SEA-MaP
SOUTHEAST ASIA REGIONAL PROGRAM ON COMBATING MARINE PLASTICS

ASEAN MARINE PLASTICS RESOURCE MOBILIZATION STRATEGY (RMS)

A Regional Financing Architecture for Sustainable Action on Marine Plastics

2027 – 2030

An ASEAN project supported by the World Bank

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List of Acronyms

Stakeholders	Outcomes
ACGF	ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility
AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
AMS	ASEAN Member States
AWGCME	ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment
AWGCW	ASEAN Working Group on Chemicals and Waste
AWGESC	ASEAN Working Group on Environmentally Sustainable Cities
ASEAN	The Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CAPEX	Capital Expenditure
CIF	Climate Investment Funds
EPR	Extended Producer Responsibility
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HDPE	High-Density Polyethylene
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IETC	International Environmental Technology Centre
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
LGU	Local Government Unit
MDB	Multilateral Development Banks
MRFs	Material Recovery Facilities
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
OPEX	Operational Expenditure
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
PET	Polyethylene Terephthalate
PIDG	Private Infrastructure Development Group
PMU	Project Management Unit
PRO	Producer Responsibility Organization
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RAP	Regional Action Plan
RMS	Resource Mobilization Strategy
SEA-MaP	Southeast Asia Regional Program on Combating Marine Plastics
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprise
TA	Technical Assistance
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

Executive Summary

Marine plastic pollution remains a significant challenge across Southeast Asia. Increasing waste volumes continue to place pressure on waste management systems and contribute to plastic leakage into rivers, coastal areas, and marine ecosystems. In response, ASEAN Member States (AMS) have implemented a range of policies, programmes, infrastructure investments, and circular economy initiatives, supported by the ASEAN Regional Action Plan (RAP) on Combating Marine Debris as the region's overarching framework for collective action.

To support implementation of the RAP and strengthen long-term resource mobilisation, the ASEAN Marine Plastics Resource Mobilization Strategy (RMS) was developed based on a Stocktaking and Needs Assessment undertaken between September 2025 and January 2026. The assessment reviewed policies, programmes, financing mechanisms, stakeholder initiatives, and investment conditions across ASEAN.

The assessment found that significant efforts, financing sources, and partnerships are already active across the region. The principal challenge is therefore often less the availability of financing and more how existing resources, initiatives, and stakeholders can be better aligned, coordinated, and translated into sustained implementation outcomes.

Key areas identified for continued strengthening include:

- coordination and alignment among financing streams;
- integration of infrastructure investments with long-term operational and maintenance requirements;
- monitoring, reporting, and accountability systems;
- scaling and replication of successful initiatives; and
- private sector engagement approaches that reflect differing levels of market maturity and investment readiness across AMS.

Addressing these areas can help strengthen investment readiness, improve financing alignment, and create more enabling conditions for government, development partners, financial institutions, and private investors to support implementation at scale.

The RMS responds to these opportunities by providing a regional coordination framework that supports the mobilisation and alignment of financing in support of RAP implementation. The Strategy does not establish a financing facility, pooled fund, or regional implementation mechanism. Rather, it strengthens the enabling conditions through which existing financing sources—including domestic public finance, development finance, development partner support, philanthropic funding, and private investment—can be more effectively aligned with priority interventions.

The RMS is structured around four mutually reinforcing system functions:

1. Aggregating national and local initiatives into prioritised investment pipelines;
2. Aligning financing instruments with the lifecycle needs of plastics management systems, from project preparation and infrastructure development to operations and long-term maintenance;
3. Strengthening governance, monitoring, reporting, and accountability systems that support investment confidence and implementation effectiveness; and
4. Supporting catalytic financing approaches that can help mobilise larger and more diverse investment flows.

Recognising the diverse economic, institutional, and financing contexts across ASEAN, the RMS adopts a flexible and phased approach. It does not prescribe a single regional financing

target, nor does it replace national priorities and mechanisms. Instead, it provides a framework that AMS and partners may adapt according to national circumstances, levels of readiness, and investment opportunities.

The Strategy builds on the institutional foundations, partnerships, knowledge products, and stakeholder networks established through the Southeast Asia Regional Program on Combating Marine Plastics (SEA-MaP). In doing so, it supports continuity of regional cooperation while strengthening the conditions for longer-term and more programmatic implementation.

Implementation of the RMS will remain nationally led by AMS. ASEAN's role is to support regional coordination, knowledge exchange, stakeholder engagement, and dialogue with financing partners through existing cooperation mechanisms and institutional arrangements.

Through strengthened coordination, improved investment readiness, and more effective alignment of financing systems, the RMS seeks to support ASEAN in translating policy commitments into sustained and scalable action that reduces marine plastic leakage and advances circular plastics economies across Southeast Asia.

Adoption and Decision Note

The ASEAN RMS is adopted as a non-binding regional coordination framework intended to support implementation of the ASEAN RAP on Combating Marine Debris.

Adopting the RMS does not create a new obligation for AMS, ASEAN bodies, development partners, or private sector stakeholders. It does not establish a new ASEAN financing facility, pooled fund, financial institution, legally binding mechanism, mandatory financing commitment, or regional financing target.

AMS retain full discretion in determining national priorities, financing decisions, investment pathways, and engagement with financing partners in accordance with national laws, policies, and development priorities. The RMS provides AMS, with support from relevant ASEAN mechanisms, with a practical framework to organise investment pipelines, align financing, engage partners, and sustain SEA-MaP momentum beyond 2027.

PART I – STRATEGIC FOUNDATION

1.1 A Regional Context and Strategic Turning Point

Southeast Asia has experienced rapid economic growth, urbanisation, and expanding consumer markets, contributing to increased plastic consumption and waste generation across the region. While plastics remain essential across many sectors of the economy, waste management systems continue to develop at different rates across AMS. Some AMS made significant progress in strengthening collection services, recycling systems, and supporting infrastructure, while others continue to face challenges related to service coverage, infrastructure capacity, operational sustainability, and recycling market development. Where waste management systems remain incomplete or under-resourced, plastic waste may enter waterways and coastal environments, making land-based leakage a significant contributor to marine debris. Marine plastic pollution therefore presents not only an environmental challenge but also broader economic and development implications for fisheries, tourism, public health, and coastal livelihoods.

AMS have demonstrated a growing commitment to addressing these challenges through national policies, regulatory reforms, circular economy initiatives, and investments in waste management systems, supported by regional cooperation under the RAP on Combating Marine Debris. These efforts provide an important foundation for continued progress. However, findings from the Stocktaking and Needs Assessment indicate that implementation capacity, infrastructure readiness, and market development remain uneven across the region. While many promising initiatives are underway, opportunities remain to strengthen coordination, support long-term sustainability beyond individual project cycles, and scale successful approaches where enabling conditions are in place.

The assessment further found that a wide range of financing sources already exists across ASEAN, including domestic public expenditure, bilateral and multilateral assistance, philanthropic capital, emerging Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) systems, and private investment. The principal challenge is therefore often less the availability of financing than the need to better coordinate, sequence, and align existing resources to support sustained implementation. Consultations conducted during the development of the RMS also highlighted the importance of strengthening investment-ready pipelines, improving alignment between capital investments and long-term operational financing requirements, enhancing monitoring and reporting systems, and creating enabling conditions for greater private sector participation. As global financing for circular economy and sustainable infrastructure continues to expand, access increasingly depends on the availability of investment-ready opportunities, credible governance systems, and reliable monitoring frameworks.

The RMS responds to this strategic opportunity by strengthening regional coordination, facilitating investment readiness, and improving financing alignment to support more sustained, scalable, and system-oriented implementation of marine plastics interventions across ASEAN.

1.2 Purpose of the Resource Mobilisation Strategy

The RMS provides a regional coordination framework that supports implementation of the RAP on Combating Marine Debris by facilitating investment readiness, improving financing alignment, and strengthening engagement among governments, development partners, financial institutions, private sector actors, and other stakeholders.

The RMS does not establish a new financing facility or funding mechanism. Rather, it seeks to strengthen the enabling conditions through which existing financing sources can be more effectively mobilised, coordinated, and aligned with priority marine plastics interventions across ASEAN.

Specifically, the Strategy seeks to:

- strengthen investment readiness;
- improve coordination among financing partners and financing streams;
- align financing instruments with implementation needs; and
- support resource mobilisation for priority marine plastics interventions across ASEAN.

To support these objectives, the RMS promotes stronger coordination among stakeholders, improved alignment and sequencing of financing sources, and greater connectivity between financing opportunities and priority interventions. These functions provide the strategic foundation for the objectives and operational priorities presented in Part II of the Strategy.

Further discussion of regional coordination, stakeholder engagement, and financing dialogue mechanisms is presented in Part V.

PART II – THEORY OF CHANGE AND STRATEGIC ARCHITECTURE

The RMS is designed to translate strategic intent into practical and sequenced implementation pathways. Building on the findings, the strategy recognises that sustained progress in marine plastics requires more than additional financing alone. Rather, improved outcomes depend on stronger investment readiness, better alignment between priorities and financing pathways, clearer institutional coordination, stronger implementation systems, and greater confidence among financing and implementation partners. In this context, the RMS translates broad strategic aims into operational objectives that guide how priorities may be progressively advanced through coordinated investment pathways, financing alignment, and system-level strengthening across differing AMS contexts.

2.1 From Stocktaking Findings to Strategic Design

The RMS is grounded in the findings of the ASEAN regional Stocktaking and Needs Assessment on Combating Marine Debris. The Stocktaking, which was conducted between September 2025 and January 2026, highlighted that while AMS has introduced numerous policies, initiatives, and investments addressing marine plastic pollution, these efforts often operate across diverse institutional and financing arrangements.

Across the region, national action plans, regulatory frameworks, and development partner initiatives have generated valuable experience in waste management improvements, circular economy innovation, and community engagement. However, many of these initiatives continue to be implemented through individual projects rather than through more integrated systems capable of delivering sustained reductions in marine plastic leakage.

The Stocktaking identified several system factors affecting the implementation of the RAP. Financing flows are often distributed across multiple initiatives and institutions; infrastructure investments may lack aligned operational financing; monitoring systems continue to evolve; successful pilot initiatives require clearer pathways for scaling; and private sector participation varies across contexts and levels of market maturity.

These findings suggest that the principal challenge facing marine plastics management in ASEAN is often less the absence of initiatives or financing sources than the need to strengthen coordination, alignment, and continuity across existing efforts to support sustained implementation.

The RMS responds to these opportunities by strengthening the enabling conditions that allow financing flows, policy frameworks, and implementation systems to function more cohesively in support of RAP implementation.

