

For the first time in the agency's history, UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan 2020-2023 includes a specific outcome area on the protection of ecological assets. It envisions cities that protect, conserve, restore and promote the ecosystems in and around them, whether land or water. Improving waste and water infrastructure is one way to achieve this; planning for reduced urban sprawl is another. For its part, UN-Habitat seeks to catalyze connections and action in the global environmental arena, linking global actors and policies to local and national contexts. Its policy advice, technical support, knowledge production, and practice sharing are in increasing demand in rapidly-growing coastal cities. As these cities seek to improve their interface with the ocean, UN-Habitat has responded through deeper collaboration with specialized agencies and MEAs.

Under the framework of the Global Partnership for Marine Litter and in cooperation with UNEP, UN-Habitat's Waste Wise Cities programme is addressing marine litter and plastic pollution by improving municipal solid waste in coastal cities. The programme has already produced *Waste Wise Cities Tool*, which allows for rapid assessment and quantification of the solid waste generated, collected and managed in controlled municipal facilities. Conversely, it also allows for estimation of the plastic leaked into the wider marine system. With application so far in Nairobi and Mombasa, Kenya, UN-Habitat now aims to scale up its approach to help 50 other cities—including Lagos, Karachi, Manila, Jakarta, Dar es Salaam, Santo Domingo, and Lima—as they develop plans for improved municipal solid waste collection

UN-Habitat and UNEP will also soon publish a global modeling of marine litter hotspot cities that require urgent waste management intervention. In addition, the two agencies have just initiated the new joint *Go Blue* programme, which aims to create a sustainable and thriving blue economy on Kenya's coast. Over four years the programme will guide the formulation of planning frameworks for the coastal cities, including both land and sea areas, and pilot a 'blue carbon' project that restores thousands of hectares of coastal mangrove and seagrass habitat. Coming full circle, *Go Blue* will also fund the reconstruction of a wetland that will recycle wastewater and prevent its dumping directly into the ocean. Beyond merely engaging its resident communities, the programme will create hundreds of jobs for people in the waste recycling sector.