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## PRESS RELEASE

### New local approaches to tackle the plastic waste challenge launched

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**Bangkok, 31 March 2021** - On the way to reduce and better manage plastic waste in Thailand, the Pollution Control Department of the Thai Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and the 'Rethinking Plastics – Circular Economy Solutions to Marine Litter' project, funded by the European Union and the German Government, presented three new pilot projects. They will contribute to tackle the plastic waste challenge in three different provinces in Thailand to reduce the amount of plastics, which end up untreated on land and in the oceans. During today's launch event in Bangkok, the activities in Phuket, Rayong and Trang Province were further introduced jointly with the non-profit organisations in charge of their implementation. The pilots focus on reducing and avoiding plastic waste and to better segregate, collect, sort and recycle it until February 2022.

**Preeyaporn Suwanaged, Deputy Director General of Pollution Control Department (PCD)** thanked the partners and highlighted the need for a circular economy and the implementation of the principle of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle (3R): "The Thai Government has given high priority on finding both short-term and long-term solutions to tackle the plastic waste problem. The pilot projects are in line with the national policy on driving economic and social development by adopting new economic models namely Bio Economy, Circular Economy and Green Economy (BCG Model) including the Roadmap on Plastic Waste Management 2018-2030 and the Action Plan on Plastic Waste Management 2020-2022."

"Plastic waste concerns us all. We must move towards a circular economy for plastics – an economy in which resources are used and managed more efficiently and more sustainably" agreed **Dr. Giuseppe Busini, Deputy Head of Mission of the Delegation of the European Union to Thailand**. "Through the 'Rethinking Plastics' project we share regional and European experiences and work closely with Thailand to prevent marine plastic litter. The new pilot projects can complement these joint efforts towards a circular economy with concrete actions and experiences from the local level, involving the communities and households, local businesses and administrations. We hope that they can serve as best practices and inspire future initiatives and policy development."

"It is important to link local ideas and initiatives to the national policy level as well as to regional and global exchanges", added **Mr. Jan Scheer, Deputy Head of Mission and Head of Economic Affairs of the German Embassy in Bangkok**. "I am confident that we can learn a lot from the solutions and needs identified in the pilot locations. Rayong, Phuket and Trang represent an economic center, a main tourism destination and an area with precious marine environment. We can learn a lot from the challenges faced in specific areas and it is of great advantage that the pilot projects include so many experienced partners and important stakeholders. I am very happy to meet all the partners here today and wish the pilot projects a successful implementation."

After the presentation of each pilot project, the participants gathered at the launching event to exchange experiences and recommendations for the upcoming implementation period.



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In addition to the three launched pilot projects in Thailand, the 'Rethinking Plastics – Circular Economy Solutions to Marine Litter' project, which is implemented by GIZ and Expertise France, financially supports in total more than 20 pilot initiatives in five countries.

They cover a better management of plastic waste, activities for a sustainable consumption and production of plastic as well as reducing plastic litter from ships and fishing vessels in China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. The pilot experiences and lessons learned will serve as a basis for replicable examples and shall enrich policy development initiatives.

#### The three pilot projects in Thailand are:

- **Enhancing a circular economy model at local level and improving municipal plastic waste management practices and policies in Koh Libong**, implemented by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Koh Libong, Trang Province  
*The island and area of Koh Libong is important for wildlife and marine biodiversity, as it is the largest seagrass area in Thailand and home for dugongs. To conserve this precious marine environment, the pilot partners work with local communities and the tourism sector to avoid and manage plastic waste.*
- **An enhancement of plastic packaging waste segregation performance for closed-loop recycling**, implemented by the Faculty of Engineering of Chulalongkorn University in Rayong Province  
*Local communities, schools and stakeholders along the plastic value chain engage for a better segregation and collection of plastic waste. The goal is to enhance its recycling rate.*
- **Less plastics in Phuket: Reduction and better plastic waste management in households and businesses**, implemented by the Phuket Environmental Foundation in Phuket  
*Phuket, Thailand's largest island, aims to reduce and better manage the amount of plastic waste in businesses and households. Alternatives to single-use plastics are for example explored with the food delivery and tourism sectors.*

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#### About the 'Rethinking Plastics – Circular Economy Solutions to Marine Litter' project

'Rethinking Plastics – Circular Economy Solutions to Marine Litter' supports a transition towards a circular economy for plastics in East and Southeast Asia to contribute to a significant reduction of marine litter. The project is co-funded by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). It is jointly implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and Expertise France. China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam as well as Japan and Singapore for selected topics are among the partner countries. In Thailand, the project cooperates closely with the Pollution Control Department (PCD) of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE).

The project is linked to the [European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy](#) as well as to the initiatives of the [German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development](#). More information about the project on <https://beatplasticpollution.eu/rethinking-plastics>.

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