Stocktaking Findings	RMS Strategic Response
Distributed financing flows across initiatives	Pipeline aggregation and coordinated financing architecture
Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) -focused investment patterns	Lifecycle financing alignment
Monitoring and enforcement systems requiring strengthening	Improved governance credibility through strengthened Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) systems
Pilot initiatives with potential for scaling	Programmatic investment pipelines
Variable private sector participation across countries	Circular economy financing and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) systems

2.2 Vision and Strategic Objectives

The RMS envisions an ASEAN region where marine plastic pollution is addressed through increasingly coordinated systems that translate policy commitments into sustained implementation and measurable environmental outcomes. Achieving this vision requires strengthening the institutional, financial, and market conditions that support long-term investment in plastics management systems across AMS.

Building on the strategic aims outlined in Section 1.2, the RMS establishes a set of strategic objectives that guide implementation and resource mobilisation efforts across the region. These objectives reflect the findings of the Stocktaking and Needs Assessment and respond to the opportunities identified for strengthening investment readiness, financing alignment, governance systems, and implementation capacity.

The strategic objectives of the RMS are to:

- support the translation of policy commitments under the RAP into prioritised investment pathways;
- strengthen investment readiness across AMS;
- align financing instruments with the lifecycle needs of plastics management systems;
- strengthen governance, monitoring, reporting, and verification systems that support investor confidence and implementation effectiveness; and
- mobilise coordinated financing flows that support long-term improvements in plastics management systems.

These objectives provide a structured framework for linking policy commitments with investment pathways, financing alignment, and system-level improvements across ASEAN. They form the foundation of the RMS Theory of Change, which explains how strengthened coordination, improved investment readiness, and more effective financing systems can contribute to sustained implementation and measurable reductions in marine plastic leakage over time.

2.3 Theory of Change

The RMS Theory of Change builds directly on the strategic objectives outlined above and articulates how improved coordination across policies, financing systems, investments, and implementation mechanisms can strengthen investment readiness, enhance implementation effectiveness, and support sustained reductions in marine plastic pollution across ASEAN.

When governments translate policy commitments into prioritised investment pipelines, align financing instruments with system needs, and strengthen governance and monitoring systems, investment conditions improve. Under these conditions, financing flows from domestic public budgets, development finance institutions, development partners, and private sector actors can be more effectively mobilised and aligned around coherent implementation pathways.

Public financing supports the continuity of operational service systems, development finance institutions can contribute to infrastructure modernisation, catalytic financing can strengthen investment readiness, and private capital can expand circular economy markets. When these financing streams are deployed in coordination with AMS, they can support governments in implementing sustained programs that reduce plastic leakage and strengthen waste management systemsIn this context, the RMS functions as a coordination framework that strengthens the enabling conditions under which financing can be mobilised and aligned in support of RAP implementation. It does not act as an implementing mechanism, but rather supports how financing flows, policy frameworks, and institutional systems interact to deliver sustained outcomes.

Figure 1 illustrates how the RMS Theory of Change translates strategic objectives into coordinated financing pathways and system-level outcomes.

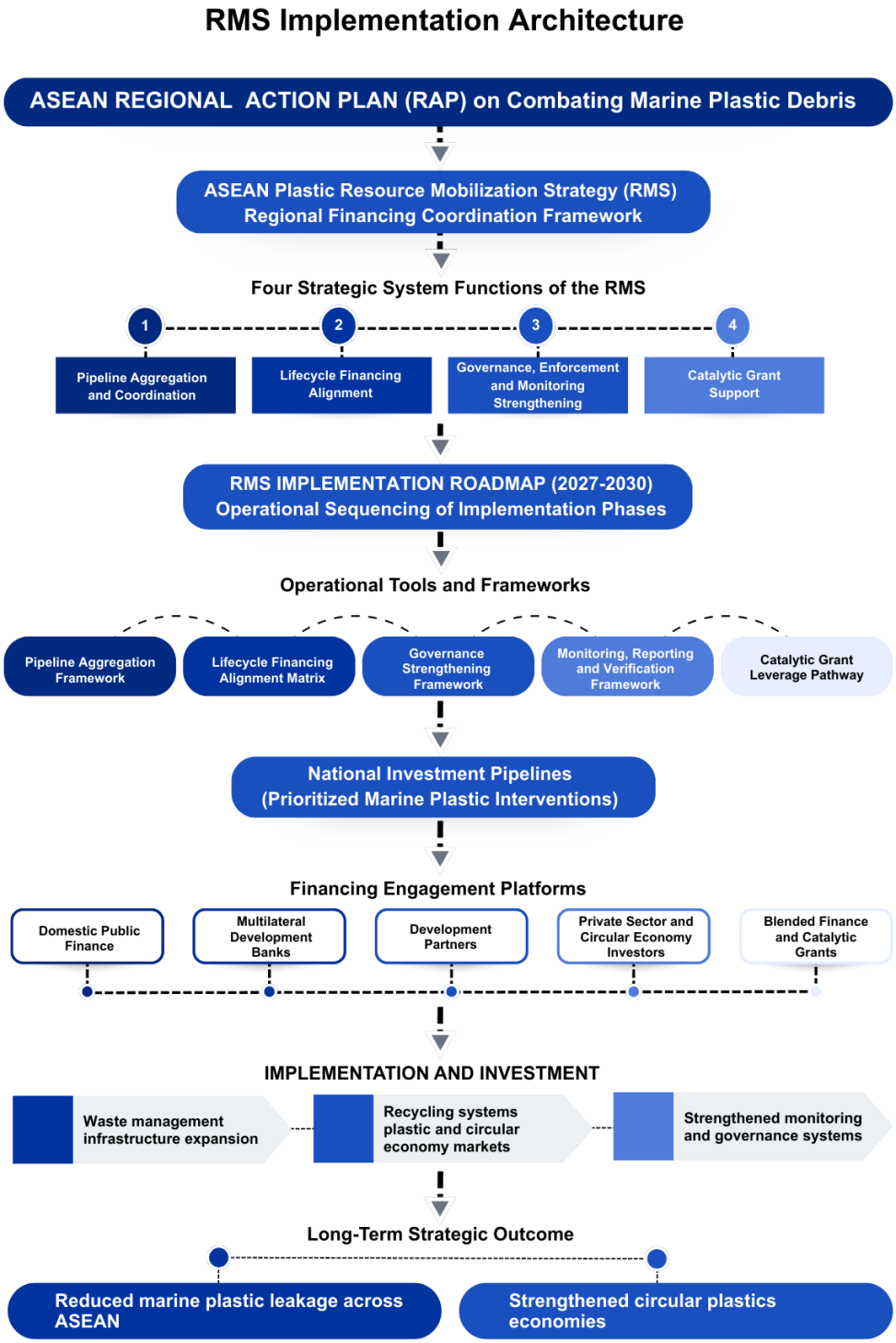


Figure 1: Integrated Architecture of the ASEAN Marine Plastics Resource Mobilization Strategy Reflecting the Post-2027 Implementation Context

The figure illustrates how the RMS translates stocktaking findings into coordinated financing pathways that support implementation of the RAP. Through four strategic functions—pipeline aggregation, lifecycle financing alignment, governance and monitoring strengthening, and catalytic grant leverage—the RMS aligns domestic public finance, development finance,

private capital, and catalytic financing to strengthen plastics management systems and support sustained reductions in marine plastic leakage across ASEAN.

Building on the Theory of Change presented above, the following figure illustrates how the RMS operationalises the findings of the regional Stocktaking and Needs Assessment through a structured system architecture. The diagram below (Figure 2) highlights the progression from key implementation challenges identified across AMS to the core system functions of the RMS, and ultimately to the expected outcomes of strengthened plastics management systems. Through four mutually reinforcing pathways—pipeline aggregation and coordination, lifecycle financing alignment, governance and monitoring strengthening, and catalytic grant leverage—the RMS provides a coordinated framework for aligning policy commitments, financing mechanisms, and institutional actions. These elements support the mobilisation and alignment of financing required to advance implementation of the RAP on Combating Marine Debris over the period 2027–2030.

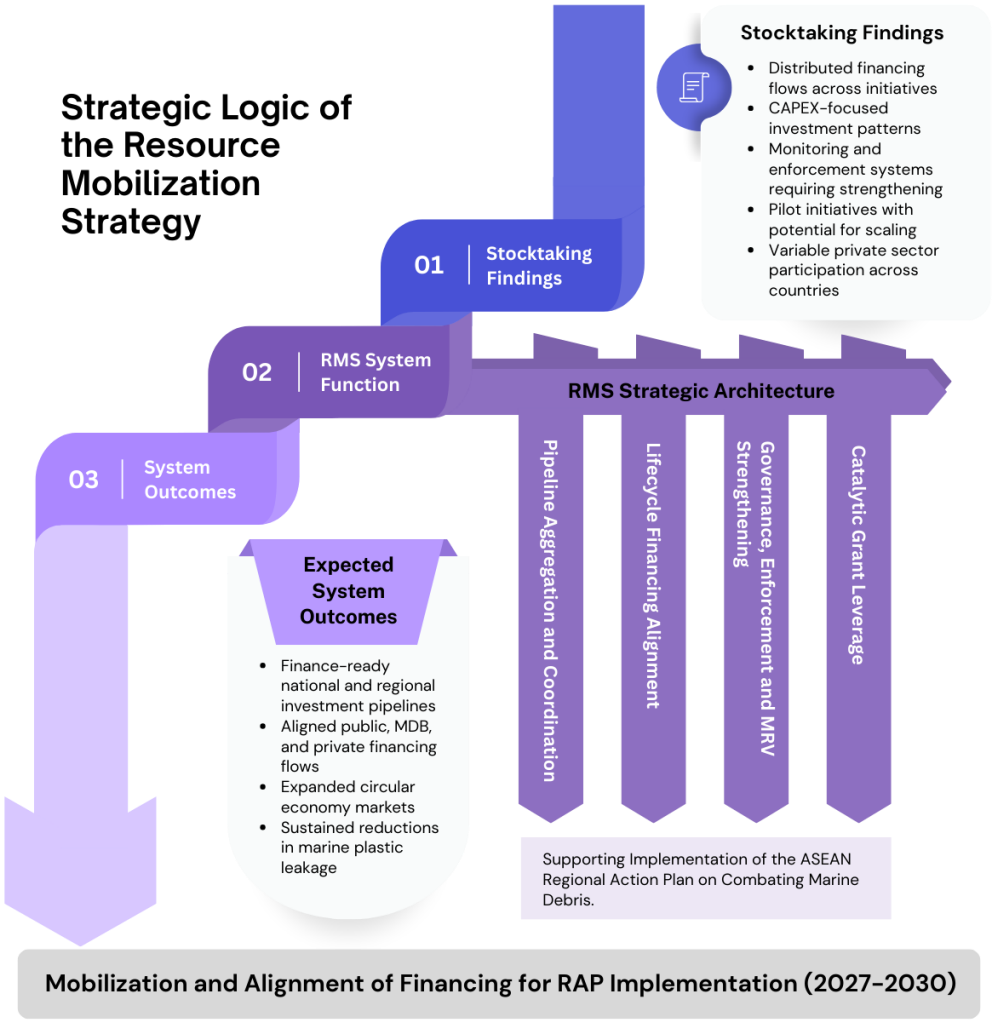


Figure 2: Operational Architecture of the RMS Reflecting the Post-2027 Implementation Context

2.4 Core System Functions of the RMS

Building on the findings of the Stocktaking and Needs Assessment and the Theory of Change, the RMS translates its strategic objectives into a set of core system functions that guide how

financing, institutional arrangements, and investment pipelines can be strengthened and aligned across ASEAN.
These functions respond directly to key system constraints identified through the Stocktaking, including financing flows operating through separate channels, limited alignment between capital and operational financing, evolving monitoring systems, and the need to scale successful pilot initiatives.

