participants visited the “blue stations”, which are recycling drop off points in various communities of Santo Domingo, established by Parley (Dominican Republic). Participants learned about the operations of the stations, the demographics of the beneficiary communities, and the supply chain for the collected waste and materials. Attendees were particularly interested in the economics behind the stations, the role of the municipality and political buy-in, the receptivity of the communities, and the educational aspects of the stations.

In the late morning, participants convened in the Parley office to conclude the group work activity from the day prior. They also had the opportunity to reflect on the visit to the blue stations and to ask additional questions. In some cases, countries have existing, similar operations within their own countries.

The workshop concluded with each participant sharing key learnings and commitments. Key themes included:

- Commitment of Phase I countries to lend support to Phase II countries, as well as commitments by Phase II countries to continue to share and exchange knowledge
- Raising the priority of the PROMAR activities within respective ministries / government bodies
- Better overall understanding of the project and its indicators and activities

#### **Key next steps for Phase II of the PROMAR project include:**

- UNEP to work bilaterally with Phase II country implementing partners to sign agreements: by end of July 2024
- UNEP and adelphi to organize follow-up webinars/virtual meetings to build further capacity of key deliverables (e.g., material flow analysis, monitoring and evaluation, pilot implementation, EPR training, etc.): starting in Q3 2024
- UNEP to support the connection of focal points between Zero Waste Caribbean and PROMAR projects: by end of July 2024
- UNEP and GRID Geneva to refine proposal for regional monitoring and knowledge platform, based on feedback shared: by end of July 2024
- Country implementing partners to begin project implementation: starting in Q3 2024