

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 and African Clean Cities Platform are addressing marine litter and plastic pollution by improving municipal solid waste management in coastal cities. In 2021, the programmes launched *Waste Wise Cities Tool*, a monitoring methodology of SDG indicator 11.6.1, which allows for rapid assessment and quantification of the solid waste generated, collected and managed in controlled facilities. Conversely, it also allows for the estimation of the plastic leakage into the wider marine system and to identify sources of leakage in the municipal solid waste management chain. Since its launch, the tool has been applied in more than 50 cities globally, including major cities such as Lagos, Karachi, Manila, Jakarta, Dar es Salaam, Santo Domingo, revealing what is happening on the ground. For example, in Dar es Salaam, only 36% of waste is collected of a total generation of 6,000 tonnes per day. In Lagos, 32kg/person of plastic is leaking into the ocean every year, which is equivalent to every single person from Lagos throwing three 1.5L PET bottles every single day. The data and information provided by Waste Wise Cities Tool application have already started catalyzing investments in Solid Waste Management infrastructure and policy intervention in coastal cities. For example, Mombasa County government mobilized funds to finance Material Recovery Facilities and Refused Derived Fuel factory from Coca Cola Foundation, WWF and EIB, based on the Waste Wise Cities Tool data. In addition, through the collaboration with University of Leeds, data from cities was collected and used for a global GIS model to identify marine litter hotspot cities which require urgent interventions.

As part of the EU-funded Go Blue project, UN-Habitat and UNEP are developing a regional ecosystem-based land-sea planning framework for Kenya's coastal counties to leverage blue economy resources for livelihoods and job creation. Furthermore, the local blue economy is being strengthened by a baseline assessment of Kenya's marine and coastal ecosystems, establishment of regional data centres, support of solid waste management, as well as improvement of coastal public spaces and capacity building in Marine Protected Areas. Go Blue also pilots a 'blue carbon' project that will help restore thousands of hectares of coastal mangrove and seagrass habitat and fund a constructed wetland to address wastewater issues in a neighborhood of Mombasa and prevent the dumping of raw sewage into the ocean. Beyond merely engaging its resident communities, the programme will create hundreds of jobs for people in the waste recycling sector.

UN-Habitat further is engaged on urban adaptation and coastal resilience on Cambodia's coastline, which is vulnerable to droughts, strong winds, floods and sea-level rise. Increases in sea levels are especially alarming for Cambodia's coastal areas which are already experiencing severe seawater intrusion, beach erosion, high tides, and frequent storm surges. UN-Habitat is implementing the *Climate Change Adaptation through Protective Small-scale Infrastructure Interventions in Coastal Settlements of Cambodia* project to increase the resilience of coastal communities. The main objective of the project is to enhance climate change adaptation and resilience of the most vulnerable coastal human settlements of Cambodia through resilience investment in small-scale protective and basic service infrastructure and natural assets, particularly in areas where ecotourism has the

potential to sustain such interventions. To achieve this objective, the project deploys nature-based solutions and green/blue infrastructure approaches to strengthen coastal resilience, such as mangrove plantation, development of a coastal defense mechanism and strengthened coastal housing designs to reduce impacts of strong winds and storm surges, integrated water management and rehabilitation of canals and river channels to reduce floods and saltwater intrusion, as well as the refurbishment of water reservoir to encounter water scarcity. Additionally, UN-Habitat is installing tide gauges and automated weather stations to provide accurate data on sea-level rise in target locations and thereby improve flood warning capability for low-lying coastal communities.