In practice, the RMS supports the translation of policy commitments under the RAP into prioritised and structured investment programmes, helping governments move from broad policy intent toward finance-ready programmes. It strengthens investment readiness through the preparation and aggregation of investment pipelines aligned with financing requirements and capable of engaging development partners, multilateral development banks, and private investors.

At the same time, the RMS strengthens the governance, coordination, and monitoring systems that support financing confidence and implementation effectiveness. This includes enhanced regulatory implementation, institutional coordination, and MRV systems that promote transparency, accountability, and the tracking of environmental and system-level outcomes. The RMS also facilitates more structured engagement between governments and financing partners through common planning, coordination, and investment preparation approaches, supporting stronger alignment between investment opportunities and appropriate financing instruments.

Through these integrated functions, the RMS operates not as a financing facility or implementing agency, but as a regional coordination platform that supports the prioritisation, mobilisation, and sustained alignment of financing in support of RAP implementation.

In practical terms, this may include the development of multi-city investment programmes, alignment of national waste management strategies with appropriate financing instruments, strengthening of regulatory monitoring systems through digital platforms, and deployment of catalytic financing to support project preparation and investment structuring.[1] These examples illustrate how the RMS can strengthen investment readiness, financing alignment, and implementation capacity across AMS.

2.5 Enabling Investment Confidence

Investment confidence is an important factor influencing financing mobilisation and the long-term sustainability of plastics management systems.

Across AMS, marine debris action plans and sectoral policies identify numerous activities addressing plastic waste reduction, infrastructure development, circular economy innovation, and regulatory reform. However, financing institutions and investors often require investment opportunities that are sufficiently prioritised, structured, and supported by clear implementation arrangements before financing decisions can be made.

Without clear prioritisation and visibility, investment opportunities may remain fragmented across multiple initiatives and institutions, limiting their ability to attract development finance, technical assistance, or private investment. Project preparation requirements, transaction costs, and perceived implementation risks can further constrain investment interest, particularly where opportunities are relatively small in scale or lack clear pathways for replication and expansion.

[1] Reflects Stocktaking findings on fragmented project-based approaches and the need to aggregate investments into programmatic pipelines.

The RMS addresses these challenges by promoting the development of prioritised and programmatic investment pipelines that align environmental priorities, implementation readiness, and financing opportunities. By improving the visibility and structure of investment opportunities, the RMS can help reduce transaction complexity, strengthen engagement with financing partners, and support more efficient mobilisation of resources.

Illustrative examples include multi-city waste management programmes, where clusters of municipalities jointly develop collection, sorting, and disposal systems to achieve economies of scale; regional recycling infrastructure networks that connect materials recovery facilities, plastics processing hubs, and logistics systems across provinces or countries; national investments in integrated monitoring and data systems, including digital platforms for waste tracking, reporting, and performance monitoring, and plastic leakage prevention initiatives targeting priority river basins, coastal zones, or urban hotspots. These approaches demonstrate how related interventions can be structured into investment programmes that are more attractive to financing partners while remaining aligned with national priorities and implementation capacities.

Investment confidence also depends on the long-term viability of plastics management systems. Findings from the Stocktaking and Needs Assessment indicate that infrastructure investments are not always matched with sufficient operational financing to sustain service delivery. Without predictable financing for waste collection, enforcement, maintenance, and monitoring, infrastructure investments may not achieve their intended outcomes.

The RMS therefore promotes lifecycle financing alignment, ensuring that capital investments are complemented by reliable operational financing that supports service delivery, regulatory implementation, and monitoring systems throughout the investment lifecycle.

Governance and data reliability further influence financing decisions. Regulatory clarity, consistency of implementation, transparency, and credible monitoring systems are frequently identified by governments, development partners, and investors as important factors supporting investment confidence. Strong monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) systems can help demonstrate results, strengthen accountability, and support evidence-based decision-making.

By strengthening these enabling conditions—prioritised investment pipelines, lifecycle financing alignment, and credible governance and monitoring systems—the RMS helps create an environment in which public, development, philanthropic, and private financing can more effectively support long-term improvements in plastics management systems across ASEAN.

2.6 The Four-Pillar Strategic Architecture

Building on the enabling conditions and system functions described above, the RMS translates its theory of change into an operational framework through four mutually reinforcing strategic pillars.

Each pillar responds to key system considerations identified through regional consultations and the Stocktaking and Needs Assessment. They provide a coherent architecture through which AMS can strengthen implementation systems, improve financing alignment, and scale the implementation of the RAP on Combating Marine Debris.

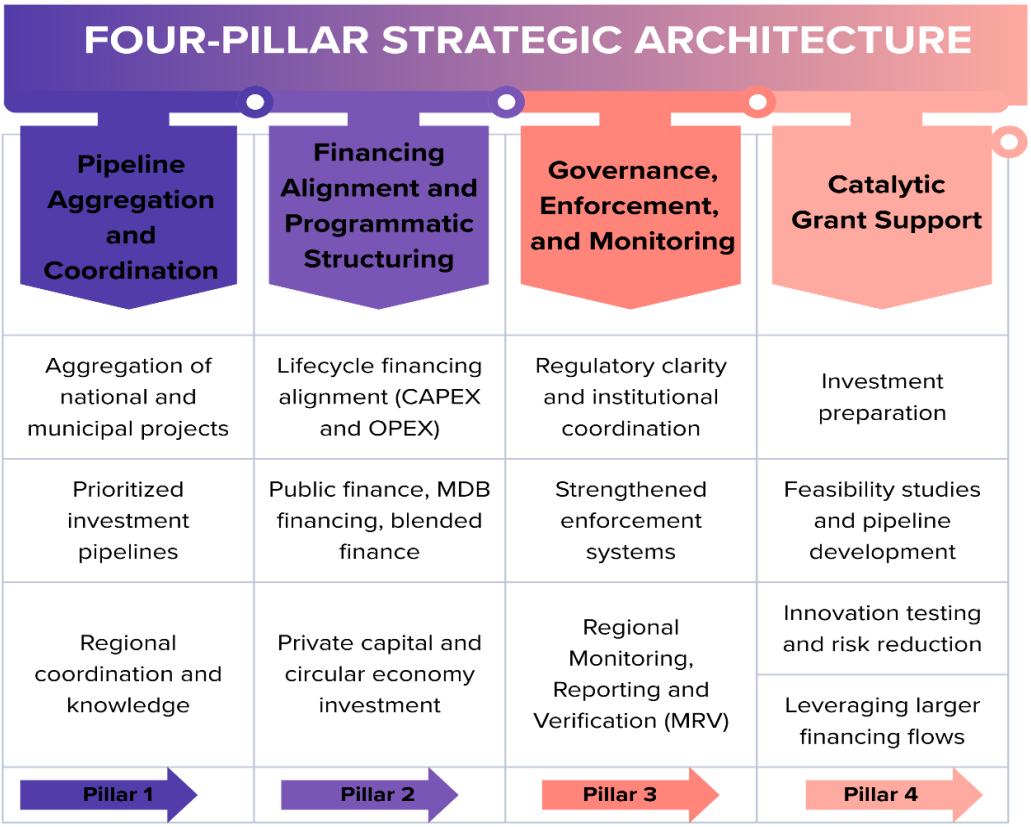


Figure 3: Four-Pillar Strategic Architecture of the RMS

The figure presents the four strategic pillars guiding the implementation of the RMS: pipeline aggregation and coordination, financing alignment and programmatic structuring, governance, enforcement and monitoring strengthening, and catalytic grant support. Together, these pillars provide the institutional and financing architecture through which AMS can strengthen implementation capacity, improve financing effectiveness, and support long-term implementation of the RAP on Combating Marine Debris.

In practical terms, these pillars may be applied through actions such as consolidating local waste management projects into regional investment pipelines, aligning public budgets with long-term service delivery needs, strengthening enforcement through interoperable monitoring systems, and using catalytic grants to prepare finance-ready investment programmes.[2] These examples illustrate how the RMS architecture can be operationalised across different national contexts.

Differentiated Implementation Pathways Across AMS:

ASEAN Member States operate under diverse institutional, financial, and market conditions. The Stocktaking and Needs Assessment, therefore, identified differentiated readiness tiers across the region, reflecting variations in governance arrangements, service delivery systems, enforcement approaches, data availability, and access to financing.

The RMS recognises that countries will progress along different implementation pathways depending on their system readiness and national priorities.

[2] Aligned with Stocktaking findings on financing fragmentation, CAPEX–OPEX imbalances, and the need for integrated system approaches.

The Stocktaking and Needs Assessment identified three broad implementation contexts across ASEAN:

- Scaling contexts, where governance systems, enforcement arrangements, and data platforms are relatively well established. In these contexts, the RMS primarily supports the expansion of investment pipelines, the mobilisation of private sector financing, and the strengthening of circular economy markets.
- Transition contexts, where policy frameworks and pilot initiatives are in place but pathways toward broader system-scale implementation continue to develop. In these contexts, the RMS prioritises pipeline preparation, investment structuring, and the transition from pilot initiatives toward programmatic implementation.
- Foundation contexts, where coordination mechanisms, data systems, and service delivery capacity are still developing. In these contexts, the RMS prioritises catalytic grant support, institutional capacity development, and service system strengthening.

By supporting differentiated pathways across readiness contexts, the RMS enables AMS to progressively advance their marine plastics management systems in line with national priorities and institutional readiness.

2.7 Pillar 1 – Pipeline Aggregation and Coordination

Marine plastics interventions across ASEAN are implemented through a wide network of institutions operating at different levels of governance. National ministries establish policy frameworks and regulatory standards, provincial authorities coordinate regional implementation, municipalities manage waste collection services, and sectoral agencies oversee infrastructure development and environmental monitoring.

This diversity of actors reflects the multi-sectoral nature of marine plastics management. At the same time, it can create coordination challenges in project development and investment preparation. Many initiatives remain relatively small-scale and localised, often responding to specific policy priorities or partner-supported programmes.

