

Im Auftrag des:



Bundesministerium
für Umwelt, Naturschutz
und nukleare Sicherheit

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Grant Programme against Marine Litter “Marine Debris Framework- Regional hubs around the globe” (Marine:DeFRAG) by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety (BMU)

1. Introduction

The protection of marine ecosystems plays a crucial role in achieving a sustainable and socially equitable global development. This is reflected, among other things, in the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 of the United Nations (UN) Agenda 2030, and in the international agreement "Strategic Plan 2011-2020 for the Conservation of Biodiversity".

The oceans are the largest ecosystems on the planet. They provide a habitat for and are essential for the survival of a great number of species as well as a wide range of services for humans. However, these important ecosystems are subjected to increasing pressures. These include the input of litter. Roughly 90 percent of floating marine litter consists of plastic. It can remain in the environment for a very long time and poses a threat to marine animals (including organisms dependent on marine ecosystems, such as birds and mammals), as they can become entangled in it or swallow it, mistaking it for food, which can lead to their death. Therefore, this grant programme focusses on preventing plastic litter from entering the oceans.

Every year, around eight million tonnes of plastic litter are washed into the oceans. Almost all countries in the world contribute to this pollution. As wind and currents can transport plastic waste over long distances, it represents an international problem.

The German Federal Government wants to improve the protection of the oceans and their valuable ecosystems from marine litter¹. For this purpose, the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety's (BMU) Grant Programme against Marine Litter funds projects that protect the marine environment from the input of terrestrial litter.

This document describes the objectives and thematic focus of this programme. The focus of the measures should be the reduction of litter entering the marine environment. The projects can be implemented from the 01.06.2020 at the earliest and currently up to the 31.12.2023. Suitable approaches and measures that aim to reduce plastic inputs into the oceans include policy advice, capacity building,

¹ KoA V 19. LP RdNr. 618f und 6533f

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technology cooperation and investments, as well as the implementation of policies and strategies.

2. Objectives

The overarching goal of the grant programme, based on the prevailing definition of marine litter², is to directly or indirectly reduce the input of solid waste, in particular plastic waste, into the marine environment. Marine litter does not refer to other types of marine pollution, such as nutrient pollution or pharmaceutical residues. In order to achieve a rapid and significant reduction of the input of solid waste into the marine environment, measures will be most effective if they focus on addressing the biggest amounts of input as well as targeting areas and processes with the maximum potential for mitigating the negative environmental impacts of marine litter. Because upstream and landlocked countries also contribute to the load of plastic waste in the oceans and thus to marine litter, they can also be included in project measures effectively. Because rivers act as significant input vectors of plastic into the ocean by transporting large amounts over longer distances, reducing the litter load of rivers is another effective approach to reduce marine litter.

3. Thematic Focus

The following measures directly contribute towards reducing marine litter:

1. Measures that, based on the waste hierarchy, establish regulatory and legal frameworks, as well as technologies and structures in production, distribution and consumption, that prevent the production of waste, in particular plastic waste, and thus its possible entry into the marine environment. Substitution effects and leakages³ must be taken into account to achieve a true net reduction of total waste (for example, by avoiding the use of plastic, by increasing material efficiency and thus reducing the use of resources, by reuse and recycling etc.).⁴
2. In addition, when considering unavoidable waste, it is important to establish regulatory and legal frameworks, as well as technological and organisational measures and recycling management concepts that ensure an orderly collection and registration of waste, and where possible high-quality material recycling.

² Marine litter is any persistent, manufactured or processed solid material (regardless of its size) that intentionally or unintentionally enters the environment and is found in coastal and marine waters. This includes solid waste that has been transported from the terrestrial environment to the ocean.

³ It should be ensured that the project activities do not shift the input of plastic waste to another region or sector.

⁴ The funding of technological developments of alternative materials and their properties (source raw materials, degradability) is only effective, if they minimise the input paths and quantities of litter into the ocean.

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3. Furthermore, measures that reduce the input of plastic waste from significant point sources that cannot be reduced by focusing on either of the two above mentioned thematic focus areas, are also considered meaningful.
4. Capacity building in public and private institutions, in particular the building and strengthening of appropriate institutions in partner countries, contributes to the long-term implementation and firm establishment of the above-mentioned measures in the partner countries.

