

**Promoting Plastics Circularity in the Philippines: Launch of Manila City Action Plan for
Plastics Circularity and Future Opportunities
Multifunction Hall 2, ADB Headquarters, Mandaluyong City
Monday, 10 February 2025, 9:00 am – 1:30 pm**

**Keynote Speech for Pavit Ramachandran,
Country Director, Philippines
Southeast Asia Regional Department**

I. Introduction

- Representatives from the Government of the Philippines, represented by Honorable Krystle Marie C. Bacani of the City Council of Manila, the City of Manila Department of Public Services, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Finance, Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Trade and Industry, and Department of Science and Technology, ADB colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.
- On behalf of the Asian Development Bank, I am pleased to officially hand over this City Action Plan for Plastics Circularity to the City of Manila. This City Action Plan is a culmination of years of hard work and consultation with our local and national government partners, as well as stakeholders across the plastics value chain. It serves as a foundation for scaling up our efforts to address plastic pollution and bringing Philippines closer to its vision of Zero Waste to Philippine Waters by 2040.

II. ADB's Support to the Philippines

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- The Action Plan broadly aligns with the Philippines' Country Partnership Strategy priorities, most particularly on scaling up nature-based development and disaster resilience. We are steadfastly committed to strengthening capacities and enabling environment for sustainable coastal and marine management, including community-based solid waste management, policy reforms, and systems for collecting plastic waste to tackle marine pollution.

Regional TA – Support to the Philippines

- Since 2019, our regional technical assistance project to address marine plastic pollution has supported capacity building and research to support the country's implementation of the National Plan of Action for the Prevention, Reduction, and Management of Marine Litter. These activities align with preparations for a new global agreement to address plastic pollution, or the Global Plastic Treaty.
- The TA supported the development of this action plan to promote plastics circularity in the city of Manila. As we have just heard, the City Action Plan presents a comprehensive approach to strengthening Manila's waste management systems, with recommendations for regulations, data collecting and monitoring, waste management infrastructure, and empowering the informal sector and consumers.

Indorama Ventures Regional Blue Loan Project – Support to the Philippines

- In 2020, ADB approved a \$100 million Blue Loan for Indorama Ventures Limited to boost its plastic recycling capacity in India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand.

- In the Philippines, this supported development of the country's first food-grade, bottle-to-bottle recycling facility, accelerating PET bottle collection and recycling and reducing plastic leakage into the marine environment

Pasig River

- Last year, ADB launched a special cross-sector initiative to support the government's Pasig Bigyan Buhay Muli (Pasig River Urban Development) project, with a priority to rejuvenate the Pasig River and unlock connectivity and economic potential.
- We also launched through ADB Challenges, a Plastic Waste Discovery Space to develop a plastic waste digital model for the Pasig River, which will simulate plastic pollution flow and provide actionable insights for environmental interventions. This will feed into a broader Pasig River Digital Twin program.

Marine Ecosystem and Blue Economy Development Program

- In line with our country partnership strategy's thrust for nature-based and resilient development, ADB and the government are preparing the Marine Ecosystem and Blue Economy Development Program. The program will support the development of resilient coastal and marine ecosystems and a thriving blue economy in the Philippines. We envisage that this program will underpin our pipeline of TA and

investments on coastal and marine infrastructure and ecosystems and blue carbon.

- The program targets reforms that will leverage coastal and marine resources, preserve ecosystems, enhance climate and disaster resilience, and foster public and private investment for sustainable growth.
- The program includes a reform area to enhance management and circularity of plastic and other solid waste. The program will apply lessons learned and recommendations of the city action plan to strengthen implementation of plastic waste reduction, recovery and diversion, and cascading of actions to LGUs. We look forward to leveraging Manila City's experience in the creation of this nationwide approach.

III. Closing

- Today is just the first step in operationalizing the transition to a circular economy.
- I look forward to taking forward this dialogue on how we can work together to make a circular plastics economy a reality in Manila and in the Philippines.
- Thank you.