While these initiatives provide valuable contributions, their scale may limit access to larger financing sources. Development finance institutions often prefer programmatic investments that reach sufficient scale and efficiency. Smaller municipalities may also require additional support in preparing investment proposals that meet financing requirements.

The RMS therefore promotes pipeline aggregation as a strategic mechanism for strengthening investment readiness and improving access to financing. Further technical guidance on the structure of aggregated investment pipelines, including investment clustering approaches and pipeline preparation templates, is provided in Annex 1 – Pipeline Aggregation Framework.

Strengthening Bankability of Investment Pipelines:

To improve financing readiness, priority pipelines may be strengthened through:

- clear institutional ownership and implementation responsibility
- indicative capital and operational cost estimates
- feasibility and safeguard screening
- revenue or sustainability pathway assessment, where relevant
- measurable environmental outcomes
- readiness for engagement with financing institutions

This helps move projects from the concept stage toward finance-ready investment opportunities. Under this approach, related initiatives are consolidated into structured programmatic investment pipelines aligned with RAP priority areas. Rather than presenting

individual projects in isolation, governments are supported in organising interventions into coordinated investment clusters, such as:

- multi-city waste management programmes
- regional recycling infrastructure networks
- national monitoring and data systems
- integrated leakage prevention programmes

Pipeline aggregation offers several potential advantages:

- investment packages that align with MDB financing thresholds
- improved efficiency in project preparation
- stronger coordination across national and subnational actors
- greater visibility of priority investments at the regional level
- expanded opportunities for replication and scaling

Through these mechanisms, pipeline aggregation supports AMS in mobilising financing for marine plastics interventions at a greater scale.

From Pilot Initiatives to Scalable Investment Programmes:

Across ASEAN, a wide range of pilot initiatives and demonstration projects have generated valuable experience in addressing marine plastics challenges. Examples of such initiatives include city-level plastic recovery programmes, community-based waste collection systems, and pilot recycling value chain interventions supported by development partners across several AMS. These initiatives have tested new technologies, service models, circular economy approaches, and community-based interventions.

The Stocktaking and Needs Assessment highlighted that many of these promising initiatives remain localised and may benefit from clearer pathways for scaling and long-term financing.

Pipeline aggregation helps address this opportunity by integrating successful pilot initiatives into structured investment programmes that can support replication, scaling, and engagement with financing partners.

Through this process:

- pilot initiatives demonstrating technical feasibility can be incorporated into larger investment portfolios
- successful local models can be replicated across multiple cities or regions
- development finance institutions can engage with programmatic investments rather than individual projects
- private sector participation can expand within more predictable regulatory and financing environments

By creating pathways from experimentation to larger investment programmes, the RMS supports the translation of innovation into long-term improvements in plastics management systems.

2.8 Pillar 2 – Financing Alignment and Programmatic Structuring

Plastics management systems require financing across the full service lifecycle. Waste collection systems operate daily, recycling facilities require ongoing maintenance and staffing, regulatory authorities oversee environmental compliance; and monitoring systems generate data that supports policy implementation.

Traditional financing models have often prioritised infrastructure development, while operational sustainability may receive less consistent attention. Infrastructure assets may be

constructed through grant programs or development loans, while operational expenditures for maintenance, staffing, enforcement, and monitoring may depend on annual public budgets.

Where operational financing is uncertain, infrastructure assets may operate below optimal capacity, and service delivery systems may face implementation challenges.

The RMS addresses this opportunity through lifecycle financing alignment, ensuring that financing strategies support the full delivery chain of plastics management systems. The alignment of financing instruments with the functional components of plastics management systems is further illustrated in Annex 2 – Lifecycle Financing Alignment Matrix.

Under this approach, financing instruments perform complementary roles within scalable investment programmes and broader system improvement initiatives:

- Domestic public finance supports municipal service delivery, regulatory implementation, and enabling functions that underpin programme implementation;
- MDB financing contributes to large-scale infrastructure modernisation and investment programmes that aggregate multiple projects or jurisdictions;
- Blended finance mechanisms help reduce investment risks and mobilise additional capital for emerging circular economy markets and scalable investment opportunities;
- Private capital supports commercially viable recycling infrastructure, resource recovery facilities, and circular value chain investments; and
- Results-based financing strengthens accountability, incentivises performance, and supports the achievement of measurable environmental and system-level outcomes across programme portfolios.

By aligning these financing streams within coherent implementation programmes, AMS can help ensure that infrastructure investments are supported by reliable operational financing, institutional capacity, and long-term system improvements that contribute to sustained implementation outcomes.

2.9 Pillar 3 – Governance, Enforcement, and Monitoring Strengthening

Governance systems are central to financing confidence and implementation effectiveness. Many AMS have adopted policy frameworks addressing plastic waste and marine pollution. The effectiveness of these frameworks often depends on the strength of enforcement systems, institutional coordination mechanisms, and monitoring infrastructure. Investors and development partners typically assess regulatory environments not only based on policy commitments but also on the consistency of implementation and the reliability of monitoring data.

The RMS, therefore, treats governance systems as essential components of implementation infrastructure. Institutional roles and governance strengthening priorities supporting RMS implementation are further elaborated in Annex 3 – Governance Strengthening Framework.

Key areas of action may include:

- clarifying institutional mandates across agencies responsible for plastics management
- strengthening compliance monitoring and inspection systems
- developing interoperable digital monitoring platforms
- aligning monitoring indicators with RAP outcomes
- improving regional comparability of reporting systems

Reliable MRV systems play an important role in supporting governance credibility. Robust data systems support evidence-based policy decisions, enable performance-linked financing instruments, and enhance transparency across implementation actors. The structure of the monitoring architecture and reporting responsibilities is further detailed in Annex 4 – Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification Framework.

Through strengthened governance systems, AMS can enhance accountability, improve regulatory predictability, and support long-term circular economy investment.

2.10 Pillar 4 – Catalytic Grant Support

Concessional financing and grant resources continue to play an important role in advancing marine plastics initiatives across ASEAN. The RMS emphasises the catalytic role that grant financing can play in strengthening investment readiness and enabling larger-scale financing.

Rather than supporting stand-alone activities, catalytic grant resources can be deployed strategically to strengthen the enabling conditions necessary for larger investment programmes. The catalytic financing functions and leverage mechanisms associated with these investments are summarised in Annex 5 – Catalytic Grant Leverage Pathway.

Priority catalytic functions include:

- investment preparation and feasibility studies
- development of finance-ready project pipelines
- strengthening monitoring and data systems
- improvements in institutional coordination
- innovation testing linked to scalable solutions
- risk-sharing mechanisms that enable blended finance

By supporting early-stage preparation and strengthening institutional readiness, catalytic financing can help mobilise broader financing flows from development finance institutions and private investors.

Through targeted deployment of catalytic grants, the RMS supports the transition from individual project initiatives towards more structured and scalable investment programmes across ASEAN.

PART III – FINANCING ARCHITECTURE

The ASEAN financing landscape includes a diverse mix of domestic public expenditure, bilateral and multilateral assistance, philanthropic funding, emerging EPR systems, and private investment. While these sources are significant, they often operate through different mandates, timeframes, and risk appetites. The principal opportunity lies in strengthening alignment across existing financing sources to support the full lifecycle of plastics management systems – from project preparation and infrastructure investment to market development and long-term operations.

The RMS promotes a coordinated financing architecture in which different financing sources play complementary roles according to their comparative advantages, helping to strengthen implementation effectiveness and long-term system sustainability.

3.1 Financing the System of Marine Plastics Management

Effective marine plastics management requires sustained financing across multiple components of waste management and circular economy systems. Plastics management is not supported by a single financing instrument or infrastructure investment. Rather, it functions as an interconnected system that combines public service delivery, infrastructure development, regulatory oversight, monitoring systems, and private sector participation in circular markets. For example, municipal waste collection services in rapidly urbanising secondary cities may require predictable operational financing through public budgets, while recycling facilities and other infrastructure investments may be supported through

development finance institutions. At the same time, circular economy initiatives such as plastics recovery and processing may attract private investment where enabling policy and regulatory frameworks, including EPR systems, are in place.

Across AMS, plastics management systems perform several interconnected functions. Municipal waste management services provide the foundation for plastics recovery through collection, transport, sorting, and containment. Infrastructure investments—including recycling facilities, material recovery facilities (MRFs), transfer stations, and sanitary landfills—support the safe processing and treatment of waste. Regulatory systems guide compliance with environmental standards and support the implementation of policies such as EPR. Circular economy markets create value from recovered materials through recycling and reintegration of post-consumer plastic materials into productive value chains, while innovation and behavioural change initiatives support new technologies, community engagement, and improved waste management practices.[3]

These functions require financing with different characteristics. Public service delivery relies on predictable operational expenditure (OPEX) financing to maintain continuity of services, while infrastructure development requires capital expenditure (CAPEX) investments with longer financing horizons. Circular economy development may benefit from risk-sharing mechanisms that support market growth, while innovation initiatives often require more flexible financing that enables experimentation and adaptation. A detailed overview of the relationship between financing instruments and these functions is presented in Annex 2 – Lifecycle Financing Alignment Matrix.

Many of these financing sources are already active across ASEAN. Municipal and national budgets finance waste collection services and regulatory implementation. MDBs support infrastructure investments and technical assistance. Development partners contribute to pilot initiatives and institutional strengthening, while private sector actors invest in recycling and materials processing where market conditions are conducive.

The key opportunity, therefore, lies not in the absence of financing, but in improving how different financing sources work together to support long-term system performance. Infrastructure investments may not always be accompanied by adequate operational financing, pilot initiatives may require clearer pathways for replication and scaling, and circular economy investments often depend on continued improvements in regulatory implementation and monitoring systems.

The RMS responds to these opportunities by promoting stronger alignment across financing instruments and system needs throughout the implementation lifecycle. By improving coordination between financing sources and system requirements, AMS can strengthen operational continuity, enhance investment readiness, and support more sustainable improvements in plastics management systems.

[3] Reflects Stocktaking findings on underfunded municipal systems and gaps between capital investment and operational financing.