Considering the thematic focus outlined above, the impact of these measures on the marine environment is decisive. For this, the following aspects are particularly relevant:

5. The total net reduction of the mass of plastic or other litter (kg) entering the natural environment, in particular considering the reduction in relation to the project duration (kg/a), and, where applicable, the environmental loads (kg/m³), contributes to a reduction of environmental impacts from marine litter.
6. In certain cases, reducing the number of plastic particles per volume of water (river or ocean) may be a further factor for reducing the environmental impact of a measure. Thus, in regions with a (empirically or modelled) proven high load of primary microplastic⁵, measures to prevent them from entering the environment will have a positive environmental impact.
7. The prevention of litter discharges that pose a threat to particularly ecologically valuable marine and coastal areas (for example designated marine or coastal protected areas) and/or to particularly endangered marine species (e.g. nationally protected species, IUCN Red List species) is relevant as well.

In-situ extraction measures in the ocean or in rivers will only be useful once the land-based input has been significantly reduced worldwide, also because removal of litter from the marine environment can cause harm to biota. However, the direct removal of litter from the terrestrial environment, including beaches, can be useful as a valuable part of awareness raising activities.

⁵ Primary microplastic is defined here as plastic that is smaller than 5mm upon its entry into the environment. According to the ECHA, microplastics are very small (typically smaller than 5mm) solid particles composed of mixtures of polymers (the primary components of plastics) and functional additives. They may also contain residual impurities from when they were manufactured. They can be unintentionally formed through the wear and tear of larger pieces of plastic, including synthetic textiles. They can also be deliberately manufactured and intentionally added to products for a specific purpose, for example, as exfoliating beads in facial or body scrubs.

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4. General Characteristics of Successful Measures and Projects

In addition to a sound technical approach, measures, investments, and projects under this programme will ideally be characterised by further aspects that contribute to the success of the project. The project should be tailored to the needs of the partner country. Likewise, transformative and innovative elements should be included. It is generally preferable that project measures are sustainable and verifiable in terms of their impact and effectiveness⁶, and that synergies with current and previous funding measures are realised and considered during project planning. In this respect, participation in, or exchange with implementing organisations of the PREVENT Waste Alliance is a possibility. In addition, all projects should respect safeguards and gender mainstreaming to ensure that risks are considered and managed and universal guiding principles, such as respect for human rights, are taken into account. For example, the inclusion of informal workers in waste management is an important aspect to consider.

5. Partner Countries and Regions

The programme focuses on bilateral and regional projects in ODA-eligible countries⁷. Regional projects should be transnational multi-country projects with an impact on one or more geographically connected river or marine region(s). In the case of rivers, the catchment area is also significant for a meaningful country constellation. In the interest of a wide-ranging influence of the project activities, a special focus should be placed on the countries and regions that are responsible for causing significant inputs of marine litter. Preferably, the proposed projects should be shown to be complementary to other measures and projects funded or carried out by the federal government in this thematic area in order to make the best possible use of existing synergies.

6. Project funding

German federal implementing organisations, non-governmental organisations, companies, universities and research institutions, as well as German subsidiaries of international and multilateral organisations and institutions, which are registered in Germany, can submit applications for funding. Grants on a cost basis are not envisaged.

In addition to demonstrating the political support in the partner countries for the project, projects are expected to implement an appropriate amount of their funding

⁶ Orientation along the logical framework of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is recommended.

⁷ <http://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/daclist.htm>

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and project activities through national stakeholders in the partner countries in order to integrate the project into national structures and increase the sustainability of the projects.

The funding volume provided by the BMU per project amounts to between 3 million euros and the maximum of 5 million euros. Projects are expected to be funded from the 01.06.2020 until 31.12.2023.

The BMU advocates measures to reduce emissions from business trips (e.g. through video conferencing). The implementing organisations are obliged to carry out project activities and investments from project funds as climate neutral, resource efficient and environmentally friendly as possible.

The Zukunft – Umwelt – Gesellschaft (ZUG) gGmbH has been commissioned by the BMU to manage this grant programme.

Further information on the two-stage application procedure and the link to the online platform easy-Online for the submission of project outlines can be found on the ZUG website (<https://www.z-u-g.org/>).