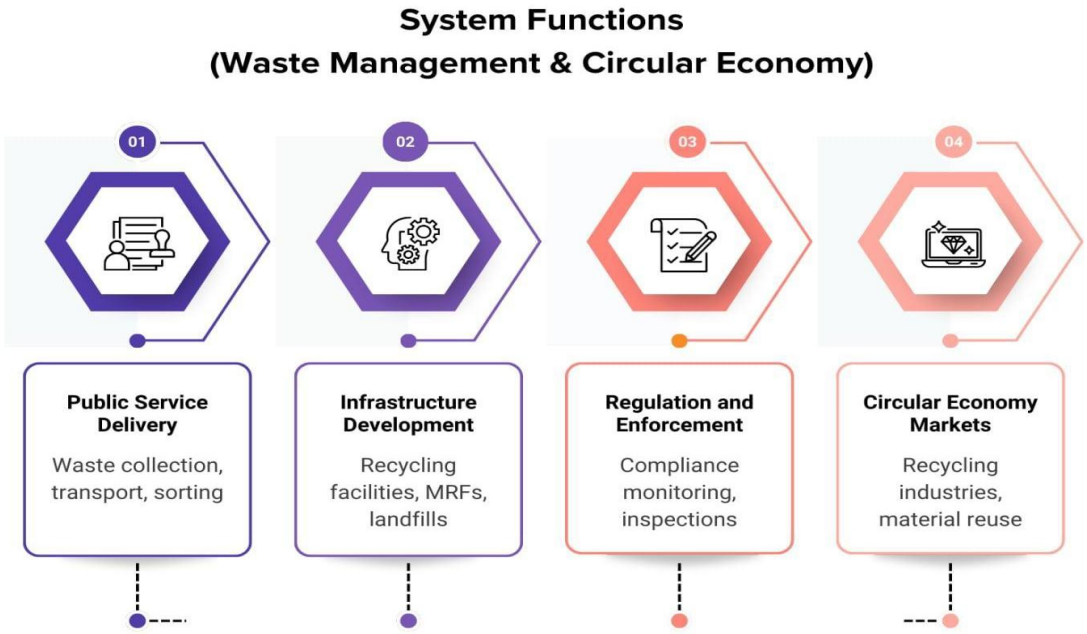


Figure 4: Core System Functions of Marine Plastics Management Systems

Domestic public finance remains the foundational anchor of this system. National and subnational budgets are particularly important for financing waste collection services, enforcement, staffing, monitoring, and other operational functions that require continuity beyond project cycles.

3.2 The ASEAN Marine Plastics Financing Ecosystem

The RMS conceptualises marine plastics financing as an ecosystem in which multiple actors perform complementary roles within a coordinated system. These actors include governments, development finance institutions, private sector investors, philanthropic organisations, and development partners providing catalytic financing. Detailed descriptions of financing instruments and their respective roles within this ecosystem are presented in Annex 6 – Financing Ecosystem Tables.

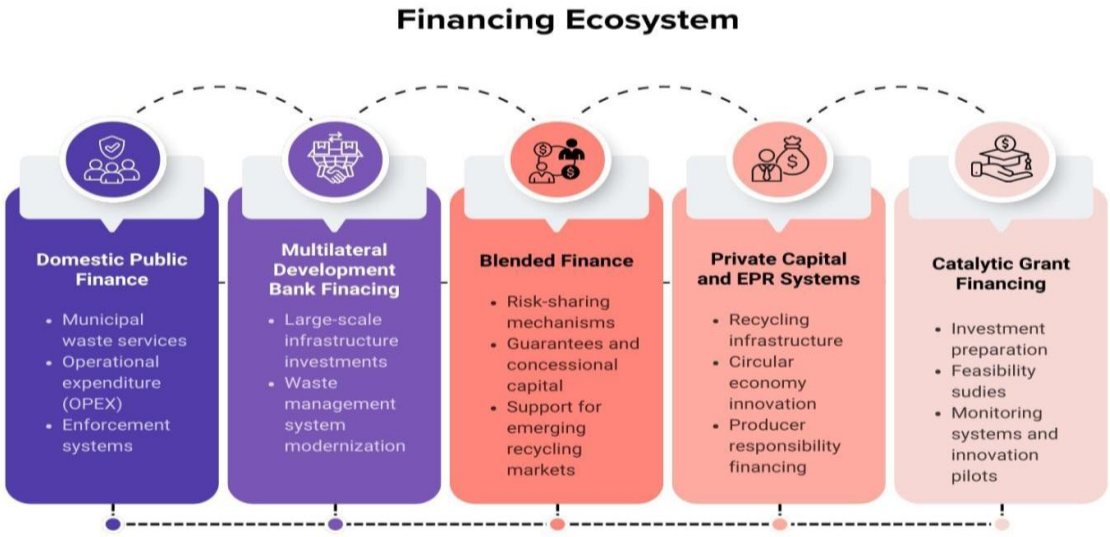


Figure 5: Financing Ecosystem Supporting Marine Plastics Management

Within this ecosystem, different financing sources contribute to different stages of system development and implementation. Domestic public finance provides the foundation for

operational continuity and regulatory implementation. Development finance institutions support large-scale infrastructure investments. Blended finance mechanisms help reduce risks associated with emerging circular economy investments. Private capital supports recycling capacity, resource recovery, and market innovation, while catalytic grant financing strengthens institutional readiness and investment preparation.

When deployed in a complementary manner, these financing sources can reinforce one another and support long-term improvements in plastics management systems across AMS.

Relevant sustainable finance frameworks may further strengthen financing alignment by improving the credibility, visibility, and investability of marine plastics initiatives. At the regional level, the ASEAN Taxonomy for Sustainable Finance provides an emerging reference framework that may help guide investments in areas such as circular economy development, waste management, recycling, and pollution prevention. At the national level, several AMS are also advancing sustainable finance frameworks, green bond mechanisms, and taxonomy initiatives that may create additional pathways for public and private capital to support environmental priorities, including marine plastics interventions where national eligibility criteria permit.

International financing platforms and facilities may also provide opportunities to support marine plastics investments. These include blended finance facilities, climate and environmental funds, and development finance mechanisms that offer concessional financing, technical assistance, project preparation support, and risk-sharing instruments. Examples include financing windows and facilities associated with institutions such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), World Bank, and the Green Climate Fund (GCF). While marine plastics investments may not always align directly with traditional climate finance categories, many interventions generate broader environmental, resilience, and circular economy benefits that may strengthen their relevance to such financing opportunities.

The RMS does not seek to create new financing mechanisms or duplicate existing financing platforms. Rather, it serves as a coordination framework that helps connect marine plastics priorities with relevant financing opportunities at regional, national, and international levels. Through stronger pipeline preparation, clearer environmental outcomes, harmonised monitoring systems, and coordinated stakeholder engagement, the RMS can help improve the readiness and visibility of investment opportunities while preserving national ownership and alignment with domestic priorities.

In operational terms, the RMS builds on existing ASEAN and partner-supported initiatives, including foundations established through SEA-MaP. Through strengthened coordination, investment readiness support, and financing alignment, it seeks to connect initiatives that may otherwise operate independently, facilitate the transition of successful pilots into programmatic investment pipelines, and support engagement with a broader range of financing partners.

Over time, successful implementation of the RMS may be reflected not only in financing volumes, but also in stronger alignment between financing supply and investment demand, improved predictability of investment pipelines, reduced transaction barriers, and greater confidence in the institutional, regulatory, and monitoring systems supporting plastics management across ASEAN.

The financing ecosystem approach is guided by three key principles.

First, financing should support the full lifecycle of plastics management systems rather than isolated components. Infrastructure investments alone may not achieve sustained reductions in marine plastic leakage if operational financing remains uncertain.

Second, financing approaches should reflect differing levels of institutional readiness, market maturity, and implementation capacity across AMS. As countries progress through different stages of system development, financing pathways may also vary.

Third, concessional resources should be deployed strategically to catalyse broader financing flows rather than permanently subsidise system operations.

By applying these principles, the RMS supports AMS in mobilising, aligning, and sustaining financing across multiple actors and institutions.

3.3 Financing Instruments and Roles

The financing instruments described in this section support the implementation of the four-pillar strategic architecture outlined in Section 2.6 by illustrating how different financing sources contribute to investment readiness, lifecycle financing needs, governance systems, and catalytic functions across plastics management systems.

Building on the financing ecosystem presented in Section 3.2, the RMS applies a complementary financing approach across the waste management and circular economy value chain. Different instruments serve different purposes and are most effective when aligned within a coordinated system.

Potential financing partners under the RMS may include public institutions, development partners, climate and environmental funds, project preparation facilities, commercial financiers, impact investors, and private sector actors whose mandates, risk appetites, and financing instruments vary according to investment stage and market context. Understanding the roles and interests of these actors can help AMS strengthen investment readiness, identify appropriate financing pathways, and engage more effectively with potential partners. As the financing landscape continues to evolve, partner mapping should be periodically reviewed and updated to reflect emerging financing facilities, project preparation mechanisms, blended finance platforms, and changing partner priorities. An indicative overview of institutions, partner interests, and engagement pathways is provided in Annex 8 – Donor and Partner Mapping Matrix.

Financing Partner Category	Illustrative Actors	Indicative Roles
Multilateral Development Banks	Asian Development Bank (ADB), World Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)	Infrastructure finance, concessional lending, guarantees, technical assistance
Climate and Environmental Funds	Green Climate Fund (GCF), Global Environment Facility (GEF), Adaptation Fund, Climate Investment Funds (CIF)	Grants, blended finance, readiness support, environmental co-benefit investments
UN and International Environmental Mechanisms	United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), International Environmental Technology Centre (IETC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Technical assistance, policy support, capacity development, knowledge products
Bilateral Development Partners	JICA, GIZ, AFD, DFAT, FCDO, USAID	Grants, policy support, institutional strengthening, project preparation support
Project Preparation and Blended Finance Facilities	Global Infrastructure Facility (GIF), ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance	Project preparation, transaction advisory support, blended

Financing Partner Category	Illustrative Actors	Indicative Roles
	Facility (ACGF), Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG)	finance structuring, risk mitigation
Commercial and Impact Investors	Commercial banks, impact investment funds, institutional investors, and sustainability-focused private equity funds	Recycling, logistics, circular economy infrastructure, enterprise financing
Industry and EPR Actors	Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs), manufacturers, packaging producers, brand owners, and industry associations	Collection systems, recycling finance, producer accountability, circular economy investments

Understanding Financing Partner Requirements

Across financing categories, institutions commonly assess several enabling conditions before engagement. These typically include clear institutional ownership, sound policy and regulatory frameworks, realistic cost and revenue structures where relevant, safeguards compliance, measurable environmental outcomes, reliable data systems, and practical implementation arrangements. Strengthening these conditions can improve the credibility of investment proposals and help governments engage a wider range of financing partners.

Domestic public finance remains the foundation of plastics management systems across ASEAN. Waste management is fundamentally a public service responsibility requiring stable financing for collection, transport, environmental monitoring, enforcement, and other recurrent functions. Aligning national and subnational budgets with RAP priorities can strengthen operational continuity. Integrating plastics management priorities into development plans, expenditure frameworks, and fiscal transfer systems can also help ensure that municipalities and local governments have adequate resources for service delivery.

As plastics management systems mature, private investment can play an increasingly important role in expanding recycling capacity, materials processing, logistics networks, and innovative packaging solutions. Regulatory instruments such as EPR systems may further strengthen private sector participation by creating more predictable incentives and financing arrangements for waste recovery and recycling. Private investment is generally more viable where governments provide clear regulatory pathways, reliable material supply streams, transparent data systems, and prepared investment pipelines. Further details are provided in Annex 7 – Private Sector and Extended Producer Responsibility Framework.

Differentiated Pathways for Private Sector Participation and EPR Systems

The readiness of EPR systems and broader private sector participation varies significantly across AMS, reflecting differences in regulatory frameworks, institutional capacity, enforcement mechanisms, and market maturity. The RMS therefore adopts a differentiated approach, recognising that private sector engagement will evolve progressively rather than uniformly across contexts.

In foundation contexts (near-term):
Priorities focus on establishing enabling conditions for future private sector participation. These may include developing policy and regulatory frameworks, piloting voluntary or sector-specific EPR schemes, strengthening data and monitoring systems, and building institutional capacity for compliance and enforcement.

In transition contexts (medium-term):
Efforts may focus on operationalising EPR systems, strengthening enforcement mechanisms, improving cost recovery structures, and aligning financing flows with waste management systems. These conditions enable more structured engagement with private sector actors.

In scaling contexts (medium- to longer-term):
More mature regulatory environments and monitoring systems can support expanded private sector investment in recycling infrastructure, materials recovery systems, and circular economy markets.

Some circular economy investments face early-stage risks that constrain private sector participation. These may include uncertain feedstock supply, commodity price volatility, fragmented markets, or limited scale. Blended finance mechanisms can help address these constraints by combining concessional resources with commercial capital. Instruments such as guarantees, concessional co-financing arrangements, and risk-sharing facilities may improve the viability and crowd in private investment for emerging recycling and circular economy markets.

Catalytic grant financing also remains important for strengthening investment readiness across ASEAN. Although grants may represent a smaller share of total financing volumes, they can play a strategic role in supporting feasibility studies, project preparation, institutional coordination, monitoring systems, and innovation pilots. By reducing early-stage barriers and strengthening institutional capacity, catalytic grants can help mobilise broader follow-on financing from development finance institutions and private investors. Related leverage pathways are outlined in Annex 5 – Catalytic Grant Leverage Pathway.

No single financing source can meet all system needs. Public finance underpins service continuity, development finance supports infrastructure modernisation, private capital expands market-based solutions, and catalytic grants help prepare investments and reduce early-stage risk. When aligned effectively, these instruments can help AMS strengthen plastics management systems, expand circular economy opportunities, and mobilise more diversified financing flows to address marine plastic pollution across ASEAN.

3.4 Mobilising and Sequencing Financing Flows

Rather than viewing financing sources as substitutes, the RMS recognises them as complementary components of a broader ecosystem. Improved sequencing and coordination can increase effectiveness, reduce duplication, and support more sustainable outcomes.

Achieving sustained reductions in marine plastic leakage across Southeast Asia requires financing approaches that support long-term improvements in plastics management rather than isolated project interventions. Plastics management systems operate through interconnected functions—including municipal service delivery, infrastructure development, regulatory implementation, monitoring systems, and circular economy market development—each of which requires financing with different characteristics and time horizons.

The Stocktaking and Needs Assessment indicated that while multiple financing sources already exist across ASEAN, these resources often operate alongside one another rather than within coordinated investment systems. Infrastructure investments may sometimes proceed without fully aligned operational financing mechanisms, while innovation pilots may require clearer pathways for scaling and replication. Private sector participation may also be influenced by regulatory environments, monitoring systems, and the availability of well-prepared investment pipelines.

Building on the financing ecosystem described above, the RMS focuses on improving the sequencing and alignment of financing flows within coordinated investment systems that support the implementation of RAP priorities.

Financing Roles within the RMS Architecture

Financing Actor	Strategic Role	Financing Instruments	Example Investments
Domestic Public Finance	Support operational waste management systems	National budgets, municipal budgets, and fiscal transfers	Waste collection, enforcement, and monitoring
Multilateral Development Banks	Support infrastructure investment	Sovereign loans, blended finance, guarantees	Recycling plants, MRFs, waste treatment infrastructure
Private Sector	Expand circular economy markets	Corporate investment, EPR funds, venture capital	Recycling facilities, materials processing
Development Partners	Support investment readiness and institutional strengthening	Grants, technical assistance	Pipeline preparation, MRV systems

AMS operate under diverse economic and institutional conditions; therefore, the RMS does not establish a fixed regional financing target. Instead, it provides a strategic framework that supports governments in mobilising resources aligned with national contexts and readiness levels.

The mobilisation of financing may follow a phased sequencing that reflects the evolution of plastics management systems across the region. In earlier stages, catalytic financing and technical assistance can support investment preparation, feasibility studies, monitoring system development, and institutional coordination improvements. As investment pipelines mature, development finance institutions can play a larger role in supporting infrastructure modernisation. Over time, strengthened regulatory frameworks, expanded infrastructure networks, and improved monitoring systems can help create conditions for increased private sector participation and the expansion of circular economy markets.

Through this phased approach, the RMS helps AMS progressively strengthen financing systems that support sustained improvements in marine plastics management. This sequencing is indicative only and should be adapted to national priorities, market conditions, and levels of institutional readiness.

Illustrative Financing Sequencing Pathways

In practice, financing pathways may evolve progressively as investment readiness and system maturity improve. Early-stage support may include technical assistance and project preparation activities that help identify opportunities for aggregating and structuring interventions into investment-ready programmes capable of attracting larger-scale financing over time.

Implementation Stage	Primary Financing Focus	Illustrative Instruments	Example Applications
Early Stage	Investment readiness and pipeline development	Grants, technical assistance, project preparation facilities, catalytic funding	Feasibility studies, project aggregation and bundling assessments, investment pipeline development, programme structuring, MRV systems
Growth Stage	Infrastructure development	Sovereign loans, concessional finance, blended instruments	Collection systems, MRFs, recycling facilities
Expansion Stage	Market scaling	Private equity, commercial lending, EPR revenues	Circular enterprises, packaging recovery systems

Consolidation Stage	Long-term sustainability	Public budgets, cost recovery systems, results-based finance	Operations and Maintenance (O&M) systems, enforcement, sustained service delivery

This sequencing is indicative only and may vary according to national context and readiness conditions.

PART IV – IMPLEMENTATION AND GOVERNANCE

Implementation of marine plastics initiatives remains the responsibility of AMS. The RMS supports the application of coordinated financing and investment approaches through regional alignment, financing readiness, and stronger investment preparation. The RMS does not prescribe implementation modalities but provides a framework that AMS may apply in accordance with national systems, priorities, and institutional contexts.

4.1 Institutional Framework for Implementation

Effective application of the RMS requires coordinated engagement across regional institutions, national governments, development partners, and private sector stakeholders. Given the transboundary nature of marine plastic pollution and the diversity of institutional arrangements across AMS, implementation benefits from balancing regional coordination with strong national ownership.

The RMS adopts a governance model that builds on existing ASEAN cooperation mechanisms rather than establishing new institutional structures. This approach ensures alignment with ASEAN principles of national leadership, regional coordination, and institutional efficiency. Institutional roles and governance strengthening priorities are further elaborated in Annex 3 – Governance Strengthening Framework.

The ASEC plays a facilitative role by convening dialogue, supporting partner engagement, and promoting alignment with the RAP on Combating Marine Debris. At the regional level, ASEAN supports coordination, knowledge exchange, and engagement with development partners and financing institutions, while AMS retain primary responsibility for implementation.

4.1.1 Institutional Roles within the RMS

Institution	Primary Role under the RMS
ASEAN Member States (AMS)	Lead national implementation, identify priority investments, develop investment pipelines, engage financing partners, and report progress through existing mechanisms.
ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC)	Facilitate regional coordination, convene dialogue among stakeholders, support knowledge management, promote cross-country learning, and assist in tracking regional progress.
ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment (AWGCME)	Serve as the primary technical platform for discussing RMS implementation, reviewing progress, sharing experiences, and identifying opportunities for regional collaboration.
Other Relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies	Contribute technical inputs and support implementation in areas related to waste management, circular economy, sustainable cities, chemicals and waste management, finance, and investment.

Development Partners and Financing Institutions	Provide financing, technical assistance, project preparation support, and knowledge resources consistent with their respective mandates and investment criteria.
Private Sector and Industry Stakeholders	Participate in investment, innovation, EPR implementation, circular economy development, and partnership initiatives where appropriate.

The RMS strengthens coordination among these actors while respecting existing mandates, decision-making processes, and national responsibilities.

Regional coordination functions may include:

- facilitating regional dialogue on financing mobilisation and investment priorities
- supporting the aggregation and improving visibility of national investment pipelines
- coordinating engagement with multilateral development banks and development partners
- supporting regional alignment of monitoring, reporting, and verification systems
- facilitating knowledge exchange, peer learning, and technical collaboration among AMS

Through these functions, regional institutions strengthen information sharing, coordination, and collaboration across AMS while respecting national implementation arrangements.

Primary responsibility for RMS implementation remains with AMS. National governments play a central role in integrating RMS priorities into relevant planning, investment, and coordination mechanisms in accordance with national priorities and institutional arrangements.

To support practical application, the RMS encourages integration into national and subnational planning and budgeting systems. This may include aligning RMS priorities with national development plans, sector strategies, and medium-term expenditure frameworks, as well as incorporating plastics management investments into municipal and provincial planning instruments.

Local governments play a critical role in service delivery, particularly in waste collection, enforcement, and community engagement. Strengthening their participation in pipeline development and financing strategies helps ensure that investments reflect operational realities and support long-term service sustainability. Where appropriate, fiscal transfer mechanisms, intergovernmental coordination platforms, and capacity development initiatives may be leveraged to strengthen subnational implementation.

This governance structure strengthens regional coordination while maintaining national leadership and respecting existing institutional mandates. The broader institutional architecture supporting RMS implementation is summarised in Annex 3 – Governance Strengthening Framework.

In practice, coordination may include convening regional financing dialogues, supporting the presentation of national investment pipelines to development partners, facilitating technical exchanges across AMS, and coordinating engagement with multilateral development banks and regional initiatives aligned with RAP priorities.[4]

4.2 Roles and Responsibilities of Key Stakeholders

[4] Aligned with Stocktaking findings on fragmented financing and the need for stronger coordination across institutions and partners.

Effective implementation of the RMS requires coordinated participation across multiple stakeholders operating at regional, national, and sectoral levels. While AMS retains primary responsibility for national implementation of marine plastics initiatives, regional institutions, development partners, financial institutions, and private sector actors contribute complementary roles in supporting financing mobilisation, investment preparation, technical cooperation, and knowledge exchange.

The table below summarises the indicative roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders involved in supporting RMS implementation.

Stakeholder Ownership and Delivery Responsibilities

Stakeholder	Roles and Responsibilities
ASEAN Member States	Maintain leadership over the national implementation of marine plastics initiatives. National governments are responsible for developing and prioritising national investment pipelines, implementing policy reforms, strengthening waste management systems, and mobilising domestic public financing aligned with RAP priorities. National authorities also coordinate engagement with subnational governments, private sector actors, and civil society organizations involved in plastics management initiatives.
ASEAN Secretariat	Supports regional coordination, information sharing, and stakeholder engagement through existing ASEAN mechanisms relevant to marine plastics and environmental cooperation. The Secretariat may facilitate dialogue among AMS and development partners, promote knowledge exchange, and support the visibility of national priorities and regional progress, consistent with existing mandates and available resources.
Development Partners and Multilateral Development Banks	Provide financial and technical support for RMS implementation through grants, technical assistance, concessional financing, and infrastructure investment. MDBs can play an important role in supporting large-scale waste management infrastructure programmes, investment preparation, and policy initiatives related to environmental sustainability and circular economy development.
Private Sector and Circular Economy Actors	Contribute to the development of plastics management systems through investments in recycling infrastructure, circular economy innovation, logistics networks, and materials processing technologies. Private sector actors also contribute to the development of responsible production systems and strengthened plastics value chains. Mechanisms such as EPR systems can help mobilise private sector financing and support accountability across the plastics lifecycle.

While roles are complementary, further clarity may be provided across key ASEAN institutional actors. AMS retain full ownership of implementation, including policy development, financing mobilisation, and service delivery.

Relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies and cooperation mechanisms may provide technical guidance, policy alignment, and coordination support to help ensure that RMS implementation remains consistent with regional priorities. Depending on the thematic area and nature of the intervention, this may include bodies such as the ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment (AWGCME), the ASEAN Working Group on Environmentally Sustainable Cities (AWGESC), the ASEAN Working Group on Chemicals and Waste (AWGCW), and other relevant sectoral bodies operating under ASEAN cooperation frameworks. Engagement with

these mechanisms would generally occur through established ASEAN processes and coordination arrangements facilitated by the ASEC and relevant ASEAN sectoral platforms.

This differentiation helps ensure clarity of mandates while maintaining flexibility across national contexts and implementation arrangements.

4.3 Operational Continuity: From SEA-MaP Foundations to RMS Implementation

The RMS is intended to support continued implementation of regional marine plastics priorities beyond the SEA-MaP programme period by leveraging the institutional, technical, and coordination assets established through SEA-MaP. Rather than introducing parallel systems or new implementation structures, the RMS provides a framework for applying and extending existing knowledge, partnerships, analytical outputs, and coordination mechanisms in support of more coordinated and programmatic investment approaches for marine plastics management across ASEAN.

SEA-MaP has generated a range of assets that can support this transition, including regional coordination platforms, stakeholder networks, data systems and analytical products, pilot initiatives and technical assistance activities. These resources have contributed to a stronger understanding of investment priorities, implementation challenges, and opportunities for strengthening plastics management systems across ASEAN. They also provide a practical basis for continued engagement among governments, development partners, financial institutions, private sector actors, and civil society organisations.

The period between 2026 and 2027 represents an indicative transition phase during which existing knowledge products, stakeholder networks, and emerging investment opportunities may be aligned with RMS priorities. During this period, efforts may focus on knowledge consolidation, continued stakeholder engagement through existing ASEAN mechanisms, and integration of investment-ready opportunities informed by experience and lessons generated under the SEA-MaP.[5]

Institutional continuity is maintained through existing ASEAN coordination arrangements, with the ASEC continuing its facilitation and coordination role through relevant ASEAN mechanisms and sectoral bodies, while AMS retain primary responsibility for implementation. In this way, the RMS supports a gradual progression from pilot-based interventions toward more scalable and programmatic investment approaches while preserving national ownership and avoiding duplication of existing structures and processes.

Phase	Focus	Key Outputs
SEA-MaP (to 2026)	Foundation building	Regional platforms, analytical products, data systems, pilot initiatives, stakeholder networks
Transition (2026–2027)	Alignment and continuity	Knowledge consolidation, partner engagement, investment pipeline alignment, investment preparation
RMS (from 2027)	Scaling and implementation	Programmatic investments, financing alignment, system strengthening, coordinated delivery

[5] Based on Stocktaking findings emphasizing the need to consolidate knowledge, sustain coordination platforms, and strengthen pathways from pilots to scaled implementation.

This transition pathway is intended to support continuity of knowledge, stakeholder engagement, and investment development efforts while enabling AMS to progressively advance implementation through nationally led and regionally supported approaches.

4.4 Phased Pathways for RMS Application (2027 - 2030)

The phased pathways presented in this section are indicative and are intended to guide AMS from 2027 onwards, reflecting the post-SEA-MaP implementation context and varying levels of institutional readiness across countries.

The phased roadmap provides a strategic sequencing framework that allows ASEAN and AMS to advance along differentiated implementation pathways depending on their national contexts and readiness levels. Early stages emphasise strengthening institutional and technical foundations, while later stages focus on expanding investment pipelines and strengthening financing systems within national policy frameworks. Through this approach, the RMS supports ASEAN and AMS in progressively translating RAP priorities into financing systems that support sustained marine plastics management.

Strategic Phases of RMS Implementation

Phase	Strategic Focus
Phase 1 – System Preparation and Investment Readiness (2027–2028)	May focus on strengthening the enabling conditions that support financing mobilisation and long-term implementation. Activities during this phase may include the preparation and prioritisation of national investment pipelines, improvements in monitoring and reporting systems, and enhanced coordination among relevant ministries, agencies, and stakeholders. Particular attention may be given to strengthening investment readiness, including the identification and assessment of opportunities for aggregating projects and initiatives into investment-ready programmes. This phase may also support the evaluation of successful pilot initiatives for potential scaling and replication, while strengthening policy, regulatory, and institutional foundations that can enable future implementation of EPR systems and broader private sector participation. Activities such as feasibility studies, project preparation support, investment pipeline development, and strengthening national monitoring systems may be undertaken.[6]
Phase 2 – Financing Alignment and Pipeline Consolidation (2028–2029)	May focus on aligning financing instruments with emerging investment pipelines and strengthening engagement with development finance institutions, development partners, and private sector actors. During this phase, national and subnational initiatives may be consolidated into structured investment programmes, helping translate investment-ready concepts into larger and more coordinated financing opportunities. Successful pilot initiatives may be further developed into scalable implementation models, while financing arrangements are aligned with the operational, institutional, and infrastructure requirements of plastics management systems. Depending on national circumstances, AMS may also advance the operationalisation of EPR systems and related regulatory frameworks, strengthen cost recovery mechanisms, and expand opportunities for private sector engagement. Policy and regulatory initiatives supporting circular

[6] Reflects Stocktaking findings on limited investment readiness and the need to strengthen data, planning, and pipeline development.

Phase	Strategic Focus
	economy development may continue to progress alongside efforts to mobilise financing for larger-scale implementation.
Phase 3 – Infrastructure Deployment and Market Expansion (2029–2030)	May focus on expanding investments in waste management infrastructure, recycling capacity, and materials recovery systems while supporting the development of circular economy markets. Building on the investment readiness, financing alignment, and programme development efforts of earlier phases, this stage may involve the scaling of successful pilot initiatives into broader implementation programmes and the expansion of EPR systems where enabling conditions and regulatory frameworks are sufficiently established. Development finance institutions, private investors, industry actors, and EPR-related financing mechanisms may increasingly participate in supporting infrastructure deployment, recycling investments, and circular value chain development. Efforts may also focus on strengthening market demand for recovered materials, improving resource recovery systems, and expanding private sector participation in plastics collection, recycling, and circular economy enterprises. As implementation scales, monitoring, reporting, and governance systems may continue to be strengthened to support investment confidence and long-term sustainability.
Phase 4 – Institutionalization and Long-Term Sustainability (2030 onwards)	May focus on embedding plastics management financing within national policy, planning, and budget frameworks, strengthening institutional coordination mechanisms, and aligning monitoring systems with RAP reporting cycles. This phase supports the long-term sustainability of investments and implementation systems established under earlier phases, including the continued operation of infrastructure, monitoring systems, EPR mechanisms, and circular economy initiatives. Efforts may focus on integrating plastics management financing into national budget systems, strengthening long-term institutional coordination arrangements, and sustaining private sector participation through mature regulatory, financing, and market frameworks. This phase also supports continued monitoring, learning, and adaptation to ensure that investments and implementation gains are maintained over time.

The phased implementation approach allows ASEAN and AMS to progressively strengthen the institutional, financial, and market conditions that support plastics management systems. By sequencing investment readiness, project preparation, and financing mobilisation, the RMS provides a structured pathway through which Member States can expand implementation of marine plastics management initiatives over time.

A more detailed operational roadmap outlining specific activities, milestones, and implementation responsibilities is provided in the separate document “RMS Implementation Roadmap.”

4.5 Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV)

In addition to supporting performance monitoring, MRV systems play an important role in enabling financing mobilisation by strengthening transparency, accountability, and investor confidence. Reliable and interoperable data systems can support evidence-based decision-making, performance-linked financing instruments, information sharing, and improved coordination among stakeholders. The RMS therefore promotes the strengthening and

alignment of existing national monitoring and reporting systems with RAP reporting requirements, rather than establishing separate reporting systems. This approach recognises that many AMS already maintain monitoring and reporting arrangements that support waste management, circular economy initiatives, and, where applicable, EPR systems. Strengthening these systems and improving alignment with regional reporting requirements can help AMS track financing mobilisation, monitor implementation, support adaptive learning, and assess improvements in plastics management systems over time.

At the regional level, MRV systems are intended to support three primary objectives.

First, they support the tracking of resource mobilisation efforts by monitoring the scale, composition, and sources of financing aligned with RAP implementation priorities. This includes tracking public financing commitments, development partner contributions, private sector investments, and other financing mechanisms that support plastics management initiatives.

Second, MRV systems support performance monitoring by capturing progress in the preparation and implementation of investment pipelines, expansion of waste management infrastructure, development of circular economy initiatives, and implementation of EPR systems where applicable. Effective MRV systems are particularly important for mandatory EPR arrangements, which rely on reliable data, compliance oversight, reporting, and accountability mechanisms. Monitoring information can help governments and partners understand how investments contribute to improvements in service delivery systems, recycling capacity, resource recovery, producer responsibility performance, and reductions in waste leakage.

Third, MRV systems facilitate regional learning and cooperation by enabling AMS to share implementation experiences, benchmark progress, and identify effective approaches for strengthening plastics management systems. Through regular reporting and knowledge exchange processes, the RMS can support the dissemination of good practices and lessons learned across the region.

To support these objectives, the RMS monitoring framework focuses on a set of core indicators that track both financing mobilisation and system performance.

Illustrative indicators of successful resource mobilisation under the RMS may include:

- increased value of financing aligned with RMS priorities across public, private, and development sources;
- number and value of finance-ready investment pipelines presented to partners;
- volume of co-financing leveraged through catalytic support;
- number of AMS accessing new financing partnerships;
- increased proportion of financing supporting long-term system operations and circular economy investments;
- number of AMS strengthening monitoring and reporting systems aligned with RAP reporting requirements; and
- progress in the implementation or expansion of EPR systems and related compliance monitoring mechanisms, where applicable.

The RMS does not establish mandatory regional quotas or financing targets. However, progress may be assessed through indicative benchmarks that consider improvements in financing mobilisation, investment readiness, institutional capacity, and implementation performance, taking into account national context and data availability. Baseline values and indicative targets may be refined during implementation through the MRV framework in consultation with AMS. Collectively, these indicators and benchmarks are intended to support

learning, adaptive management, and assessment of progress towards strengthening investment readiness, financing alignment, and implementation capacity across ASEAN.

Additional indicators may include the value and diversity of financing mobilised across different instruments, the maturity of aggregated investment pipelines, expansion of waste collection and recycling infrastructure, growth of private sector participation in circular economy activities, and reductions in marine plastic leakage pathways.

Further details on the monitoring architecture, reporting arrangements, and data management systems supporting RMS implementation are presented in Annex 4 – Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification Framework.

PART V – ENGAGEMENT PLATFORM AND CALL TO ACTION

5.1 ASEAN as a Platform for Engagement and Resource Mobilisation

The Stocktaking and Needs Assessment highlighted that substantial investments, initiatives, and partnerships already exist across ASEAN to address marine plastic pollution. AMS, development partners, multilateral banks, private sector actors, research institutions, and civil society organisations are supporting a wide range of activities that contribute to improved waste management, circular economy development, and reductions in marine plastic leakage. While these efforts have generated important progress, opportunities remain to strengthen connections between implementation priorities, financing opportunities, technical support, and stakeholder engagement across the region.

In this context, the RMS serves as a regional engagement platform that helps connect stakeholders around shared priorities under the RAP on Combating Marine Debris. The RMS does not establish a centralized financing mechanism, a pooled funding arrangement, or a regional implementation structure. Rather, it provides a framework through which governments, development partners, financial institutions, private sector actors, and other stakeholders can identify opportunities for collaboration, align resources with priority interventions, and support nationally led implementation efforts. The regional value of the RMS lies in its ability to help connect stakeholders, investment opportunities, and implementation priorities across ASEAN.

Through the RMS, stakeholders may be better positioned to:

- identify investment opportunities and priority interventions aligned with RAP objectives;
- engage with governments and implementation partners on investment-ready programmes and financing needs;
- explore opportunities for collaboration across financing, technical assistance, policy support, and capacity development;
- share knowledge, lessons, and scalable approaches across AMS; and
- contribute to broader efforts that strengthen plastics management systems and support circular economy development.

These activities may benefit from coordination and facilitation through existing ASEAN cooperation mechanisms, including technical exchanges, knowledge sharing, stakeholder engagement, and dialogue with development partners, while implementation responsibilities and financing arrangements remain nationally led.

Implementation of these engagement functions may be supported through existing ASEAN cooperation mechanisms and relevant sectoral platforms, as outlined in Part IV of this

Strategy. The ASEC, relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies and working groups, ASEAN Centres, development partners, and other stakeholders may contribute according to their respective mandates and areas of expertise[7]. Where appropriate, engagement efforts may also build upon existing regional initiatives, including SEA-MaP, to promote continuity, leverage established assets, and avoid duplication.

By strengthening connections among stakeholders, financing opportunities, and implementation priorities, the RMS can help improve investment readiness, expand opportunities for partnership, and support the mobilisation of resources needed to advance RAP implementation across ASEAN.

The complementary roles of regional and national actors in supporting resource mobilisation under the RMS are summarised in the table below.

Dimension	Regional Functions (ASEAN Level)	National Functions (AMS Level)
Primary Role	Facilitate regional coordination, stakeholder engagement, and visibility of investment opportunities across ASEAN.	Lead implementation of marine plastics priorities, investment planning, and resource mobilisation in accordance with national priorities, institutional arrangements, and levels of readiness.
Institutional Actors	Relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies and working groups; ASEAN Centres; regional knowledge and cooperation platforms.	National governments, line ministries, local governments, regulatory agencies, and other relevant national institutions and stakeholders involved in plastics management, environmental governance, and sustainable development.
Resource Mobilisation Function	Facilitate engagement with development partners, MDBs, and financing institutions, and other stakeholders; support alignment between financing opportunities and investment priorities.	Mobilise domestic and external financing; engage with development partners, financial institutions, and investors; and develop nationally led financing and investment approaches aligned with RAP priorities and national development objectives.
Investment Pipelines	Enhance visibility of national and multi-country investment pipelines; support aggregation and regional showcasing of investment opportunities.	Identify, prioritise, and implement national and subnational investment pipelines, including opportunities for project aggregation, scaling of successful initiatives, and development of investment-ready programmes.
Financing Instruments	No direct financing role; supports coordination of financing instruments and partner alignment.	Deploy and manage financing instruments, including public budgets, loans, grants, EPR-related financing mechanisms, blended finance arrangements, and private sector investment instruments, as appropriate to national contexts.

[7] Reflects Stocktaking findings on fragmented financing and the need for stronger coordination, alignment, and visibility of investment opportunities across ASEAN.

Dimension	Regional Functions (ASEAN Level)	National Functions (AMS Level)
Implementation Responsibility	No direct implementation role; supports coordination and knowledge exchange.	Lead implementation of marine plastics interventions, including policy development, regulatory implementation and enforcement, infrastructure investments, service delivery improvements, EPR implementation where applicable, and stakeholder coordination at national and subnational levels.
MRV and Data Systems	Promote regional alignment of indicators, comparability of data, and knowledge sharing across AMS.	Strengthen and manage national MRV systems; collect, analyse, and report data to support decision-making, accountability, RAP-aligned reporting, and monitoring of financing and implementation progress.
Knowledge and Capacity Development	Facilitate regional knowledge exchange, peer learning, and dissemination of good practices.	Apply lessons learned, strengthen institutional and technical capacities, support workforce and organisational development, and adapt regional knowledge and good practices to national and local contexts.
Stakeholder Engagement	Facilitate engagement among governments, development partners, financial institutions, private sector actors, academia, and civil society organisations.	Lead engagement with national stakeholders, including public institutions, private sector actors, development partners, academia, civil society organisations, and local communities; establish country-specific partnership and coordination arrangements.
Coordination Platforms	Support regional dialogue, stakeholder engagement, and coordination through existing ASEAN cooperation mechanisms and platforms.	Coordinate implementation across national institutions, local governments, financing partners, private sector actors, and other stakeholders to support integrated and sustained implementation of marine plastics priorities.

5.2 Financing Dialogue and Knowledge Exchange Mechanisms

To support coordinated resource mobilisation and implementation, the RMS promotes structured mechanisms for financing dialogue and knowledge exchange across ASEAN. These mechanisms provide practical pathways for aligning investment priorities with appropriate financing opportunities, strengthening stakeholder coordination, and facilitating the exchange of knowledge and practical experience in support of the RAP priorities.

Periodic financing dialogues may bring together the AMS, development partners, financial institutions, multilateral development banks, private sector actors, and other stakeholders to discuss investment needs, financing approaches, and implementation challenges. These engagements can help improve the visibility of national and multi-country investment pipelines, strengthen alignment between financing instruments and implementation requirements, and support more coordinated actions across stakeholders involved in marine plastics management.

Knowledge exchange complements these financing dialogues by supporting the dissemination of lessons learned, technical knowledge, and implementation experience across ASEAN. The Stocktaking and Needs Assessment identified significant experience from pilot initiatives, technical assistance programmes, and policy reforms across the region, as

well as opportunities to further share and adapt effective approaches in different national contexts.

These functions may be supported through existing ASEAN cooperation mechanisms and relevant sectoral platforms, including environmental cooperation processes, technical working groups, ASEAN Centres, regional knowledge networks, and partner-supported initiatives. The ASEC may facilitate information sharing, stakeholder engagement, and dissemination of lessons learned through established ASEAN meetings, reporting processes, technical exchanges, and regional dialogue platforms.

Knowledge products and analytical outputs developed under SEA-MaP—including the Stocktaking and Needs Assessment, technical frameworks, pilot documentation, and related resources—may continue to serve as reference materials supporting learning, adaptation, and replication across AMS.

Through these existing structures, knowledge exchange functions may include:

- dissemination of lessons from pilot initiatives and demonstration projects;
- sharing of good practices in waste management systems, circular economy development, and regulatory implementation;
- peer learning on monitoring, reporting, and enforcement systems; and
- exchange of approaches to investment preparation, financing alignment, and pipeline development.

To support sustained engagement beyond one-off activities, the RMS promotes an iterative engagement approach linking investment pipeline development, financing partner engagement, and ongoing knowledge exchange. .

5.3 ASEAN Call to Collective Action

Marine plastic pollution remains a shared regional challenge that requires continued collaboration among governments, development partners, private sector actors, and communities.

The RMS therefore encourages collective engagement to support the implementation of the RAP. The ASEAN institutions and AMS are encouraged to continue strengthening national policy frameworks, enhancing coordination across institutions, and mobilising domestic financing to support waste management and circular economy systems.

Development partners are invited to align technical assistance and financing programmes with the strategic architecture of the RMS, supporting activities that strengthen system readiness, investment preparation, and institutional capacity. Development finance institutions may also engage with governments in supporting infrastructure investments that contribute to improved waste management and recycling systems across the region.

Private sector actors also play an important role in advancing circular economy solutions. Packaging producers, recycling companies, technology providers, and investors can contribute to the development of sustainable plastics value chains through responsible production systems, investment in recycling infrastructure, and innovation in materials management.

Through strengthened partnerships and coordinated resource mobilisation, ASEAN and its partners can continue advancing progress toward more sustainable plastics management systems and reductions in marine plastic leakage across Southeast Asia. The RMS provides a framework through which these collective efforts can be better connected, supported, and sustained over time in support of RAP implementation.

How to Use the Annexes

The annexes are practical implementation tools that support governments, ASEAN bodies, development partners, financing institutions, and other stakeholders in applying the RMS. They are intended to guide investment preparation, financing alignment, governance strengthening, monitoring, and stakeholder engagement according to national circumstances and levels of readiness.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Pipeline Aggregation Framework
Annex 2 – Lifecycle Financing Alignment Matrix
Annex 3 – Governance Strengthening Framework
Annex 4 – Monitoring, Reporting and Verification Framework
Annex 5 – Catalytic Grant Leverage Pathway
Annex 6 – Financing Ecosystem
Annex 7 – Private Sector and Extended Producer Responsibility Framework
Annex 8 – Donor and Partner Mapping Matrix